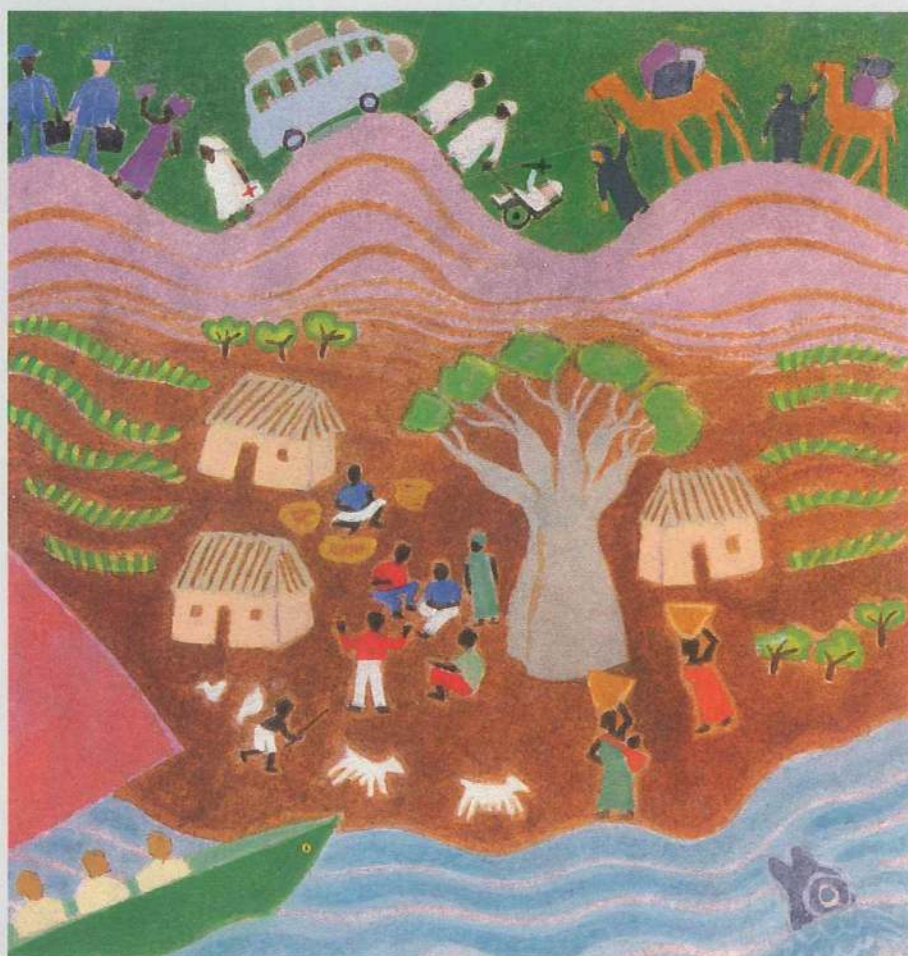


THE MAKING OF A PERIPHERY

Economic development and cultural encounters
in southern Tanzania

Edited by *Pekka Seppälä and Bertha Koda*



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Acknowledgements

This book is a result of a long chain of discussions which have taken place in Mtwara during the last five years. Mtwara is a curious town in the sense that the researchers working there have easily located each other and been open for an exchange of views. The small encounters accumulated over time into a network which, like the networks of marketplace women, works well without a coordinator. At one point, however, several people began to think that it was time to take stock of the accumulated knowledge.

The Nordic Africa Institute together with the IDS, University of Dar es Salaam, took the initiative to call the researchers to a meeting. The researchers were asked to come forward with provocative academic papers which would challenge the prevalent views on southern Tanzania. The papers were presented and discussed at a seminar in September 1995. The discussion turned out to be both lively and inconclusive. While many of the prevailing views were successfully criticized or elaborated, the discussions also revealed many controversial issues. Some of the controversies are due to the significant gray zones and outright blank zones in the information. However it is fair to say that the mainstream view on development and change in southern Tanzania has been directed by taken-for-granted prejudgements and beliefs. It is a long way from hearsay to a balanced judgement.

In this book we have set out to gather the views which show both the development on the ground and the perceptions about it. We have collected papers which tackle the central issues. Although this collection does not offer a full tour of all the aspects of the local culture and economy, it has definitely tackled the issues which have been central to the debates in and on Mtwara.

While working on the issue we have accumulated a number of debts of gratitude. First, the regional administration in Mtwara has been supportive of our agenda to launch a researcher perspective on local issues. Second, the large development programmes of RIPS and UNICEF as well as the Naliendele Agricultural Research Station have been most kind in the sharing of their material and views with the researchers. The encounter between the researchers and developmentists has been mutually nourishing. Indeed, the dividing line

between these two groups often disappeared from sight when the discussions became most intense. The RIPS programme is also due for special thanks because of its help with the practical arrangements for the meeting of researchers.

The discussion on culture and development requires a depth of perspective to be thought provoking. We would like to express our warm gratitude towards Dr Marja-Liisa Swantz and Dr J.A.R. Wembah-Rashid for their input in the discussion. Their long experience and commitment have shaped their views in judgements which can take us in surprising directions. Thanks are also due to Mr. M.A. Msengwa, Mr. H.A. Naganoga, Mr. Mwami and Dr A. Lihamba for their contributions which have enriched the views expressed in the papers.

Finally, special thanks are due to Ingrid Andersson for the work which she put into the organising of the meeting and to Susanne Östman for editing the papers.

Dar es Salaam and Uppsala, May 1996
Bertha Koda and Pekka Seppälä

Introduction

Pekka Seppälä

My grandfather lived like this, he begot my father and he in turn lived like this and begot me. I follow their ways of life. There is nothing you can teach me about life. Besides, I produce and eat my own food, I do not eat at your place. And, I am no beggar.¹

This book offers interpretations on economic development and cultural change in southern Tanzania. What these interpretations have in common is that they share a critical approach towards a simple externalist view of the southern regions as a location of passivity and apathy. Instead, they provide glimpses of the diversity of local development patterns. They also present examples of exploitation and underdevelopment and of the subtle forms of resistance.

The quotation above gives one view of the perception of development that can be recorded in southern Tanzania. It is a caricature of parochialism and traditionalism which are often taken as representative of the whole population. External development agents often generalize this view as a general pattern when they refer to the mentality hostile to development that, they maintain, prevails in southern Tanzania. Yet it is questionable to what extent this statement is a representative example of attitudes common in southern Tanzania. The quotation may be simply the defensive situational statement of a villager facing the demands of the external change agents. It expresses arrogance, self-containment and even hostility towards change and its messengers. It is quite possible that even the same person, when approached in a different way, could express quite different opinions on development and cultural change. Thus we need to be very critical of the stereotypical examples when we assess whether the people of southern Tanzania differ from other Tanzanians.

1. From the chapter by Wembah-Rashid, below.

Another example of the formation of perceptions of southern Tanzania concerns the famous Makonde carvings. These carvings are a symbol of southern Tanzania to those Europeans who have some knowledge of the country. The carvings are very distinctive because they are made of African blackwood¹. Many carvings with dreamlike human figures fulfil all the criteria of "primitive art" that tourists have in their minds. Other carvings reproduce typical African idioms of family and religion. On the basis of carvings, and through analogy, the people of southern Tanzania could be labelled as traditional and primitive. However, the analysis by Saetersdal (in this volume) shows that many of these carving styles have only developed recently, as a result of commercial encounters. The carvers, although often Makonde by ethnic origin, tend to originate from Mozambique and work in Dar es Salaam. Thus the link between the material objects (the carvings) and the image of southern Tanzania is both shallow and contestable. Certainly the carvings are a poor guide, if one tries to analyse the cultural patterns of southern Tanzania.

These examples show that one needs to be very humble and careful when making statements about other people's perceptions of economic development and cultural change. The views on the ground can never be captured and recorded directly/authentically. Instead, identified views are always mediated by *our* own perceptions. They are shaped by a selection process in which a potentially vast amount of information is first filtered by the limited scope of our gathering experiences, these experiences are then scrutinized by our taken-for-granted premises, and finally remoulded by our limited capacity to memorize and preserve information. In order to overcome the limitations and to develop our perception, we need to listen and talk, verify and nullify, test and reappraise. In the end, we express perceptions as seen from a limited angle. There is no simple way out of the hermeneutic dilemma of limited interpretations.

Southern Tanzania is a suitable object for studying perceptions on economic development and cultural change because the region has witnessed a number of developmental interventions during its history, yet it is often described as an undeveloped periphery. The multiplicity of interventions has not allegedly brought the expected results and thus southern Tanzania is often presented as a failure. This perception is based, however, wholly on externalist criteria of eco-

1. Sometimes also called ebony.

conomic development. Moreover, the perception is based on rather vague information, often surrounded by ideologically coloured premises. Thus it is high time to place one view against another and compare one piece of information with another. The aim of this volume is to provide an alternative, culturally sensitive interpretation of regional development. Although the selected papers cannot reach a single objective view of development, they do generate a substantially richer and more varied picture which challenge many taken-for-granted wisdoms.

This book presents a number of original and diverging views of the economic development and cultural change in southern Tanzania. Each of them presents a specific view, as moulded by the writer's premises, experiences and memories. Each of the views is unique and stands on its own. Yet, together they form more than each of them separately. They form a discussion which provides a good coverage of the factors shaping development in the region.

We have consciously placed cultural analysis on an equal footing with economic and social analysis, which is also expressed in the selection of the papers. Rather than giving a systematic overview of various sectors in a regional perspective, we have selected papers which concern the historically important (or ideologically central) sites of cultural discussion. Thus the analysis of, say, oral literature, stands side by side with the analysis of land tenure. This approach is a statement in itself. It states that culture is not merely a hindrance to development and change. Rather, culture is an "enabling" source of capacities; a formative aspect which gives substance to ideas and which directs the allocative decisions. Culture is a force to be reckoned with if we are to get anywhere in the understanding of development and change.

When cultural analysis is combined with socio-economic analysis, the totality of analysis covers a wider field than the stated issue. Thus the article on the politics of the road project may at first sight appear to be a rather specific paper. However, when the road is understood as an artery which connects the region with the cultural influences of the capital city, it acquires more importance. The other articles refer to the same road issue in relation to colonial policies, patterns of trade and patterns of youth migration. In the light of these other perspectives, the importance of the road project stands in a new light.

The southern regions cover a wide area. We have sought to express the diversity within the area. Naturally, the cultural variety also includes conflicts and contradictions. These conflicts appear in different forms. There are the conflicts between developers and the developed, between external and local people. There are also more nuanced conflicts between youths and their elders, between men and women, and among the religiously devout and the politically motivated people.

In this introductory chapter we assist the reader who is unfamiliar with the region by briefly presenting some of the major controversial issues. First, we discuss the relative isolation of the region. Second, we assess the relative weight of the external interventions that have shaped the area. Third, we discuss the economic development of the area. Fourth, we study the ways local initiatives and external interventions have created local variations and conflicts within the region. Fifth, we discuss perceptions (of Tanzanian northerners on the southerners) as a developmental factor. Sixth, we study how the manner of producing knowledge shapes our understanding. In the course of the introduction, we place the individual papers into a common discursive context.

ISOLATION

Southern Tanzania comprises the Mtwara and Lindi regions and the Tunduru district in the Ruvuma region. Historically, these regions have been very much connected to each other through migration and administrative arrangements. The physical environment also carves the area into a separate unit.¹ The area is mostly known for its cashew cultivation. This area contrasts with the area of the "big four" regions (Rukwa, Mbeya, Iringa and parts of Ruvuma) in the south-west which during the 1980s were the maize bowl of Tanzania.

The chapters in this book discuss south-eastern Tanzania. However, the term used here is "southern Tanzania". This generalization reflects our preoccupation with a binary cultural distinction between southern Tanzanians and the rest. The rest are "northerners", even if they actually come from, say, Iringa. While making this simple dis-

1. Agriculturalists use the term Southern Zone for the area.

tion, we open the door to a discussion of whether the "south" not only exists as a real site but also as an object of perceptions.

In his article, Dr Wembah-Rashid presents a historical and geographical analysis of factors which have been instrumental to the relative isolation of southern Tanzania in the contemporary situation. It is often claimed that at the present time southern Tanzania is isolated from the centres of development and change. The isolation is first and foremost described as physical isolation, which is a result of the difficulty with transport and communication. The roads to the other regions are poor and in the midst of the rainy season, the main road to Dar es Salaam is closed altogether. Sea and air communications serve mainly specific sections of cargo and personal transport. Thus ordinary citizens face considerable difficulties when they plan to travel out of the area.

Road communication has always been important not only for the transport of goods but also for ideas and cultural patterns. Roads facilitate the transport of crops from peripheral areas but the returning vehicles bring fancy goods, music, clothes and books. Road is often looked upon as synonymous with modernization. For this reason, the problem of communication by road is often interpreted as a lack of modernity. Here we see how simple things like roads are not an objective measure of economic development but a culturally guided criterion to appraise development. Those who are cut off physically are also perceived to be cut off from the strivings towards change. The simple question of isolation expressed by the lack of a road appears also as a constitutive element of a cultural relationship where the centre is differentiated from the periphery; modern people are distinguished from traditional people; and active people are differentiated from passive. While these distinctions are made, it is not at all self-evident where the "facts" end and the "opinions" begin. The strongest generalizations are made by those who have least first-hand experience of the area. When first-hand experiences are lacking, the polarizations tend to emerge, and the pejorative perception becomes established as a discourse.

This discourse has implications back to the material world. The pejorative view of the northerners (both the Dar es Salaam and the European view) on southerners directs and shapes the concrete (governmental and donor) development initiatives in southern Tanzania.

Mesaki and Mwankusye present in their paper the political wrangles behind the road construction. They show the importance that the road received before the elections and the promises that the politicians floated to the electorate. They then compare the history of promises with the actual appalling situation in the field. Wembah-Rashid goes even further and discusses the historical continuity in policies that have kept the southern regions isolated.

The relative isolation of the southern regions needs to be placed under closer scrutiny. First, as Wembah-Rashid points out, the sense of isolation is increased by the fact that on all sides the immediate neighbouring areas are equally poor and marginalized. Thus short-range trade and interaction does not function as a substitute for poor communication with Dar es Salaam. Second, the physical characteristics of the surrounding areas make the area more isolated. The area is bordered by uninhabited forests in the north and the Indian Ocean in the east. The barrier of forests in the north functions as a frontier not just in real terms but also in the formation of perceptions. When one enters the area from the north by car, one travels for several hours through the wilderness, interrupted by a few small settlements. The dominance of nature over human constructions is striking. Thus the existential experience of a traveller is like a rite of passage: first you leave one situation, then you are thrown into a frightening transitional phase and only when you have passed through it are you initiated into a new situation.

At the same time, it is worth noting that an alternative road to Dar es Salaam, entering the south-western regions and running up to Ruvuma, was upgraded already two decades ago. That road has not helped Mtwara and Lindi regions. Instead, it has effectively helped to turn the Ruvuma region away from the Mtwara and Lindi regions. In this equation, Tunduru district (within Ruvuma region) has a mediating role because, although it is administratively connected with the Ruvuma region, it has strong cultural links towards Mtwara and Lindi regions.

The discussion above shows that a widespread view of the isolation of southern Tanzania mixes the physical barriers and alleged cultural distinctions. When these two can be separated, the issue of cultural isolation and the concomitant distinctiveness can be subjected to three critical tests. First, we can ask whether the southern regions have been culturally isolated in the past, and if so, whether the current

level of isolation is induced by malicious policies. Second, we can ask whether the current level of isolation is exaggerated or a real thing. Third, we ask whether the relative isolation is an obstacle for development or—and this is a radical alternative interpretation—in certain respects, a blessing, protecting the area from external exploitation and, as such, a result of the calculated choices in the livelihood strategies of the southerners.

These three questions are analytically distinctive but otherwise intricately related to each other. We start with the record of historical interventions.

EXTERNAL INTERVENTIONS AND THE CAPTURED PEASANTRY

J. Gus Liebenow is the author of the major study¹ on the political history of the southern regions. The study is very well argued and has been widely cited as an exemplary analysis of colonial politics; actually the study sits beautifully within the current debates in political science due to its emphasis on the subtle forms of “resistance from below” in the colonial encounters. Since his view has left its imprint on most of the articles here, it is worth quoting him at length. Liebenow provokes when he states:

The Makonde area of southeastern Tanzania was often referred to as the “Cinderella region of a Cinderella territory” by the British colonial administrators who governed Tanganyika until 1961. By 1969, no one had as yet managed to rescue the one-third-million Makonde from their plight of poverty, illiteracy, and disease. Although they constitute the third largest of the 120 ethnic groups of Tanzania, size bears little relationship to their economic, social, and political development (Liebenow, 1971:11–12).

This view is often cited as proof that the southerners are passive people with no interest in development. Yet Liebenow does not himself accept this view but sees history from the perspective of a political process of underdevelopment. In the following summary Liebenow puts together the major political encounters from the early colonial period:

When societies possessing better material resources or more sophisticated systems of political, military, and economic organization came into

1. J. Gus Liebenow, *Colonial Rule and Political Development in Tanzania: The Case of the Makonde* (1971).

contact with the Makonde, there was no guarantee that development would take place. The decades of Ngoni and Arab contact that preceded the imposition of European rule in 1885, as well as the nearly eight decades of German and British colonial administration, did relatively little to set the Makonde on the road of development. Alien domination of, or even contact with, Makonde society took one of three forms. First, contact was frequently counterproductive with respect to development, since it resulted in the harassment or exportation of its human resources. Second, those who tended to monopolize the mechanisms of change regarded the Makonde homeland as being of marginal interest in the pursuit of economic, religious, or other interests, and hence they concentrated their administrative and material resources elsewhere. And third, when innovation was attempted, it was frequently done in an arbitrary and capricious fashion without any effort being made to involve the Makonde in developmental institutions in a sustained and significant fashion (Liebenow:1971, 15).

In more general terms one can say that the external interventions have simultaneously generated development and underdevelopment. The interventions create their own object and in this sense they are instrumental in the making of the periphery.

The discussion of external interventions has recently centred around the issue of whether the rural people are "captured" by the state agency (cf. Hydén, 1980 and 1983, for the benchmark views). The question is whether the life-style of the "uncaptured" rural population could be changed to such an extent that they willingly leave their parochial attachments and orient themselves to the wider world. (The other side of the coin is that, in this process, rural people are simultaneously turned into tax-paying peasants. Historical evidence shows that taxation seldom provides as much as it extracts from peripheral areas. Thus political penetration has two sides, modernization and exploitation.) The discussion of political penetration is shallow unless it takes into consideration the views of the objects of such political penetration. The (double-edged) initiative of the state is challenged by rural people. Their responses vary in terms of whether they want to accommodate state penetration or resist it. When only some people enter into cooperation, the result is a set of alliances which cross the external-internal divide and create complex frontlines.

When the issue of "captured folks" is studied from the perspective of interdependencies and complex frontlines, we see that the effect of the interventions varies. Some interventions have changed the environment permanently. Some effects have also been historically spe-

cific and, although they may have had a decisive impact at a certain time, they have left limited traces on the current situation.

Like Liebenow, both Wembah-Rashid and Swantz trace (in their articles below) a chain of early historical encounters with powerful intruders. Their list also includes the major world religions and development workers. The analysis of the encounters challenges the picture of isolation. Rather than being an isolated corner, southern Tanzania was historically a central point of entry for Arabs and Europeans. The history of encounters is as long and detailed as in any other part of Tanzania. It is also a misinterpretation to say that these encounters have not had an impact. The cultural encounters have left their imprint on the landscape through the Islamic and Christian religions. The colonial encounter has had deep effects on the political organization while agricultural interventions have dramatically changed the physical environment. However, the effects of the encounters have been uneven amongst the population.

Wembah-Rashid provides an overview of the variation in the cultural geography of southern Tanzania and argues that the variation is to a large extent caused by variation in external encounters. Especially the effects of the Christian missions have been very local but intense where they have occurred. These missions have provided schools, clinics and churches, labour on their farms, vocational training in their workshops and clothes as payment. Their impact is thus strong. In comparison, the Islamic penetration has been less localized. Instead, the Islamic religion has been carried onwards from the saddles of the trading caravans, in the clothes and hats of the coastal people, and through the learning of Arabic expressions and songs which enter both the feasts and everyday life. The spread of Islam has been wide because Islam has been synchronized with local beliefs rather than brought in as a separate cultural force.

Swantz provides another angle. She argues that commercial and political interaction between Arabs and southern Tanzania was intensive for centuries before the German colonialization. She then argues that the Mozambican war has induced isolation. The effect of the war was very concrete and decisive: it meant that the area was declared an emergency area where all travel was severely restricted. Interaction with the outer world was thus legally curtailed. Swantz also discusses the effect of Islamic education in turning people away from some development issues.

Both the colonial and post-colonial administrations have made their interventions into the social organization. As Liebenow shows, the colonial pattern of interventions has been a chain of abruptly changing policies and administrative systems. Although this kind of variation in interventions is far from unique in colonial history¹, it is nevertheless a matter worth serious consideration. The resistance towards administration appears in this perspective as resistance towards the discontinuity, insecurity and the unintended effect of increased objectification. In this situation, the colonial and post-colonial encounter has increased the division between the opportunistic followers of whatsoever policies prevail and the critical parochial perspective.

The strongest interventions of the administration relate to agriculture. The German settlers came and established plantations while the administrators provided new crops for local farmers. The British colonial officers encouraged and forced settlements along the roads in the 1920s. The first large agricultural project was the Groundnut Scheme which became infamous, even on the scale of the British colonial policy discourse, as an outright failure. The scheme started a major groundnut plantation in Nachingwea in 1948. The project created a huge infrastructure but, apart from the infrastructure, production never really took off (Wembah-Rashid, 1983:53–63; Wood, 1950).

Another intervention with more permanent effects was the villagization programme in the beginning of the 1970s. The programme had already started in the Mtwara and Lindi regions at the end of the 1960s, as a counter-measure to protect the villagers from the armed attacks of the Portuguese troops who were searching for the Mozambican guerrilla fighters. However, the Ujamaa policy, as it came to be known, was also a measure to prevent the spread of independent initiatives to organize communal production and marketing, along the lines of the Ruvuma Development Association, since these were regarded as a possible source of local resistance against state power. Table 1 shows the extent of villagization in southern regions.

The figures for Lindi and Mtwara are far above the national average levels. Although the numbers of people need to be read with caution (as many authorities sought to reach targets by playing with numbers), it is obvious that the level of villagization was high.

1. See Bruce Berman (1990) for the whims of the colonial administrators in Kenya.

Table 1. *The number of Ujamaa villages and total members in southern regions*

| Region | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 | 1973 | 1974 |
|------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Lindi (villages) | 285 | 592 | 626 | 589 | 339 |
| (members) | 70,673 | 203,128 | 175,082 | 169,073 | 218,888 |
| Mtwara | 465 | 748 | 1,088 | 1,103 | 1,052 |
| | 173,027 | 371,560 | 441,241 | 466,098 | 534,126 |
| Ruvuma | 120 | 205 | 205 | 242 | 184 |
| | 9,000 | 29,433 | 29,430 | 42,385 | 62,736 |
| Total mainland | 1,956 | 4,484 | 5,556 | 5,631 | 5,010 |
| | 531,200 | 1,545,240 | 1,980,862 | 2,028,144 | 2,560,472 |

Source: Hydén, 1980:103.

The effects of the villagization were mixed. Although the villages could provide some services, it is also clear that the disruption caused by the land tenure arrangements had negative effects on agricultural production. In addition, villagization seriously disrupted the social fabric in the villages. In her paper, Koda presents a detailed account of the legal and administrative ambiguity created by the abrupt villagization, and the consequent change in the land tenure arrangements in practice. She points to the women as the major losers in villagization and the subsequent land disputes.

Another change initiated in the agricultural sector was the introduction of cashew cultivation. This development is outlined by Seppälä in his first paper. Cashew was established slowly during the last decades of the colonial period as a major cash crop in southern Tanzania. It is worthy of note that cashew cultivation started as a smallholder crop and that the propagation of cashew by the colonial administration was fairly weak. Instead, Indian traders were crucial actors through their capacity to move cashew from this area to the world market (Hassett, 1984). They were the major exporters during the colonial period. Later, the government and its parastatal organization, Cashew Nut Authority of Tanzania, took a central role in the marketing. Production increased steadily until 1974 and then dropped dramatically. During the 1970s the government also started, with loans from the World Bank, the industrial processing of cashew nuts locally. The processing plants had, however, unsuitable technology and proved to be a failure. Throughout the 1980s, cashew cultivation was down. The liberalization of trade in the early 1990s has meant that the private traders have again taken a leading role in cashew

marketing. Amongst the mixed group of traders, those either originating from India or having good connections there have been dominant. The private traders have offered the producers better prices for cashew nuts and thus the interest to tend cashew trees and harvest them has revived in the southern regions.

A visible form of external intervention during the post-colonial period has been development aid. The major agencies working in southern Tanzania have been the bilateral donors FINNIDA and ODA (from Finland and the United Kingdom, respectively) and the multilateral donors, UNICEF and the World Bank. While the bilateral donors have been working in various fields, the multilateral organs have had more specific agendas. UNICEF has worked on health and nutrition issues while the World Bank has worked on cashew production and processing.

Timo Voipio presents a detailed analysis of one set of the development interventions by donor agencies in the area. He analyses a chain of bilateral regional development projects which have aimed to be comprehensive. The projects include a continuous chain of planning exercises from the early 1970s to the present day. The projects have generated a large number of studies and project plans but very few of these plans have led to concrete implementation on a large scale.¹Armstrong However, the accumulated experience over decades has taught donors a lesson. In the current situation, planning takes more consideration of local views.

Based on the evidence, the history of the interventions can be summarized as follows: the encounters with the external world have been many and embraced a multitude of aspects of life. However, the impacts created have been either sporadic, fading away without trace, or location specific. In other words, they have not led to the accumulation of economic change that has altered the overall economic organization in a major way. When external commentators make hurried statements on southern Tanzania, they tend to overlook the history of interventions. Yet the number of interventions and cultural encounters is as high as anywhere. The picture is even more complex when the local perspective on the manifold intrusions is introduced into the discussion.

1. For a critical view of Rural Integrated Development Plan (RIDEF), including the early ones in southern Tanzania, see Armstrong (1987).

One question still remains unanswered: whether the relative economic isolation is actually a blessing, since it protects the area from external exploitation. Here the answer can only be tentative because we cannot acquire factual information on the alternatives to current history. Nevertheless, it is evident that the historical resistance to political and economic domination has not been a hindrance for exploitative practices. There are good grounds to say that the existing level of isolation has also entailed a lack of internal means to combat some forms of exploitation, e.g. through not being able to demand a good price for agricultural produce. Nevertheless, the relative isolation and political resistance may have generated alternative forms of social provisioning and generating livelihoods. In order to tackle this dilemma, in the following, we look at the economy from the outside and from the inside outwards.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE SYMBOLS OF CHANGE

Economic development can, at a crude level, be analysed as a ratio of the available resources to the size of population. One does not need to follow the Malthusian line of argument to understand that this is a vital equation. Thus we start by outlining the population figures and the natural resources.

Although southern Tanzania accommodates almost two million people, the area has a relatively low population density. Population densities were estimated at 53 for Mtwara region, 10 for Lindi region and 12 for Ruvuma region in 1992. The population densities are very high on the western Makonde plateau (in Newala district) and this raises the figure for Mtwara region above the national average (see Table 2).

The population densities need to be supplemented by an analysis of the trends in population indicators. The estimates for the future population show that the population is unlikely to increase dramatically within the coming years. Population growth has been fairly low for the last decade, which has been a subject of debate. The explanations suggested include out-migration, poor nutrition and sexually transmitted diseases.

Table 2. *Population in southern Tanzania*

| <i>Region / district</i> | <i>Total population in 1988</i> | <i>Population density in 1988</i> | <i>Under 5 mortality rate in 1985</i> | <i>Population growth rate between 1978 and 1988</i> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| <i>Mtwara</i> | 889,494 | 53 | 233 | 1.4 |
| <i>Mtwara U*</i> | 76,632 | | 180 | |
| <i>Mtwara R**</i> | 169,436 | | 255 | |
| <i>Masasi</i> | 335,428 | | 240 | |
| <i>Newala</i> | 307,998 | | 223 | |
| <i>Lindi</i> | 646,550 | 10 | 236 | 2.0 |
| <i>Lindi U*</i> | 41,587 | | 186 | |
| <i>Lindi R**</i> | 284,523 | | 289 | |
| <i>Nachingwea</i> | 118,017 | | 209 | |
| <i>Liwale</i> | 52,211 | | 249 | |
| <i>Kilwa</i> | 150,212 | | 210 | |
| <i>Ruvuma</i> | 783,327 | 12 | 188 | 3.4 |
| <i>Tunduru</i> | 170,235 | | 222 | |
| <i>National (mainland) average</i> | 22,533,758 | 26 | 191 | 2.8 |

Source: Population Census, 1988.

Notes: * Urban ** Rural

The first explanation, the level of out-migration, is difficult to establish clearly. There are areas like the Makonde plateau which are densely populated and where especially youth migration is clearly visible (see Mihanjo and Luanda below). There are, however, other relatively sparsely populated locations which provide land for new settlements. Thus a part of the migration takes place within southern Tanzania. The out-migration to towns in other regions primarily takes place from the most congested locations.

The second explanation for low population growth is poor nutrition and consequent infant mortality. Small children are vulnerable in a situation of poor nutrition: Dag Vinthagen (1992) has established a high level of child malnutrition in a case-study in Mtwara. The nutritional problem is not necessarily a lack of food, but the dietary patterns. Vinthagen draws his conclusions as follows:

The picture of stunting is totally dominating, indicating a problem of overall social conditions including traditional feeding patterns and a virtually total dependency on a single crop, cassava. Positive determinants for child health are prolonged breast-feeding and effective birth spacing. The traditional weaning pattern has all the well-known drawbacks with

low meal frequency, few supplements and bulky food with low energy density. An additional problem is the resistance against cassava as weaning food. Of overall importance in improving weaning food is therefore to increase the knowledge of how to prepare cassava in the best way. An increase in meal frequency and a more efficient use of supplements would also be of great value but social and economic conditions will probably make improvement difficult (Vinthagen, 1992:1).

Yet another explanation for low population growth is given in a report of a local demography seminar written by I. Ngalinda (RIPS, n.d.:87). On the basis of village studies in Mtwara and Newala, the report argues that the level of fertility is very low. Many women are childless while women with only one or two children are also common, despite the high level of divorces and remarriages. The infertility is partly induced by the prevalence of syphilis and chronic gonorrhoea. An additional source of low population increase nowadays is AIDS.

While the above comparison on the relative weight of the various factors affecting population dynamics is inconclusive, it is clear that population growth will remain low.

In order to make sense of population figures they have to be studied in relation to the means of making a livelihood which, in this rural area, overwhelmingly means the carrying capacity of land.

In many locations, the rural people report a relative abundance of land but there are some locations where the size of the population clearly exceeds the carrying capacity of the land. The abundance of land is limited by the extensive pattern of cultivation which means that a household has several plots but, at any moment, some of them are left fallow. This pattern of extensive cultivation is developed to sustain soil fertility in the absence of fertilizers. Any disruption of the pattern (i.e. the intensification of agriculture) is likely to induce a reduction in land fertility.

Another factor limiting the abundance of land is the increasing cash crop cultivation. It may mean more efficient land use, but it also tends to increase the inequalities in the distribution of land. The extensive cultivation of cash crops, especially cashew nut by large estate holders, means decreased land availability for those who have fewer means to enforce their land claims.

The ODA has carried out a detailed analysis of the agro-economic zones in the area. The analysis located ten major agro-economic zones, varying from coastal clays through alluvial valleys to plateaus and

uplands. The study concluded that the variations even within short distances and within agro-economic zones are significant and thus it would be important to advance the analysis to micro-environments (Bennett, et al., 1979).

The high degree of variation of agro-ecological conditions between different microenvironments within southern Tanzania has had its impact on local farming systems; the households need to diversify their agricultural work in order to adapt to diverse resource bases and unpredictable environment. Richard Lamboll summarizes the general characteristics of farming systems in the Mtwara and Lindi regions as follows:

- (a) Most villages have access to both lowland and upland.
- (b) Traditional bush fallow methods are generally practised in the upland areas, with continuous cropping in the lowlands, sometimes with double cropping in the dry season.
- (c) On average about 30 per cent of the areas actually cultivated comprise lowland, 20 per cent upland cashew fields and the remaining 50 per cent upland field crops.
- (d) Most of the cultivated area is rainfed, although a number of valley basins experience periodic uncontrolled flooding.
- (e) Lowland cropping is mostly pure stand. Upland cropping is usually mixed, with the exception of cashew. The most important crops grown are as follows:

Starchy staples: sorghum, maize, rice, cassava, millet.

Leguminous food crops: pigeon peas, cowpeas, fiwi beans, green-grams, bambara nuts.

Cash crops and vegetables: groundnuts, sesame, soya beans, sweet potatoes, onions, tobacco.

Tree crops: cashew, coconut, oranges, bananas.

- (f) There tends to be a larger number of mixed crops where soil fertility is lower.
- (g) The average farm size is 2.5 hectares, but there is a lot of variation.
- (h) There is often no clear distinction between cash and food crops. For example, a survey carried out in Mtwara region in 1990 found that over 50 per cent of the households planting maize, sorghum, cassava and groundnuts did so for both sale and consumption.
- (i) Livestock numbers are generally low in relation to both land areas and human population.
- (j) Land is generally available and labour tends to be the limiting factor. The family provides most of the labour requirements, although hired labour may be used, if cash is available, for big jobs such as bush clearing. Agricultural inputs are limited.

- (k) Cassava clearly dominates as a food crop. It is also a major, if not the major, cash crop in the Southern Zone. Maize production appears to be increasing relative to sorghum and millet production (Lamboll, 1991:3-4).

As mentioned in the preceding paragraph, the role of cassava as a cash crop is important and has not been sufficiently studied. It is possible that the expansion of cassava takes place a result of the impoverishment of the soil, since cassava is the last crop in the crop rotation. If that is the situation, then the extensive commercialization of cassava is an alarming tendency. The sale of cassava is not a new phenomenon. Cassava has competed with cashew as an upland cash crop from the 1950s onwards. L.C. Brown (1985) points out that the competition has been even and the decisive issues for an individual farmer have been the availability of labour and the patterns of crop rotation and crop mixing practised. However, given the increasing population density, the current situation may be qualitatively different in that the land constraints are becoming serious. Killian in her chapter provides analyses on how the increased cultivation and sale of cassava is a road to impoverishment.

Agricultural development has recently been boosted by the increase in cashew prices. This development is analysed by Seppälä in his first chapter. The price increase has not led to significant planting of new cashew trees but instead the old trees are tended more carefully and cashew harvesting is more systematically conducted. Recent estimates on cashew production indicate that cashew production has at least doubled after the lean years. The official amount of exported raw cashew nuts was 43,000 tonnes for 1993/94 season and 63,000 for 1994/95. The target for the 1995/96 period was 80,000 tonnes. The southern zone's share (i.e. Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma regions) is roughly two-thirds of the total (*East African*, 2-8.12.1995).

The development of cashew prices has been volatile. During each collection season the liberalized free market prices have fluctuated widely. This has meant that a substantial part of the price is collected by those middlemen and large traders who have timed their buying and selling well.

Cashew growers can be divided into three groups. First, there are smallholders who invest in minimal labour and other inputs and who sell small amounts of cashew nuts largely to the local petty traders. They receive only half or even less of the local price paid by large traders at the time. Second, there are a few smallholders who have

invested in both labour and other inputs (especially sulphur) and who sell several sackfuls of cashew nuts either through petty traders or, more often, directly to the larger traders. These smallholders live largely in the major cashew producing areas of Newala, Masasi and Tunduru district. Third, there are large estate holders who invest in both labour and other inputs. The estate holders sell directly to the large traders and are paid competitive prices.

If the total cashew income were to be evenly divided between rural people in the cashew areas, in 1994/95 the income would have been Tshs. 8,200 per person.¹ The total money flow to the local economy (including farmers and petty traders) was Tshs. 12,000 million. The world market value of this produce was Tshs. 16,000 million. Given the large amount of money, it is no wonder that cashew production has generated a discussion, with clear political undertones on a national level, on the distribution of wealth. The alternatives are either to sell cashew nuts unprocessed (to Indian processing plants) or to process locally (meaning that local plants would be hired to large traders who then rehabilitate plants and organize processing work). One camp argues for increased Tanzanian control of the income through processing cashew nuts locally, thus increasing the value added to the product and the wealth of the nation. The other camp argues for free trade and market-based decisions on the processing. This debate places, at one level, state control against the (largely non-indigenous) wealthy traders and, on another, the local workers at processing factories against the Indian factory workers. From the perspective of the local economy the issue is controversial: if local processing is enforced, it will mean employment opportunities in the factories. However, if the non-indigenous trader-cum-factory operators reduce the price paid to farmers due to decreased profitability, this would naturally decrease the money flowing to the smallholders.² The discussions held between the organization of traders and the state

1. The calculation is based on the following figures: 40,000 tonnes of cashew nut were collected in the southern zone and sold at Tshs. 300 in the 1994/95 season. No input costs. The total population was estimated at 1.9 million people in Mtwara and Lindi regions and Tunduru district. (The other districts in Ruvuma region are marginal cashew producers.) The world market price was USD 800 for a metric ton. The exchange rate was USD 1 = Tshs. 500.

2. The cashew processing factories were constructed with World Bank loans in the 1970s and 1980s. The factories were equipped with inappropriate technology and have stood largely idle for most of the time (cf. Jaffee, 1994:20). Consequently, the major traders argue that processing in India, where there is seasonal excess capacity and cheap labour, is cheaper.

authorities during the 1995/96 (*Daily News*, 15, 25 and 28.12.1995) and 1996/97 collection seasons indicate that the issue of local processing is still open.

If we then look at economic development outside the agricultural sector, it first seems that there is very little taking place in southern Tanzania. The infrastructure is in bad shape and there is hardly any industry in the region. However, this view can be contested on two grounds. First, it can be argued, along the lines of underdevelopment theory, that the region has significant natural resources which are exported unprocessed, leaving limited benefits in the region. Second, it is possible to argue, along the lines of the "local knowledge" or "development from below" school of thought, that there is significant local production, but it is organized through petty production units and exchange networks and is difficult to see. We shall look at these two arguments in turn.

The underdevelopment theory has some credence if we look at the exploitation of the natural resources. A classic example of shady export of natural resources is the hardwood timber which, regardless of government control measures, has been logged for decades in southern Tanzania. Some of the most valuable tree species like African blackwood (*mpingo*) have been almost eradicated. Trade liberalization has also increased the exploitation of the marine natural resources, especially sea shells and prawns. Yet another major resource in the area is natural gas which is located south of Mtwara town. The gas is, however, transported to Dar es Salaam and the plant provides limited primary or secondary benefits to southern Tanzania. One might add that southern Tanzania has a huge potential for the tourism industry but that these opportunities have not yet been exploited to any extent.

A new entrant on the natural resource scene is gold digging which takes place in many locations, but especially along the Ruvuma river in the Masasi and Tunduru districts. Gold digging has created a rush which is astonishing in its intensity. Valuable gemstones have also been located in the regions. The government prohibited the mining of gemstones in these areas at the beginning of 1996. Addressing itself to miners and traders, it stated that some control needs to be established to curb the excessive smuggling of the gemstones. (*East African*, 29.1-4.2.1996). The matter is complicated by the manner of digging, which

is largely by artisans and thus very difficult to control by the government.

The view of limited economic development can also be refuted by the "development from below" argument which states that the local economic potential is not limited to the most visible forms of accumulation and exploitation. Instead, small-scale local production is also a significant economic force. Small-scale production units deal with products like salt and fish, hoes and pots, and haircutting and medical consultations. Their significance is apparent from the fact that they supply the major part of the capital goods, consumer wares and services that rural households use. This production is invisible for three reasons. First, the production takes place without visible premises and sales largely take place from home. Thus the whole range of products cannot be seen if we look at what is on sale at the public market places. Second, the prices of the local products are often very low. Although these products have limited monetary value, they nevertheless embody a substantial labour input. Third, production is conducted so that the governmental officers who control and draw up official statistics on the economy have little grasp of what is happening. Although the people are seldom hostile to the state authorities as such, they do not like interference in their productive activities and try, by all means, to avoid those control measures which increase their burden of taxes and "voluntary" contributions.

In his second chapter, Seppälä discusses the informal sector and its economic role. He argues that the informal sector should not be seen as a separate sector composed of enterprises which function like any capitalist enterprise. Instead, a more suitable frame of reference in this largely agricultural area sees households diversifying their economic activities from agriculture to additional sources of income. The tendency towards "diversification" is rational, given the vulnerability of the local economy in the face of unpredictable weather conditions (and food security) and the changing economic policies.

The same view of development from below is provided in a study on the use of forests (Missano et al., 1994). The authors of that study have used participatory methods to locate the variety of forest products utilized in villages. While outsiders see only valuable hardwood, the locals are able to find firewood and wood for building, game and root plants, fruits and medicine. This intimate knowledge of forest resources is astonishing and worthy of praise in itself.

The description of the perception of wealth and poverty written by Killian, provides a holistic view of differentiation in a village setting. As Killian points out, adjustment to the changes in cashew prices and to urban labour opportunities has determined who among the villagers have emerged as accumulators, with large tracts of cashew or coconut trees. Although wealth is still "in the people", the signs of permanent differentiation in material terms are there.

The economic analysis of southern Tanzania thus shows multiple faces. First, we find a dominantly agricultural society which is intertwined with the international commercial circuits, where the fluctuations of cash crop prices and the changing trade regimes create instability and inequality. Second, we locate a realm of the exploitation of natural resources which provides limited benefits for the local economy. Third, we identify a tendency towards petty non-agricultural production which supplements agriculture and enhances the self-sustainability of the rural communities. It is fair to sum up and say that the economy of the southern regions provides a large variety of products, but that only some of them benefit the poorer sections of the population.

LOCAL VARIATIONS AND CONFLICTS

The high level of objectification and exploitation of southern Tanzania should now be clear. It is a simplification to point an accusing finger at the external forces, without getting a picture of the local scene of political and economic control. Local struggles over power are important, yet surprisingly difficult to register. They take place through events which seldom reach the level of an open and public debate. Confrontations, when they take place, are not always direct but can be expressed by a circuitous route. Stealing crops from the fields of the rich is an example of such a route. In other cases, confrontation is a product of slow developments which have worked in society for such a long time that they do not appear to be new to the locals. The conflict between matrilineal and patrilineal interests is a case in point.

In the following, we outline the social dynamics in southern Tanzania. We emphasize the silent and slow evolutionary pattern of social change which conceals and naturalizes the development of contradictory interests.

Southern Tanzania is far from uniform, as far as the simple criteria of religion, ethnicity and class are concerned. The variety of the population is so complex that it is difficult to indicate one major variable or criterion which would clearly divide the population. Instead, plural identities are the order of the day.

The division of people into ethnic groups is a matter of interpretation of contested ideologies rather than a simple recording of the self-understanding of the people. The ethnic labels have been given as a by-product of the colonial administration and research.¹ Some gained support among the people and become a way of self-identification in encounters with outsiders. The major ethnic group names recognized by Gulliver (1959) were Makonde, Makua, Yao, Mwera, Machinga, Ndingo and Matumbi. The Makonde group is the largest and divided into four sub-groups according to dialect (cf. Nangumbi below). Makonde live largely in Mtwara and Newala districts. Makua and Yao largely inhabit the Masasi and Tunduru district. Mwera are found mostly in the Lindi district. The sparsely populated areas of the coastal Lindi district are inhabited by Machinga. Matumbi live in the northern part of the Kilwa district and Ndingo are located in the Nachingwea and Liwale districts.

The colonial labels have not managed to create separate, easily identifiable ethnic interest groups (i.e. tribal associations). Instead, the migrations caused by disasters, villagization, the Mozambican war and land pressure have considerably increased the mixing of residential patterns and ethnic groups. The mixing of people is enhanced by frequent marriages between the ethnic groups. In such a case, a person can easily have bilateral identity and refer separately to the mother's line and the father's line on equal terms. On the other hand, the mixing of people has decreased the value of lineage or clan as a unit of self-identification. In the encounters with strangers where the "other" is likely to have a completely different social background, dialect and lineage are suppressed and self-presentation is conducted under a more general banner of ethnic group. Kiswahili has gained ground as a neutral language in inter-ethnic communication.

1. After independence, the government of Tanzania systematically played down the importance of ethnicity. Much of the perception of ethnic groups is derived from the tribal map of Tanganyika drawn by P.H. Gulliver in *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, No. 52, 1959.

The ethnic factor is unrelated to religious allegiance. The Anglican church has established itself in Masasi, while Catholics are located in several places including Lindi, Newala and Mtwara. The Christian spheres of influence are localized, reaching usually a fair walking distance from the mission station/church. Islam has significant influence in the inland areas between the islands of Christianity. Areas along the coastal belt are largely Islamic.

Given the plurality of the population, the political history of the area is surprisingly peaceful. Even the recent multi-party elections have not managed to arouse major cleavages amongst the southerners. As Killian notes, many villagers perceive the intimidations made by opposition parties as a call for chaos. The need for peace overrides the need for political change, although the opposition parties had their share of votes (see Mesaki and Mwankusye for the results of the presidential elections held in 1995). The explanation for political orientation has its roots in the historical strength of TANU/CCM as a culturally accepted form of patronage organization (even if people view it ironically in terms of efficiency and transparency). Max Mmuya (1994) has analysed the previous single-party election, through a case-study on Mtwara region, as a show of paternalistic politics. This factor was again important in the last presidential elections. Since the winner of presidential elections, the CCM candidate Benjamin Mkapa, originates from the Masasi district, local loyalties towards him combined aspects of affinity, loyalty and the quest for harmony.

The conflicts that have evolved in southern Tanzania take place in a less visible manner. Two underlying conflicts are worth mentioning. These are the gender and generational conflicts.

Gender dimension is addressed in the chapters by Killian, Swantz, Koda and Nangumbi. The gender conflict has its roots in the pervasive influence of the matrilineal ideology throughout southern Tanzania. This ideology was suitable in a situation of extensive shifting cultivation, frequent changes of residence and the continuous circulation of people and resources between domestic units, but caused major friction in the sedentary villagized villages. The increased permanence of settlement and national policies have systematically favoured patrilineal identification and resource devolution. Although permanent investments in land appear minimal, they are nevertheless significant

in relative terms. As already mentioned, Koda's analysis shows how the repercussions of this development affect women.

In her article, Swantz takes up the conflict between the matrilineal pattern of kinship identification and a more recent spread of patrilineal property rights. Swantz looks at this encounter from within the social structure. She points out that gender roles and kinship attachments have a central place in the constitution of social order. Her feminist perspective places issues like the girls' initiation ceremony at the centre of the analysis of power relations. Swantz adds that, from the gender perspective, external interventions appear to have an indirect effect on social organization. It is the local social organization as a totality which then adapts to the historical incidents.

The generational conflict is also felt strongly in southern Tanzania. The boys have the dilemma of growing up and establishing a unit that is separate from the previous generation. Boys and young men tend to be very dissatisfied with agricultural work under their parents' supervision and are eager to take any kind of non-agricultural work. Young men also like to be very mobile and long-distance trade is one of the most honoured occupations. Mihanjo and Luanda, in their chapter, point out that this orientation of young men has a negative effect on agriculture. They also trace the origin of the famous Wamachinga (an invented ethnic group name given to traders who originate from southern regions and work in Dar es Salaam) into this generational conflict.

It is noticeable that young girls are affected by this conflict in a different way than young men. For girls, a major dilemma is the need to prove one's worth by having children and the consequences of having children. The pregnancies naturally have an adverse effect on the education of girls in a situation where there is already a very low educational standard for women (Shuma, 1994). The birth often takes place outside marriage and the young men are seldom interested in taking up their responsibilities towards a child. The plight of young mothers is eased by the relaxed pattern of handling young pregnancies and by the generous practices of fostering children by relatives.

THE OBJECTIFYING GAZE OF THE NORTHERNERS

It is widely acknowledged that people from abroad and from northern Tanzania look down at the people of southern Tanzania. The

objectifying gaze of the northerners has created its own mythologies. Among the stories told are ones on witchcraft in the area. Witchcraft is a general term for the hostility that is thought to prevail in the south.

If one asks a person in Dar es Salaam whether he or she has been in the south, the first answer is usually a shrug as if to say, "Why should I have travelled there?" Very often, views on southern Tanzania are based on second hand observation. In the world of stories and gossip, the most extravagant and peculiar ones stay in circulation. It may well be that the problem of the isolation of the south, presented at the beginning of this discussion, should be turned around: it is the lack of northerners willing to travel to the south, which is the heart of the issue. Perhaps one should argue that the road from Dar es Salaam via Kibiti to Lindi should be tarred so that northerners can travel to southern Tanzania and meet the people there.

The negative attitudes tend to prevail even when the northerner moves to the south. Juhani Koponen notes that administrators originating from northern Tanzania and working in southern Tanzania are as bewildered as other outsiders. He refers to a view of an administrator originating from the north:

"We are black and we tend to think that all blacks behave similarly. But that is wrong", a somewhat cynical senior Tanzanian official remarked. "We are outsiders and come here with our own norms. We pretend to know but we don't. We don't know why people don't send their kids to schools or why they don't go to hospital. We call them lazy without realizing that there may be some sociological problem involved" (Koponen, 1992:30).

The administrator is able to see the difference between "northerners" and "southerners", but the explanation still comes "from above". The way of life of southerners is perceived as a sociological problem, thus denying it a meaningful rationality.

The more mundane explanation for harsh living conditions in southern Tanzania, as narrated by administrators, actually refers to practical constraints. First, the food prices (especially for meat and similar items which are rare in the local diet) are high. Second, the infrastructure and services (roads, electricity, housing) are below the standards that the northerners are used to. Third, the distance to home areas where one may have, in addition to family ties, commercial or agricultural interests, is long.

What is most interesting is not the views of the northerners, but the developmental impact of these views. The impact can be hypo-

thetically detected at two levels: first, in the limited allocation of the state's resources to the area and second, in the limited interest of the private sector in the area.

The evidence on the public sector investments is inconclusive. Table 3 gives some indication of the distribution of government resources by region.

Table 3. *Public sector expenditure on southern Tanzania (per cent)*

| Region | Population 1988 | Local gvmt dev. exp. 1991 | Primary school enrolment 1991 | Distrib of fertilizer 1990 | CDRB loaned 1989-90 | Rural household: electricity 1988 |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Mtwara | 3.95 | 2.6 | 3.2 | 0.4 | 1.8 | 2.8 |
| Lindi | 2.87 | 4.4 | 2.1 | 0 | 2.3 | 1.5 |
| Ruvuma | 3.48 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 17.6 | 0.5 | 2.7 |
| Mainland total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Statistical Abstract, 1992

The statistics in Table 3 should be read with some caution because the collection of information was carried out in several stages with many possibilities for distortions. Also, given the ideology of providing equality of opportunity for all citizens, one would not expect that the official statistics show large variations in the expenditure figures from the population distribution figures.

Table 3 shows first the percentage shares of the southern region in the government expenditure on local administration. The relative share of southern Tanzania in the town and district council expenditure has been reasonably fair. The indicator for primary education shows that southern Tanzania is also doing comparatively well. However, the differences start to appear in secondary education. The share of secondary school pupils in Mtwara and Lindi was below two per cent in 1988. This figure includes the students attending private secondary schools.

The figure on the distribution of fertilizers shows that Ruvuma was a major recipient of fertilizers. However, since these statistics, pan-territorial crop pricing has been omitted and the subsidies on the fertilizers were curtailed. It is likely that the use of fertilizers has decreased substantially in Ruvuma district.

Government interest can also be measured in terms of the loans distributed by the cooperative bank and the rate of rural electrification. These figures show some variation between the three regions, but are generally below the national average.

There are no similar statistics which would show private sector interest in the area. The statistics on industrial establishments (both above 10 and above 50 employees) show that southern Tanzania is notoriously absent from the permanent interests of the private sector.

Dar es Salaam based operators have nevertheless been active in the area. Interestingly, they have voiced their interest through civil society organization. An example of an organization with good local connections is the Newala Development Foundation which has developed into a powerful organization with involvement in the cashew trade, transport sector and secondary school education (Kiondo, 1995:145–152). Key persons originating from Newala have for some time been trying to establish a local bank. Other external civil society organizations which have continued the tradition of the objectification of southern Tanzania are the Cashew Nut Association of Tanzania and the Tanzania Mineral Dealers Association (dealing with gemstones). These represent private sector interests in the public debate.

PRODUCING KNOWLEDGE OR PRODUCING A PERIPHERY?

This short overview shows that the general perception of southern Tanzania conceals its internal variety and historical dynamics. If these are taken into consideration, the distinctiveness of southern Tanzania is considerably reduced. Instead, southern Tanzania appears as a part of the country, a part which both gives and takes.

In this last section, we reflect on the role of the scientific community in advancing the understanding of southern Tanzania. It is worth asking whether the researchers are just one more group of external observers putting their labels on the area, or whether we can provide a qualitatively different view of the area. While answering this question, we have to address again the tenets of creating knowledge: the premises, the experiences and the memories. Thus we need to reflect on our own ideological premises, our ways of collecting experiences and our ways of memorizing and presenting information.

This is also the question addressed by Koponen in his chapter on the production of knowledge. Koponen presents a critical note on the

various traditions of producing knowledge in and on southern Tanzania. He covers scientific knowledge, administrative knowledge, donor knowledge and an amorphous local knowledge. Koponen argues that knowledge is socially constructed and as fragmentary as the social processes that generate it; thus we should not even expect to find systemic and uncontested knowledge. He then continues with the analysis of the limitations for each tradition of producing knowledge.

A perusal of the published scientific literature shows that researchers have largely been outsiders. Researchers originating from southern Tanzania have published relatively little on their own area. This is also reflected in our study. Although we made calls to encourage local researchers to come forward, only two were mobilized for this volume. There seems to be a certain degree of avoidance of being identified with southern Tanzania, even when one has advanced to a high level in the university hierarchy.

The pattern of past research leaves much scope for improvement. Outside researchers have tended to write short reports on the basis of a short-term fieldwork. Monographs which analyse the development and culture of the area are very few indeed. Researchers have often been recruited under the administrative or project setting which has steered the way of posing questions towards "applied" research. Thus issues like cashew cultivation, which has economic importance for the outside world, has received substantially more attention than local crops like cassava, millet or sorghum.

Given this pattern of scattered information, the accumulation of scientific knowledge has been rather slow. Time and again, researchers have been obliged to start from the basics and do substantial ground work before they have been able to dwell on their specific topic of interest.

However, the worst part of the researchers' contribution is the way the research results are distributed. Some of the most interesting studies are stored in archives kept in the backrooms of the mission stations, donor agency offices and research institutions. Their existence is never mentioned in the international bibliographical systems. The most detailed works are often Ph.D. theses which are notoriously difficult to reach. The literature review that Koponen has compiled is unique simply because it is based on a laborious job involving traveling and searching for information from all possible and impossible locations.

During the preparation of this volume, we have tried to overcome the obstacles of narrow perspectives and limited primary data. We have tried to provide each other with inspiration and material which leads into an internal discourse—a rich and diverse view on southern Tanzania. We have tried to allow the culturally sensitive views to enter into the development discourse. Yet it is clear that the image that this volume reveals differs from the one acquired when collecting experiences by living in an area and talking to the people. Indeed, the world of day-to-day living is difficult to capture and place in a research report. The chapter written by Nangumbi on the oral literature of the Makonde is refreshing in this respect. It starts with tales from the oral literature which are so strong and vivid that they are sure to capture attention and create a sense of shared experience. At the same time, the stories describe the most powerful forms of witchcraft. The skillful writing of Nangumbi raises the question: how much of the important cultural dynamics is beyond the reach of development discourse?

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PART I

THE HISTORY OF ENCOUNTERS

Is culture in south-eastern Tanzania development-unfriendly?

J.A.R. Wembah-Rashid

ABSTRACT

Culture constitutes socially-inherited patterns of thought and behaviour characteristics of a people. Development is perceived to take place when a people changes those patterns and institutes others perceived to be better and more appropriate to current and future situations. Culture is essentially a people's own product, obtained through learning and evolutionary interaction with their environment, it is thus rooted in the people. Development is an imported concept sold to the so called underdeveloped nations. Accordingly, many views prevail regarding the process of development. Some developmentalists argue that certain cultures or peoples are more amenable to change while others are more resistant.

In this chapter, I examine the view advanced above in reference to south-eastern Tanzania in order to determine whether the culture of the area is development-friendly or not, and why. I draw materials from three sources: archival, previous fieldwork in the area, and personal experience and observation. The analysis is basically holistic with a geographic-historical bias. I posit the view that all cultures have the potential for being both development-friendly and resistant, they cannot exist on only one side of the coin. Development is a selective process whereby one culture, directly or through an intermediary, takes as its own or rejects what others have invented. South-eastern Tanzania's response to new innovations can be conceptualized as a series of topographical maps of a desert landscape, always undulating. The acceptance of innovations is represented by dunes whose forms are reflective of the direction and force of the wind, the agent of change.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the relationship between culture and development. It draws its resources from archival material: information from previous research which I conducted in the region on and off between 1966 and 1994 and personal experiences through participation in the way of life of the people as a native of the region. Fieldwork was carried out in the Kilwa, Masasi and Newala districts, which represent the coast, hinterland plains and the plateau areas. In the regional context, these were micro-studies where information is generalized to present a macro-picture. I have never been to either Nachingwea or Liwale. Generally my approach is holistic with a geographic historic bias. Data collection, processing, analysis and interpretation are all qualitative.

The chapter starts with a general conceptual review of culture and development. This is followed by a brief examination of south-eastern Tanzania's culture in section three. There is a discussion of the region's culture in relation to development agencies generally; and the chapter ends with concluding remarks.

CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Culture constitutes patterns of thought and behaviour or practices characteristic of a people. It originates from learning and evolutionary interaction between a people and their environment, it is thus rooted in them. Development is perceived to take place when people transform their existing culture or patterns of thought and behaviour and adopt new ones believed to be more appropriate and better than what exists. Although ideally, development may be caused by a people's dynamism, the developed world and some third world leaders conceive of it as handouts which have to be sent to less developed countries. In that sense, it can be viewed as a commodity imported from developed to underdeveloped countries.

Anthropologists dismiss the view held by some developmentalists that certain cultures, for example those of peasants, are characteristically resistant to change. The developmentalists argue that development resistant cultures need to be "improved" for development to take place (Breton, 1992). By implication this means that where development lags behind, such as is the case with south-eastern Tanzania,

then the culture of the area has failed to "improve" or "transform". All cultures possess the potential for accepting or resisting development and this is valid for south-eastern Tanzania. For a people to accept or reject development depends on the context within which it is introduced. The development process in any culture is like a series of topographical maps of a desert landscape, always undulating. Acceptance of innovations is represented by the dunes whose forms reflect the direction and force of the wind, which is the change agent. Therefore, south-eastern Tanzania has had its periods of development and of stagnation. In this respect, the reasons for underdevelopment cannot be explained by cultural resistance alone.

Culture, or patterns of thought and behaviour, are manifested through a people's day to day "cultural practices". Cultural practices are those "actions that are engaged in by many or most members of a cultural group and carry with them normative expectations about how things should be done" (Miller and Goodnow, 1995:3). They are meaningful matters in contexts that are open to observation by researchers and by others in the respective social groups. They are subject to interpretation. In other words, development involves change in "cultural practices". I will use this perspective to guide the investigation and interpretation of how people in specific cultures reject or accept new cultural practices and why.

The cultural and historical background

South-eastern Tanzania in this chapter covers the current administrative regions of Lindi and Mtwara. This was an area of forested highlands and plateaus, undulating wooded grassland plains and swamps, before extensive exploitation of the natural vegetation took place. The soils and rainfall were and still are highly variable and unreliable. However, most of the soils were in the past suitable for a production economy of crops and animal husbandry, especially on the plateaus and in the alluvial river basins. They allowed settlements to stay a minimum of a 30 years on the same site (cf. Gough, 1961:532; Wembah-Rashid, 1983). These settlements, which held between 500 and 4000 individuals, could relocate site; resort to supplementing their food sources through an extractive economy of hunting and foraging, or reduce their human and animal populations in order to adjust to available resources. The inhabitants were basically subsist-

ence producers, thus the location, length of stay on a site and size of settlements and populations were dictated by the resource carrying capacities of specific sites, people's mode of production, technology and social system.

Currently south-eastern Tanzania is inhabited by Wamakonde, Wamakua, Wamatambwe, Wamatumbi, Wamwera, Wangindo and Wayao, among others. Murdock (1959) has classified these ethnic groups as belonging to the Yao Cluster while Nurse and Spear (1985) consider them to be a subgroup of the Ruvuma-Rufiji group of Bantu languages, although they exclude Wamakua and Wamatambwe. According to Tew (1950) the Yao Cluster peoples in Tanzania are only those who occupy the area between the Ruvuma and Lukuledi rivers, while the Ruvuma-Rufiji classification includes areas farther north of the Lukuledi river and is thus more embracing. Early studies about south-eastern Tanzania show that, in addition to these groups being matrilineal, they also have a lot in common and the history of their origins and settlement in this area is closely related (Whiteley, 1951; Tew, 1950; Mitchell, 1956; Murdock, 1959; Liebenow, 1971; Wembah-Rashid, 1975; and Nurse and Spear, 1985). South-eastern Tanzania is therefore both a geographic entity and a cultural block.

Matrilineal system

In a matrilineal system such as that in south-eastern Tanzania, all individuals are affiliated to descent units following their mother's line. Consequently, matters related to household composition, domestic authority, residence, inheritance of property and succession to socio-political positions are hinged onto the rules of the system described above. In view of the foregoing, Harris (1971:328, 331), thinks that there is a persistent notion, especially among some individuals who belong to the patrilineal system, to assume that "the presence of matrilineal descent groups reflects the political or economic domination of men by women in those societies". Some anthropologists (Harris, 1971:331) have argued that:

The stability of a matrilineal system is threatened by the structurally difficult relationship between the male who is a father and his children who are under the mother's brother's authority. He experiences a psychological conflict because of his love for his own children who belong to another descent group and over whom he exercises no author-

ity, and his responsibility for his sisters' children whom he does not raise but whom he controls.

These views have been used to explain the lack of development in south-eastern Tanzania.

In most cases, political and economic domination go hand in hand, one attracts and is dependent upon the other. This being the case, it is also true that in both matrilineal and patrilineal societies, it is the men who invariably control the corporate kin group's productive and reproductive resources. Therefore development or lack of development is a process which has no preference for either matriliney or patriliney.

Matriliney is not a feature of cultural systems which represent a particular level of social organization, rather it is a type of membership criterion (Aberle, 1961:658). Groups that follow a matrilineal system or possess matrilineal elements, may be and are found in cultures organized at various levels including industrial and complex ones. A low level of development is not a preserve of matriliney. More specifically, south-eastern Tanzania is not, for example, socio-economically backward because it is matrilineal.

Thirdly, it is suggested (cf. Harris, 1971:329), that a man who resides with his wife on her lineage or clan land after marriage may be getting the best of two worlds, without any loss in productive or reproductive efficiency. For, if the man is economically development-oriented he will ensure that his wife, sons and daughters work for him on her land, just as his sister and her children will work for him on their land.

The fourth observation has to do with the relationship between development agents and targeted people. All agents of development: Moslem and Christian missionaries, colonial and indigenous extension officers and foreign donor agencies, until recently saw men as their targets for economic development. In addition, until recently most development projects/programmes were designed with a top-down approach. They were directives from above that were often unwelcome to the targeted people.

For a long time, south-eastern Tanzanians have had contact with different patrilineal peoples: Moslems and Christian missionaries, Africans from the hinterland and other parts of Tanzania; plus deliberate post-independence government policies which favoured patri-
liney. Therefore, they cannot be described as typically matrilineal. The

Wamakua and Wayao are transforming themselves from matriliney to bilineality and the rest of the groups qualify to be classified as patrilineal (Wembah-Rashid, 1983).

Culture and development initiatives

Development or change in cultural practices can come about as an element of a people's internal dynamism or through their adoption of externally originated innovations. It is thus logical that in discussing its presence, both the internal and external factors must be examined. In the area of the study, which exhibits generally retarded development, the internal factors that contribute to this state of affairs include: (i) the geographic and economic isolation of the region and (ii) the apathy or "negative arrogance" of the inhabitants. Externally there is (i) lack of political will by the polity to develop the region, (ii) bad planning, and (iii) inappropriate approaches to the introduction of innovations by agents of change.

GEOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC ISOLATION

Today, south-eastern Tanzania has a harsh environment. The plateaus and alluvial river basins are over-exploited, mismanaged, and therefore destroyed. The plains have turned into poor soils covered with grasslands and scattered trees. This situation is a long-term effect of the process of colonization, among other factors. German colonists who had asserted their authority in the region by 1900, started off by demarcating district and territorial boundaries. These boundaries were more or less maintained by the British colonial regime as well as the post-independence government. The boundaries restricted people's movement within and outside the region. This factor plus the stopping of the slave trade, the introduction of medical facilities and Western-type school education triggered off an increase in the population. The relatively good state of the land which existed during the first years of this century began deteriorating in the 1950s and has continued to do so to this day.

The mode of boundary demarcation was in principle influenced by the region's natural features. As a region with the Indian Ocean to the east, the Rufiji river to the north, the Ruvuma river to the south and the Lumesule river to the west, south-eastern Tanzania became closed.

It is closed because, for a century now, this region has had no reliable means of transport usable by the majority of the people, save their feet. Within the region, rivers such as Matandu, Mbwenkuru, Lukuledi, Mwiti, Mbangala and Lukwika have restricted people's movement for many years and so have the Makonde and Rondo plateaus.

The presence of the tsetse fly in relatively large areas of the region is another geographic factor that has held back efforts to open up these areas. Consequently, this has contributed to the population congestion currently experienced in the few relatively habitable areas. The absence of reliable means of communication and transportation repel economic development efforts. No meaningful economic activity can take place where there is no operative movement of goods, humans and ideas.

South-eastern Tanzania's neighbour to the south is northern Mozambique, to the north is the Coast region and to the west is Ruvuma region. A number of features are shared by all these neighbours. They are at least as economically underdeveloped as south-eastern Tanzania itself. Unlike other border areas of Tanzania, where the neighbours are relatively developed or reachable, this is not the case in the region under discussion. Economically underdeveloped adjacent areas have nothing to share or exchange but poverty.

In sum, this geographic and economic isolation led to other elements which are development-unfriendly. The inhabitants here were forced to be inward oriented. Of those who manage to go outside the region, either as indentured labour or as civil servants, getting back home is a problem; either because of lack of money for the fare, or due to mere apathy. This behaviour is a logical choice for marginalized people, when they become "liberated". It is difficult for them to go back to their underdeveloped areas of origin.

Apathy or "negative arrogance"

It follows from the foregoing discussion that when the majority of the people in a region are marginalized, isolated and inward oriented, they develop a behaviour best described as apathy. This includes feelings that they cannot succeed or do better even if they embarked on some project; they have not seen anybody succeed in their vicinity. This last statement may not be true today, but these are feelings which

have persisted among members of the older generation. Another way of manifesting this indifference is what I call "negative arrogance". The people are proud of themselves even though they are economically poor and illiterate and display an attitude of "I-don't-careism". As a result, they become insulated against new innovations and want to do their own things their own way. To change agents they will say:

My grandfather lived like this, he begot my father and he in turn lived like this and begot me. I follow their ways of life. There is nothing you can teach me about life. Besides, I produce and eat my own food, I do not eat at your place. And, I am no beggar.

Another factor which has contributed to this attitude is the understanding that south-eastern Tanzania has had a long history of contact with outsiders. The earliest newcomers, the Arab and Swahili traders and Christian missionaries, effected development in the area. As a region, the people feel that they are among the first to adopt new innovations: long-distance trade, literacy in both Arabic and the Roman script and resistance to German brutality. Those who came after the Germans have had nothing new or spectacular to offer, which is probably true.

Lack of political will to develop the region

Among the widely believed reasons for why development in the region is inhibited is a lack of political will on the part of the polity to develop this region. This view until recently encompassed the entire southern part of Tanzania including the Ruvuma region. The view has been invariably referred to as the "hidden agenda" by some prominent southerners. The story begins with the outbreak of the Maji Maji war. This war, which effectively began in the Rufiji valley, quickly spread southward to all of southern Tanzania.

It caused great damage, because the Maji Maji warriors burnt down all government, Christian missionary and settler places and property they came across. Much more destruction was carried out by the German colonial administration in retaliation and to punish the people in the areas within the war belt. They burnt whole villages, crops on the farms and stores. These measures caused starvation and many deaths which, including the actual war victims, means that about 100,000 souls were lost. As if the foregoing was not enough, it is held that the Germans made it their policy to concentrate their devel-

opment efforts in areas north of the Rufiji river. Within a relatively short period of less than a decade they constructed the Central and Usambara railway lines. In the south they only started a tramway from Lindi to Masasi towards Songea. This trend was dictated by a directive purported to have originated in Germany, ordering the colonial administration not to develop the south.

Developing southern Tanzania, the story goes, would be dangerous to German colonial rule as it would allow the people in this region to organize themselves into effective resistance groups, because these people were extra intelligent, seasoned fighters with Angoni blood. Many of the men from the interior had travelled to the coast where there was some civilization and where they could acquire muzzle loaders.

Despite the fact that the Germans were defeated by the British and their allies, it is thought that they somehow communicated this "hidden agenda" to them. So British colonial rule effected this policy by undoing what the Germans built. It is held, for example, that the British dismantled the tramway, banned cotton growing and discontinued running the four schools established at the coast by Germans. For, the "hidden agenda" notwithstanding, the Germans placed emphasis on agriculture, education and health programmes between 1906 and 1914. History has it that by 1908 there were six secular schools under German teachers in the coastal area to serve the Swahili speaking Muslims and others from inland. The curricula included accounting, typing and legal issues which had to do with the jurisdictions of *akidas* and *jumbes*. It was German policy to get as many children as possible in school. After a few years it became obvious that the missionaries and German colonial rulers were in competition not only through offering school education but also in providing employment to the newly created elite, especially those trained by missionaries. The plantations in Lindi and Mikindani were demanding more and more educated Africans to work as overseers and clerks; and the administration needed civil servants to collect tax and work as interpreters.

However, believers in the "hidden agenda" story say that under British colonial rule it was the conservative governments that insisted on not following this up. This is why after World War II, the Labour Party government was prepared to invest in the Groundnut Scheme at Nachingwea. In that process they built a harbour and new town at

Mtwara and a railway line to Masasi via Nachingwea. It would have been extended to Songea had the project been successful.

When Nyerere came to power, it is said that he was advised to take heed of the "hidden agenda" and was warned to be watchful of Oscar Kambona, a southerner, if he expected to last long in power. The British advised him to act accordingly, citing one example of a smouldering fire, the formation of an opposition party to TANU, the Masasi African Democratic Union (MADU). Unlike, United Tanganyika Party (UTP), MADU was all African and likely to spread to Newala, Tunduru and Songea. Nyerere's "agreement" to this "hidden agenda" policy is manifested by the dismantling of the Mtwara-Masasi railway line and the non-implementation of the Dar es Salaam-Lindi road project; the road being a dream unrealized for over thirty years. The proponents of this view argue that at a time when self-help projects were being encouraged and which saw the construction of roads in Upare and Usambara and a hospital in Mara (though incomplete), attempts to solicit money from southerners for the road were stopped by the government.

During the Tanzania-Uganda war, it is said that the army needed a bailey bridge pretty rapidly to take to the war front. My informants wondered why of all places the authorities decided to take the one on the Mbwenkuru river!

I personally have failed to find information to confirm or refute the story of the "hidden agenda"; it may not exist. However, when a people believes rightly or wrongly that some injustice is being done to them, they form certain ideas and attitudes against authority, i.e., apathy and "arrogance". It is just like believing in witchcraft, it affects an individual's way of life irrespective of whether witchcraft really exists or not.

PLANNING

For a long time, the coast to interior settlement pattern of south-eastern Tanzania has been that of dispersed clusters of homesteads and villages. In their endeavour to bring about development in the region, all regimes have employed one or the other form of resettlement, that is, the concentration of several homesteads or villages into larger settlements. This exercise was particularly carried out in the interior of the region and at a few points along the coast.

The first encounters between an external people and the indigenous groups brought influences into the region which can be described as "development". Historians tell us that when the Bantu arrived in the region they either drove away or absorbed the then indigenous non-Bantu groups. In the latter case, they imposed upon the hosts a new economic system of crop and animal production and a relatively permanent settlement way of life. They introduced new industries, for example iron working and the production of iron implements, crafts, the manufacture of salt, bark cloth and pottery.

This way of life has continued to dominate the area for eight centuries now, minor changes notwithstanding. It has thus been accepted, adopted and sustained. And so the change from a predominantly extractive to a productive economic way of life constituted development or transformation of cultural practices.

When the Arabs "invaded" this part of the world, they brought along their own form of "development" where the main elements were a new religion and a socio-economic system. Like their Bantu predecessors, conquest and absorption were the major means of spreading their new innovations. It is during their contact period that the first coral structures were constructed at some strategic points along the coast, Kilwa, Lindi, Sudi and Mikindani. Islam as a religion and the rest of the Arab influences were not part of well-designed development plans. They spread and became accepted and adopted through contact. Russell and Pollock (1993:2) observe:

In southern Tanzania at this time (1890s), a few powerful local rulers (or "sultans"), with trading contacts at the coast, had adopted Islam and sometimes had a Muslim teacher in their entourage. Such a teacher, as well as acting as a clerk to his sultan, would also teach the Koran, and literacy through the Arabic script, to the chiefs' sons and other boys.

It is important to note here that Muslim education was targeted at a selected few individuals in society and specifically to males only although conversion to Islam and its corresponding culture was for both males and females. According to the authors quoted above, it was easy to convert to Islam because this new religion did not disrupt much of the indigenous way of life, that is, in comparison to Christian religiosity. Although I do not have statistics to support the following statement, it is my impression that south-eastern Tanzania today has more Muslim followers or people who lead an "Islamic way of life" than Christians and traditionalists. If this impression is correct, it

means that the Muslim initiative to develop south-eastern Tanzania according to Muslim principles, has had a greater impact than Christianity.

The next external group of development carriers were Christian missionaries of the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. Their major aims were to capture interest and converts from the indigenous communities and indirectly forge economic ties between the region and their countries of origin. To achieve these aims, the maintenance of relatively permanent settlements was essential. Such settlements also provided the opportunity for innovations other than religion to be introduced under strictly European supervision. The German administration and settler plantation owners, impressed by these Christian centres, sought to create "economic or plantation centres" of their own. British colonial rule pursued the same policy when they took over from Germans; and so did the post-independence regime. Settlements facilitate easy collection of taxes and political control.

Given that these measures were forms of planning which contributed to the introduction of new cultural practices in order to transform the targeted communities, the question is: how effective were they? Was there resistance against them or were they adopted by the targeted people and why? One view is that they were accepted and adopted; and another view is that although they were adopted, they never became accepted. It is argued that because of the latter situation, their effect has been the creation of a disaster manifested by the emergence of a non-sustainable way of life in the region.

Among the proponents of the first view, Russell and Pollock (1993:3) observe that:

Through contact with the British missionaries, (they) came to adopt, along with the Roman alphabet, not only a new set of beliefs and practices, many of them contrary to local traditional ones, but also a way of life on which the material products of industrial Europe impinged. What was probably most shattering in its effect on African societies, based as they were on communal activity and decision-making, was the impact of European ideas of individualism and competition.

This view is also supported by Hydén (1980:41), though from a slightly different perspective. He says:

The most important thing that happened at the time of colonization was the disruption, by default as much as by design, of the man-controlled ecological systems that supported the pre-colonial economies. By undermining these, the colonizers forced the producers into a defensive pos-

ture vis-a-vis nature. The local know-how no longer secured their production.

Whereas it is reported that in all Anglican stations, the Christians worked together on communal farms and were able to harvest and store as many as 2,000 bushels of millet in a season, these successes were never sustainable. One of the indigenous converted Christians, teacher and housewife, Agnes Sapuli of Masasi, often wrote to her mentors in England describing the occurrence of droughts, food shortages and dire famines in the region's hinterland (cf. Russell and Pollock, 1993:10–11, 111). The problem of unreliable and variable rains in the region has not been adequately addressed by development agents to date.

However, the Roman Catholics seem to have been more resourceful. They designed and developed their mission stations to become self-sufficient and self-sustaining in food production and industrial activities. They introduced and involved their converts in new forms of crop and animal husbandry, skills and crafts such as carpentry, masonry, tailoring, blacksmithing and shoemaking. Settlements such as Ndanda, Mnacho and Mnero have more or less retained these qualities to this day. I dare to say that if one is looking for positive Western-development influence, the Roman Catholic centres are the best examples in the region.

On their side, the Anglicans put much of their resources in mass education with a bias on the 3Rs (wRiting, Reading, aRithmetic). In Masasi and Newala districts, they had bush schools (equivalent to rural kindergartens) in almost every other village, primary schools (up to Standard 4) almost every 10–25 kilometers, a few central schools (Standards 5 and 6), and secondary and vocational training schools for those who went beyond Standard 8. The effect of this policy was that in the long run the most "educated natives" deserted the villages because they were "too developed" to live in them. There was "no work" for them, not only in the villages but also in the region. Initially, the church employed all graduates from their training institutions: teachers, medical personnel and priests, to work in the region. By the late 1950s, they had a surplus and were obliged to export that surplus to other Anglican dioceses, e.g. the Diocese of Central Tanganyika. They bypassed the coastal districts of Lindi, Mtwara and Kilwa as well as traditionalist Liwale, where there were no Christian centres.

If we assume that all these external influences were plans for the development of the area, we immediately see that they were ill-conceived, as well as wrongly executed. During the period of Tanganyika's colonization, basically three externally bred designs of development operated in south-eastern Tanzania. One was led by Islamic principles and centred on the coastal districts with isolated posts in the interior. This pattern of development was already entrenched when Europeans arrived in the region, consequently these areas resisted any attempts to be converted to colonially designed development.

The other two designs that developed were those spearheaded by the Christian missionary groups of Roman Catholics and Anglicans. Until the late 1950s, these two groups were often in conflict with each other because of the competition to win more converts to their side. Each one of them accused the other of interference in their spheres of operation to the extent that there was a need to divide the region into two clear and different areas of influence. In principle, the Roman Catholics had to operate north of the Lukuledi river while Anglicans took the south and could cross the Ruvuma into Portuguese East Africa. This left a good part of Newala district east of Tandahimba, Mtwara, Lindi and Kilwa to continue under Islamic influence. Because of the hostility and conflicts that existed between these groups, each area of influence was inward oriented but joined to a metropolis hardly known to the people. This compartmentalization of developmental influences in an already isolated and peripheralized region was unhealthy planning.

The post-independence government tried hard to bring these three compartments together with little success. By the nature of present day development plans, it needs literate people to work in the civil service and guide the implementation of projects and programmes; literate in the sense that they can read the Roman alphabet and preferably the English language, among others. In the government's desire to train its nationals to design development plans and implement them; to be seen as impartial in bilateral relations; and in giving in to big power pressures, it sent Tanzanians to train in various countries irrespective of their development principles. It also accepted planners from various parts of the world, expatriate advisors in government departments or as personnel from donor agencies. To me, this kind of recruitment is a kind of mixed grill policy. While it out-

wardly forms a whole and supposedly integrated meal, one can easily identify the various components. Administrators are not apolitical because they have to interpret the policy as well as execute it. Their interpretations are likely to be influenced by their personal attitudes and background training. This characteristic is not restricted to this region, it is national. Different interpretation of plans brings chaos to the development process.

Unconfirmed reports have it that at independence Masasi district was 85 per cent literate followed by Newala which was about 45 per cent and the rest below 20 per cent. The government decided to nationalize all schools nationwide in order to have the opportunity to control the enrolment, teacher allocation, distribution of funds and standardization of curricula, among other things. In this exercise it was found that Masasi and Newala districts had more teachers and schools than they "needed" at a time when other areas had very few or none. All bush schools and some primary schools were closed down and their teachers moved to the coastal districts in the region and other areas of Tanzania which had teacher shortages. I personally know a lot of teachers from Masasi and Newala districts who were transferred to the Coast region. Many schools in the two districts were turned into experimental one-teacher institutions, an exercise that was quickly dropped. The overall impact of this was deterioration of education in the hinterland of this region, but hopefully it boosted that of the coastal areas. This is poor planning, because a bird in the hand is worth ten in the bush; and you do not always have to destroy what you have built in order to put up new structures. This is the wrong way of bridging the gap between the haves and the have-nots. And, I would be interested to learn whether this exercise was extended to other areas in Tanzania where literacy was high at independence.

Transformation of people's cultural practices becomes much easier if it is directed at young generations and organized in a manner that allows them to practise what is learned in a conducive atmosphere. Traditional, Muslim and Christian educationists did this by either having the teachers reside in the students' settlement or by establishing boarding schools. In this arrangement, students are systematically moulded because they are always under the watchful eyes of their teachers, peers and senior students. This method is particularly useful where the students' background or home facilities do not provide

opportunities for the continuation at home of what is learned in school.

The post-independence education system emphasized the provision of education in day schools particularly for the first 7 or 8 (normative) years. Most teachers had to look for their own accommodation even in rural areas, where essentially there are no rental houses. This was not directed at the region under discussion alone; it was a national policy. Through this poor planning we have missed capturing many young people who have grown up to be no better or worse than their elders. That is not development. The list to illustrate poor planning could continue because there are many examples in the other sectors, but they are not necessarily specific to south-eastern Tanzania.

Inappropriate approach

Hand in hand with poor planning there is an inappropriate approach to planning itself and to the implementation of the plans, i.e. administrators and extension officers. While the former guide policy interpretation and implementation, the latter are the ones who go out (if they do) to the actual implementors, the people.

One of the points missed almost throughout by all development agents in the region is the logic of settlement patterns and natural resource management. Settlement in this region has always been dictated by availability of water and to some degree good soils for cultivation. Demographic control or adjustment had in the past taken cognizance of the need to balance the available water for domestic or agricultural use and the fertility/carrying capacity of the soils. Either a variegated farming system or rainy and dry season crop cultivation or both were employed to realize relatively adequate crop yields and maintain a friendly use of environment. In a lean year, people supplemented this with an extractive economy of hunting, foraging and fishing.

The Muslim "developmentalists" respected this approach to substance; the Roman Catholics were smarter than the Anglicans by choosing areas with assured water supplies. In addition, their forward looking developmental approach and resource management enabled them to stay in the same areas without a deteriorated life. The worst examples of the disregard of the above principles are from the post-

independence era, particularly in the framework of the villagization programme. First, most villages were located in places where both water and land was not enough for the population size that constituted these villages. Within the villages the distribution of land to farmers and the choice of crops to be planted was consonant with neither twentieth century agricultural know-how nor the accumulated knowledge of peasants.

The criticism here is that plan interpretation and implementation should have taken the right course; the provision of appropriate technology, both hard and soft, and effective communication.

The issue of administrators and extension officers as givers of directives from above in the form of orders to be obeyed without question is the main agenda for the Rural Integrated Project Support (RIPS), and I would not like to repeat their observations. However, an extension to this approach and specifically the way it was applied in the region under discussion needs commenting upon. The harsh environmental status of the region was known from the British colonial period and it was sometimes used like a prison. Civil servants who misbehaved elsewhere in the country were sent to this region as a disciplinary measure. This had an effect on the behaviour of these officers in their interaction with the inhabitants: they were either harsh to them or completely uninterested in their work. During the post-independence period, for example, one Regional Commissioner who prided in calling himself Governor instituted corporal punishment without any court warrant, for people he considered disrespectful to him personally. He kept humiliating people when he visited the districts by keeping them waiting for him for as long as eight hours; and by ensuring that the traditional leaders, *mamwenye*, who attended his rallies sat on the ground directly in front of him. This arrogance was also displayed by lower personnel, e.g. divisional executive officers who made defaulters in the cultivation of the prescribed acreage do push-ups or frog-march. These are inappropriate methods for inducing people to adopt otherwise well-intended development projects and programmes.

Some administrators from outside the region came with the preconceived ideas that people in this region are obstinate, proud, arrogant and backward. Like their colonial predecessors, they saw themselves come on a mission to civilize the local population. This attitude did not give room for the establishment of good rapport, which is an

essential element in the transfer of innovations from those who are knowledgeable to the recipients. This attitude is also held by officers from this region who work in districts other than those of their origin.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is evident that no culture survives on negative attributes alone, so the culture of south-eastern Tanzania cannot be held responsible as the sole influence on the region's lack of development. I have tried to demonstrate that there are periods in the course of the history of this region during which new innovations have been accepted and adopted, namely education, religious beliefs, agricultural practices, and the villagization programme. People have built schools and churches, dug many kilometres of trenches to lay pipes for their water supply. What has happened, however, is that these measures have not necessarily been maintained. The blame for this cannot be placed solely on the region's population, because it is reminiscent of both British colonial and post-independence planning. This is why I have great respect at one level for the initiatives of the Roman Catholic church in the region. I venture to suggest that when Nyerere was talking of *Ujamaa* villages, maybe he had in mind something akin to these Catholic centres, centres of progressive and productive communalism of brothers and sisters.

People's participation is important as conceived in the approach that is being advocated now. My caution is that this participation should not always assume that it will satisfy all the people at the same time. Freedom of participation needs to be well guided, so that it does not become a bottleneck to achieving intended goals. There will always be individuals, villages and districts that will lead others, these should be left and guided to place their feet on the next step up the ladder. Similarly, those lagging behind and hesitant should be assisted to adopt the development ideas that suit their needs.

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The saga of the Lindi–Kibiti road: Political ramifications

S. Mesaki and J. Mwankusye

ABSTRACT

The road from Lindi via Kilwa and Kibiti to Dar es Salaam connects southern Tanzania with the capital. The importance of the road was understood a long time ago. Yet a number of causes have prevented a new, modern all weather road from being constructed. Some relate to technical and financial problems. Others relate to the political weight of southern Tanzania and the doubtful commitment of politicians to using their muscle to promote the road project.

In this paper, the authors present the history of the road project in detail. They take the discussion from the early days of independence to the most recent presidential election and trace the historical development. They compare the different factors which have influenced the advancement of the project. Their verdict on the project is that it is a disappointment: regardless of the considerable talk about the road, and substantial investments, the road is still in very bad shape. This has definite impacts on other developments in southern Tanzania.

INTRODUCTION

The southern belt of mainland Tanzania, which covers what is now the Ruvuma, Mtwara and Lindi regions, has the unenviable record of being neglected since colonial days. After independence some effort was made to grapple with the plight of the "Cinderella of the South". One such measure was administrative. At different times Ruvuma, Lindi and Mtwara were established as regional entities. The Ruvuma region has made great strides in development, evidently mainly because of its connection to the main communication routes such as

the Tanzania–Zambia (Tazara) railway and the all-weather road to Dar es Salaam. The Mtwara and Lindi regions, on the other hand, have not benefited much from the fruits of independence for a number of reasons, among others because they bore the brunt of Tanzania's determination to help the liberation struggle in southern Africa particularly Mozambique. This meant that the area was sequestered from the rest of the country and even cut off from external assistance for development. The two regions are also disadvantaged in other ways. Agriculture is still archaic, relying as it does on the Lilliputian hand hoe, the *king'ng'ole*; in addition, there is a lack of infrastructure and the wherewithal for meaningful development.

In the 1970s, Mtwara airport was expanded to handle larger planes and the harbour was extended, to become a sizable commercial seaport with the purpose of serving not only southern Tanzania, but also some parts of Mozambique and landlocked Malawi. Such an eventuality seemed a reality as Mozambique gained independence in 1975 and Malawian President Banda's claims to some parts of Tanzania waned. Yet the resurgence of the civil war in Mozambique, the decline of the overall economy of Tanzania and in particular the calamitous effects of the mid-1970s rural resettlement programme in the country had far reaching consequences on the regions of Mtwara and Lindi. For example, the villagization exercise is claimed to have caused the decline of cashew nut production in Mtwara from 60,376 tonnes in 1973/74 to 6,414 tonnes in 1985/86 (see Mihanjo and Luanda in this book).

These repercussions were exacerbated by the non-completion of the proposed Lindi–Kibiti road. The Lindi–Kibiti road is supposed to become the lifeline of these two regions. Sea and air services are either not available, inadequate or dangerous and, most important of all, not appropriate for purposeful development as far as the ordinary person is concerned.

The road has been on the agenda for too long now (some claim since colonial days, e.g., Nandonde, *Hansard*, July, 1995). Unlike other projects, the Lindi–Kibiti road, though highly profiled, has attracted little foreign assistance. Its non-completion is viewed by many observers (especially southerners) as a result of a lack of political will and a continuation of the colonial pattern of neglecting some and favouring other parts of the country at the expense of and to the detriment of the former (see Wembah–Rashid in this book). It is

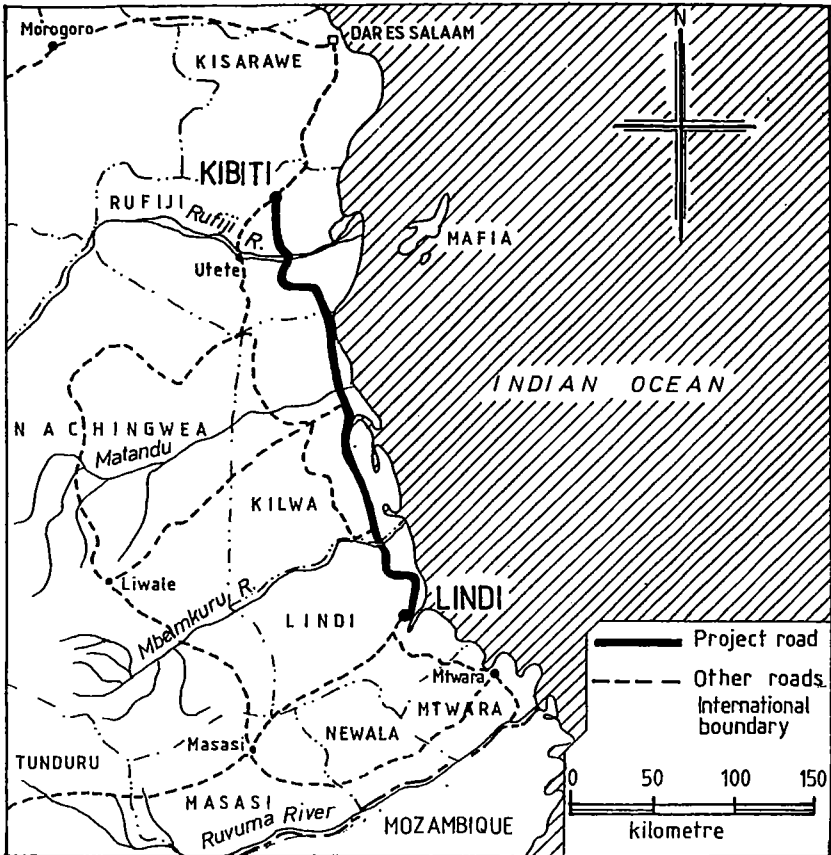
pointed out that, whereas new roads are continually being built in other parts of the country and in certain areas railway lines run parallel with good roads, in the southern regions, the only railway line built by the colonialists was uprooted after *uhuru*.¹ There are other claims maintaining that funds donated for the road are being diverted to other purposes in the country. This paper aims to provide a historical background to the project, the reasons for the road's construction, the problems and progress made in the past quarter century of lacklustre performance, the implications and consequences for the delay, and the future of the project in the light of the current economic crisis of the country. In particular, it underscores the political ramifications arising from the stalled project.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The "Lindi-Kibiti Road" is a long-standing project of the United Republic of Tanzania involving the construction of an all-weather road Kibiti in the Rufiji district of Coast region and Lindi township in the Lindi region, a distance of 330 kms. The successful implementation of the project would make it possible to travel from Dar es Salaam to Lindi/Mtwara all the year round. Currently Mtwara and Lindi are cut off from the rest of the country for up to six months of the year (during the long rains, *Kifuku*).

In 1970 the Tanzanian government approached the government of Japan for help in doing a feasibility study of the building of an all-weather road from Dar es Salaam to Lindi (OTCA, 1971). This was done by the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency which produced a two-volume report in July 1971. The study concluded that the project was practical and achievable at the then cost of Tshs. 261,447,000. As proposed, the project was regarded as beneficial not merely on the basis of economic criteria. Other indirect benefits were to be gained, "... beyond measure, such as improvement of income and cultural levels, promotion of general development, stabilization of the public feeling and improvement in the inhabitants' welfare, plus the relief from the feeling that they are isolated" (OTCA, 1971). These worthy

1. This ill-advised action is viewed as bad luck by the Minister for Works who admitted in Parliament, "... at times in these matters we do not see very far ... sometimes it is not good to lament over past events, let us look for a brighter future" (Kiula in *Hansard*, July 2, 1992, p. 1135).



The Kibiti-Lindi link road project: A location map

goals have not been achieved and the wrath of people from the south is such that in 1993 an outspoken member of parliament from Mtwara region made the threat that the area would consider “pulling out” of Tanzania since, because of neglect, southerners have never “tasted” what being Tanzanian means (Nandonde, Parliamentary Debates, 1993; *Heko*, 22–28 December, 1994, *Tanganyika Leo*, September 5–11, 1993, p. 6).

On another occasion, residents of these two regions tried to pressurize the government into building the road by making contributions of their own to raise funds for the project. Seeing such an accusing finger the then Prime Minister, the late E. Sokoine, stopped these contributions and made a statement to the effect that, like any other large project, the road to the south was a national obligation and therefore it

was the responsibility of the government to undertake it (Sokoine, 1980; Chitope, *Hansard*, 20 June 1987, p. 506). In 1980, the government of Tanzania received an interest-free loan of 150 million Tshs. (2,693 million Yen) from Japan through the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) for the procurement of construction equipment and payment for the services of some Japanese experts on the project.

Implementation of the project began with the establishment of a main base camp at Nangurukuru as soon as the project was commissioned by the premier, E. Sokoine on 17 March 1980. Since the commencement of the project, a number of contractors have been involved in building the road. They range from the Tanzania People's Defence Forces (TPDF) to Japanese volunteers. Currently the local firm, Mwananchi Engineering and Construction Company (MECCO) is the main firm engaged in the construction.

High profile, belated progress

According to the Member of Parliament (MP) for Tandahimba, Mr. S. Nandonde, one feels nauseous when talking of the Lindi-Kibiti road, because of the contrast between the ostensible high profile accorded to the project and the tardy progress made so far (*Hansard*, July, 1995). During the 1992 Budget session (June-August) the Minister for Works, Mr. Kiula told members of parliament (*Hansard*, 8 July 1992, p. 1388),

... for all my time in the government as a Junior Minister, Minister and Regional commissioner, I have never seen a project on which so much emphasis has been put and being inspected by many leaders like the Kibiti-Lindi project (applause).

It was the popular premier, E. Sokoine who initiated the construction of the road in 1980. He died prematurely in April 1984. His successor, Salim A. Salim, after a ten-hour drive from Dar es Salaam down the road to Lindi, pledged the government's intention to complete the road as early as possible (*Daily News*, September 10, 1984). In his address to Lindi residents, S.A. Salim reiterated that the government accepted the challenge to ensure the early completion of the road, but also appealed to residents of the south to raise production and efficiency in agriculture. Later on, another Prime Minister, this time J. Warioba, again

... assured *wananchi* that the government was committed and concerned in building the road ... but it was a huge and expensive project hence patience was needed. ... he also challenged the people in the south to make full use of the road when ready for food and cash crops (*Daily News*, 21 October 1987).

In December 1988, President Mwinyi himself inspected the construction of the road. In his speeches, he requested Lindi and Mtwara residents to be patient for the economic situation was hampering speedy completion of the road. On the same occasion, the President directed Ministry of Works officials to vacate their offices in Dar es Salaam and go into the field to put their knowledge into practice (*Daily News*, 12 December 1988). During another visit to the south, the President is reported to have promised Mtwara residents that the road would be passable all the year round within a period of two years (i.e. with effect from May 1989, Nakuwa in *Hansard*, 30 June 1993, p. 960).

John Malecela also made a foolhardy but incriminatory commitment, when, after becoming Prime Minister in 1990, he promised that the road would be ready by 1992 and that he would be the last Premier to hear complaints about the non-completion of the Lindi-Kibiti road. It is these never-ending but hypocritical promises which offend people from the south, who assuage their feelings by cursing (see for example Chitope's "... kuna balaa gani sijui ... maana kama kungekuwa na dawa ningekwenda kuoga dawa hiyo kuondokana na balaa hilo"¹ (*Hansard*, 26 June 1987, p. 506).

The progress of construction work

According to the Ministry of Communications, Transport and Works, the construction work on the Lindi-Kibiti road has progressed as follows:

1. By September 1989 a total of 51 kms (from *Nangurukuru* towards Kibiti up to *Somanga*) had been constructed up to sub-base level.
2. The *Nangurukuru-Mavuji* section (29.35 kms) was constructed up to bitumen level by MECCO. This section (towards Lindi) was embarked on in the 1989/90 financial year and construction up to sub-base level was completed in 1992/93 with the excep-

1. "What is all this bad luck ... because if there were medicines, I would cleanse myself of such affliction" (author's translation).

- tion of Lingaula bridge. This work is now earmarked for the 1994/95 financial year.
3. *Nangurukuru–Matandu* (10 kms) was started in July 1991 and was due to be completed after one year but problems led to rescheduling of completion to September 1993.
 4. Construction of the third stretch from *Mavuji–Hotel Tatu* (37 kms) started in January 1991 and by June 1993, 18 kms had been improved.
 5. The *Nangurukuru–Kilwa Masoko* section, a distance of 27.35 kms was constructed up to bitumen standard (surface dressing) by MECCO. The contract was signed on 3 December, 1983, and for a period of 30 calendar months. However, various problems such as liquidity problems of the contractor, unavailability of essential inputs such as diesel (among many others) affected the work greatly, thus completion went well beyond schedule, that is July 1991.
 6. Paving of *Nangurukuru–Matandu* (10 kms) was done by MECCO. The work which started in July 1991 was to cost Tshs. 326,849,510 and the duration was given as one year. The main problems were unavailability of funds, e.g. first quarter funds were released in 1992/93. As a result such completion was rescheduled for September 1993.
 7. Work on the *Njenga–Masaninga* stretch, also to be done by MECCO, was expected to start in September 1993.

To speed up the work, the ministry allocated sections to different contractors:

- (i) *Kibiti–Ikwiriri* section (29 kms) was awarded to the contractor J. Riepel of Germany and funds came from Saudi Arabia. This is to be built to bitumen standard.
- (ii) *Ikwiriri–Nyamwage*, a distance of 19 kms, involving the construction of an embankment plus drainage structures is being undertaken by a special unit of the ministry based at Ikwiriri.
- (iii) *Nyamwage–Marendego* (32 kms) is under routine/periodic maintenance by the Regional Engineer, Coast Region.
- (iv) *Marendego–Somanga* (15 kms) is under the Regional Engineer, Lindi, who is responsible for routine and periodic maintenance.
- (v) *Somanga–Masaninga* (31 kms) and *Nangurukuru–Mavuji* (30 kms). Construction of these sections is said to have been completed up

to sub-base level by the Force Account Unit (FAU) of the ministry based at Nangurukuru. The sections were handed over to the Regional Engineer, Lindi for maintenance purposes in October, 1992. The FAU is still constructing the Lingaula bridge and is back-filing the Ukuli bridge approaches.

- (vi) *Masaninga–Nangurukuru* section (23.3 kms). With the exception of the Matandu river basin (3.2 kms), this section was initially constructed up to sub-base level by the FAU. Now, MECCO, which was awarded the contract in July 1991, is said to be doing the paving for the Matandu/Nangurukuru stretch of 10 kms and work on the other 10 kms from Masaniga to Njenga was to have started in September 1993.
- (vii) The *Nangurukuru–Kilwa Masoko* section, a distance of 29.35 kms was to be given a surface dressing by MECCO and hence was handed over to the Regional Engineer, in Lindi, in October 1992.
- (viii) The *Mavuji–Mandawa* section (37 kms) is being constructed and newly realigned by the FAU of Nangurukuru. Eighteen kilometres are said to have been completed up to sub-base level.
- (ix) *The Mandawa–Lindi* section (95 kms) is under the Regional Engineer, Lindi, who is responsible for routine and periodic maintenance.

The true condition of the Lindi–Kibiti road

Below is an extract from the diary of a recent traveller from Lindi to Dar es Salaam, which testifies to the fact that the alleged progress is deceptive (with the kind permission of R.M.).

Live experiences from Lindi to Dar es Salaam by road

July, 1995. The Lindi–Dar es Salaam road has been talked about as an example of abject negligence to the extent that it has been linked to the underdevelopment of the southern regions. In actual fact, apart from scattered bits and pieces of good road, the road is pathetic. ... The trip starts with a tarmac road within Lindi town which ends up where the entry to the town is, marked with a gate-like structure symbolising the occasion of the “1990 Peasants Day Celebrations” ... from there, up to 30 kms across Ngongo mountains, the road is made up of patched tarmac and gravel up to the Kikwetu sisal estates where the aerodrome is located—the part along the sisal estate has been maintained quite well but just after its boundaries, you find a rough road with some signs of construction, loads

of gravel scattered here and there showing that they were dumped since the last rains.

Up to Mchinga village, we crossed three bridges which have no signs at all, which is very dangerous. Next, D.B. Shapriya (a building contractor) has aligned the road with "fake" tarmac for a short stretch of about 25 kms; but the April 1995 rains have spoiled all that and the road has been eroded. Then there is a dusty stretch from Mlima Matandu, the road is a quandary with craters in the middle of the road and the edges strewn with lumps of gravel dumped since May 1995.

Then comes the Matandu bridge, a long bailey bridge which the nearby residents claim is somehow associated with the war with Amin of Uganda! Once you reach Mandawa, 60 kms from Lindi, you start to encounter "international" craters which travellers have nicknamed "trials" (*mahakama*) and the story of the series of these ordeals begins after the Kitimani-Mandawa bridge. Then there is the Ntauka bridge being constructed by the Ministry of Works since 1990. Local residents wonder why the bridge is not completed in time while at the same time houses for those involved in the task are being built! From Nangurukuru, there is fine tarmac for some 9 kms and then suddenly you meet another series of craters as you approach trial number 4, Mbwemkuru. Mbwemkuru is located in a valley 5-6 km long. This is the greatest of the trials on which a lot of stories are based. For example, in May, 1995, the valley was filled with rain water for a stretch of about 4 kms. Drivers arriving at this spot were obliged to part with about Tshs. 10,000 or more to allow the car to be manoeuvred by youths through the ditch up to the other side of the valley. It is said that the drivers sealed their exhaust pipes with plastic bags and remained in their cars with their engines turned off. The youths would then push each vehicle forward with their hands, manoeuvring them between two mango trees that formed a safe path in the water up to a point when the level of water dropped and the driver could drive off. After this tribulation there is another patch of relatively good road for 3 kms, which leads you to Kipatimu I & II.

All this area is full of corrugations, but maybe "corrugation" is not the right term for these astonishing gullies along the road. One such depression measured 1 metre deep x 3 metres long. Such gullies are the norm. And some of them are still filled with water. Then you arrive at trial number 7 at Miteja Kibaoni, where depressions stretch for about a kilometre. Drivers have to be very careful in aligning their cars so that the underside does not get damaged by the "ups and downs". Thus the driving is very slow, tiring and punishing to the car/driver. It is only after getting into the Coast region that you go through ordinary corrugations.

Another eyewitness is Mr. J. Mwami, who travelled from Dar es Salaam to Mtwara on the Kibiti-Lindi road between 1 and 3 November, 1995. His account resembles the one narrated above. He concludes with the following note, and we quote: "So far out of the 340 kms or so of the Lindi-Kibiti road, only 40 kilometres have been bituminised. The rest is still earth road and unmaintained and hence in a deplorable condition."

This is corroborated by the member of Parliament for Lindi (Urban), M. Chitende who contends that only 42 kms of the 350 Lindi-Kibiti road can be said to have been built to an acceptable standard, i.e. tarmac and durable (*Hansard*, 22 June, 1995).

Problems of construction work

The truth is that the road is still impassable during all the seasons. There are many reasons for the delay. Some of them follow.

Shortage and frequent breakdown of equipment

Breakdown of construction equipment, the plants and vehicles has been mentioned as hindering progress. Most of the plants are reported to have mechanical problems and they are often at a standstill due to a shortage of spare parts. For example, the spot improvement work in Mavuji-Mandawa section was said to have been greatly affected by the unavailability of bulldozers and few vehicles were available due to a shortage of tyres. The only water bowser was said to be too old and thus operated on and off, the water pump being the main snag. Most trucks (tippers, browsers and crane trucks) were rendered useless due to lack of tyres. At one time, the breakdown of an excavator affected work on the two-span Lingaula bridge. This work was also complicated in that underground water posed a problem of some sort and because the river could not be deviated from its course (see File RP/4.A/44/93, para 2.2.1). The construction of the same section was affected when only a small amount of work was done on laying the sub-basement due the unavailability of a bulldozer. On many occasions, some of the vehicles were not available for they were allegedly hauling cement or were hired out to the contractor to supplement "out of order" vehicles. In this case, only two hundred metres (200 m) were covered with an output for 1200 m³. For a long time, CW 3757 had engine trouble, the stone crusher CW 3804 stopped for a consid-

erable period due to failure of its vibrating screen, and it needed replacement of the bearings and seal. The motor grinder CW 3711 was also crippled by hydraulic system problems. Repair and maintenance have been most affected by lack of funds allocated to the ministry from year to year (2.5.1). Problems with contractors (for example lack of quarry sites) loom and have affected progress. There is a lack of suitable construction material (*udongo*), which has to come from a long way away. Equipment bought since 1980 is obviously too old now. The only source of spares was a 2 million USD fund established since the 1988/89 period, whereas the actual amount needed is 12 million USD. Local sources were not enough; thus only 63 per cent of the requirements were provided in 1991/92 financial year.

Abundant but dubious contractors

The ministry concerned started with the Tanzania People's Defence Forces (TPDF). Then MECCO came to dominate the picture and the ministry's own unit was also involved. An irking question is why is it that in other important projects, tenders are floated and competent contractors hired, but in the Lindi-Kibiti case, the only contractor of international repute is Josef Riepl Bau A.G. who tendered for a short (30 kms) stretch near Kibiti. As Y. Abdallah asked:

Can the government say why other roads get competent usually foreign contractors to construct, but Kibiti-Lindi always fetches contractors we all know to have no competence. A foreign or competent contractor in this road is given a short stretch, no more ... Prime Ministers come and go, visit the Kibiti-Lindi road; just to visit, as no construction is going on. Elsewhere the same Prime Ministers inspect and inaugurate completed roads (*Business Times*, 12-18 May, 1995).

Sarcastically, Abdallah says that the road should be made a museum item and that the southerners, who walked in support of the Arusha Declaration in 1967, might now walk the same old road in support of multi-partyism (see below).

The ministry concerned boasts of having a local firm, MECCO, as its main contractor on the Lindi-Kibiti road. But MECCO is considered by many as good only for building houses and not roads (*Hansard*, Nkanyama, July 3, 1992, p. 1218). The government also took contradictory stands when a Deputy Minister differed with the country's President on the role of foreign contractors. In mid-December 1988, Mr. Jared Ghachocha (MP-Ngara), when inspecting the road

with an advisory team from his ministry, stated that the government, "... had decided to use foreign contractors to construct the Ikwiriri-Muhoro (section) road" (*Daily News*, 16 December, 1988). A few days later he was rebuked by the President who asked, "... for how long would the country continue depending on foreign contractors while there are well qualified and competent engineers" (*Daily News*, 20 December, 1988).

Weather

From the beginning, the Japanese had cautioned about the effects of East African weather (too much rain and fierce heat) on construction. The weather has also been responsible for giving false hopes about the state of the road. 1994 was a relatively "dry" year and motorists drove along the road without much hindrance. This was, of course, deceptive. The President, who inspected the road that year, made a statement to the effect that the road was passable, which is not true, as the experiences of many travellers have shown.

High costs, pathetic funding

Funding has always been the major problem facing this road. The original cost has been overtaken by inflation and is no longer the yardstick for estimates. While annual allocations from the government have always been meagre, foreign donors are few and non-committal. In 1984, a member from Nachingwea caused laughter in parliament when he cited a discrepancy in government estimates relating to the road in question. He quoted a vote requested by the Minister of Agriculture of 50 million shillings in 1983/84 the financial year for demarcating routes for livestock destined for the same southern areas. On the other hand, the ministry of works was asking for 28 million shillings only for the Lindi-Kibiti road (*Hansard*, Maokola-Majogo, 18 June, 1984, 210-211). Apart from the earlier insignificant funds from Japan, the only sources of financing for the road have been the Africa Development Bank, the Arab Bank, Saudi Arabia and, recently, the government of Kuwait. The Kuwait fund has offered 27 million USD for the entire Dar es Salaam-Kibiti-Lindi road. But even such colossal amounts are inadequate when it is realized for example that the four major bridges along the route require 95 million USD (*Daily News*, 24 February, 1995; Gachocha in *Hansard*, 11 July, 1989, p. 1598; Kiula in

National Assembly aired on Radio Tanzania, Dar es Salaam 30 June, 1995).

Deviations from the original proposals

The Japanese recommendation was to "... start the work all at once throughout the entire route and complete the whole work in the shortest possible time". Noting that funding was the main bottleneck, they had also advised beginning with the Rufiji bridge for the easy transportation of materials and equipment. This is because the Rufiji river/valley constitutes the greatest cause of interruption to traffic during the rainy season. It was argued that such a bridge and subsequent work advanced towards the south, would facilitate the easy transportation of construction materials and equipment. All work on bridges and viaducts should be done first, to reduce the construction period and avoid the influence of rain. It was also recommended that route two was the most feasible. Route two runs from Kibiti to the Ndundu ferry, the bridge over the Rufiji, then to Nyamwage via Muhoro to Mbwemkuru, on to Kiranjeranje and then to Lindi a distance of 319 miles.

It is evident that the above guidelines, which were provided in the initial feasibility study, have not been adhered to. But since all this seems to be too much technical information, we want to conclude by looking at the political repercussions arising from the non-completion of the road to the south.

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

"Marching Guys" and the race to State House

There are implications arising from the delay in the completion of the Lindi-Kibiti road which will certainly have an impact on the Tanzanian political scene. The first is the *machinga* phenomenon. *Wamachinga* are small-scale traders who allegedly originate from the southern regions of Tanzania and do business in Dar es Salaam. They arrive in the city, using the Lindi-Kibiti road when it is passable during the dry season, and fail to go back because of the state of the road for a good part of the year (six months). Since the early 1990s they have taken advantage of the liberalization of the economy whereby

they buy items from Asian-owned shops in the city and trade the goods mainly in the Kariakoo area (Congo Street) but they also "march" selling their wares all over the city. On two occasions, these "marching guys" have clashed with the police, resulting in their forced removal from Kariakoo. This annoyed the apparent "internal refugees" most of whom are said to originate from the underdeveloped south (see A. Khalid in *Uhuru*, 30 December, 1994, p. 7). The political repercussions arising from the handling of the *machinga* may be felt in the forthcoming elections.

In 1984, an MP from the south and later on a Deputy Minister for Communications, Works and Transport, Mr. E. Maokola-Majogo was naive enough to say in parliament that the road to the south was not a political issue, but a project of vital economic necessity for the whole country. In 1987, the most vocal of the parliamentarians from the south, Mr. S. Nandonde sounded a warning about the consequences resulting from the non-completion of the road. In 1993, he made an unexpected suggestion, namely that, since southerners have never "tasted" being Tanzanian communication-wise, they should look for another state towards the south. This was tantamount to a call to secede. In 1994, a weekly newspaper declared, "the Lindi-Kibiti fiasco shall only become important when government faces an electoral test and must show results on this matter" (*Business Times*, 8 April, 1994). Another MP from the south, Mr. Chitope admonished the government on its 30 years of dilly-dallying with the Lindi-Kibiti road and cautioned:

We are approaching election period ill-omened. You can say southern votes are of no use. But I can tell you they can make a whole difference (*Hansard*, 22 June, 1995).

Lt. Col. A. Ngayaga, MP for Liwale, referring to "abuses" suffered by southerners at the hands of the past governments and the current regime warned, "You (the government) are looking for trouble in the coming elections". He reminded MPs that the only railway line in the south was removed after independence; the proposed fertilizer manufacturing factory in Kilwa has apparently been shelved; and now the gas discovered in the south (Songosongo) is to be transported by pipeline to Dar es Salaam for generating electricity. He, therefore, did not see why another contestant could not win the next elections because of this neglect.

As early as 1992, the CCM MPs were made aware of the gains being made by opposition parties as a result of the stalled road project (see *Hansard*, Chitope, 29 June, 1992, p. 779). Indeed, the general elections of 1995 brought the Lindi–Kibiti road onto the political agenda and the presidential race, pitching the NCCR-Mageuzi candidate, Mr. A. Mrema against the CCM southerner Mr. B. Mkapa will be exciting. Mr. Mkapa in his acceptance speech for the CCM mandate to contest the post of President, listed five areas of concern which needed his attention if elected (*Uhuru*, 25 July, 1995). According to him, one of the pressing problems he noticed during his visits up country was the perception in certain areas, especially on the periphery, that the people had been disregarded and neglected by their CCM government(s). The NCCR candidate (who had defected from CCM only a few months earlier) picked the Lindi–Kibiti road as the focus of one of his crusades and it seems it has paid political dividends. Mrema argues that Mr. Mkapa who, like former Premier and Vice-President R. Kawawa, hails from the south, has no interest in helping his fellow southerners. He cites the example of the uprooting of the Mtwara–Nachingwea railway line, and asked why Kawawa was silent when it was removed. Being so close to Nyerere, he ought to have ensured that the road to the south was built. Instead, Mrema said, the same leaders, including Mkapa who for a long time also worked in a senior post under Nyerere, have been instrumental in bringing development to the northern parts of the country, whereas, according to Mrema, the south became “hell” on earth. Former president, Julius Nyerere, saw the threat posed by Mrema to the CCM candidate and met him to deflect him from contesting the coveted State House post. A lot of people are not happy with the way Nyerere is trying to assist his former student to be elected as president. Since southerners know very well how close Kawawa was to Nyerere and that the Lindi–Kibiti road was not built, by either Nyerere or Mwinyi, they might give their votes to the opposition candidate, votes which could be crucial in catapulting Mrema to the presidency.¹ That would cause a political and constitutional crisis, because it is certain that CCM parliamentarians will constitute the majority in the National Assembly. And Hon. Maokola-Majogo will understand how political the road to the south is!

1. See postscript.

Postscript

This study was written before the general elections of October, 1995. The elections began with the exercise of electing representatives in the isles and the Zanzibar president on 22 October, 1995. The elections of members for the union's National Assembly (*Bunge*) and the national President were held on 29 October, 1995. Due to many irregularities, which became apparent on election day, the elections in the Dar es Salaam region were cancelled and had to be held a second time on 19 November, 1995. The three opposition presidential candidates (Mrema, Lipumba and Cheyo) announced that they were pulling out of the final poll for Dar es Salaam, claiming that there was foul play in the whole exercise. The excitement and fever which had characterized the campaign and election periods ebbed with the "withdrawal" of Mr. A. Mrema. His decision was not accepted by the National Election Commission. It is certain that some Dar es Salaam voters did cast their votes in favour of the opposition candidates, despite the confusion which ensued. When the counting was completed it became clear that the CCM candidate (Mr. Mkapa) had won by 61.8 per cent against Mr. Mrema's 27.8 per cent (*Uhuru*, 10 November, 1995 p. 7). The percentages for the "southern" votes were as follows:

Table 1. Results of the 1995 provincial elections in the southern regions

| Region | CCM (Mkapa) | NCCR (Mrema) | UDP | CUF |
|--------|-------------|--------------|------|------|
| Lindi | 85.20 | 7.93 | 1.42 | 5.45 |
| Mtwara | 89.15 | 5.11 | 1.76 | 3.98 |
| Ruvuma | 77.81 | 18.84 | 1.16 | 2.19 |

Source: *Uhuru*, 10 November, 1995 p. 5

The reasons for Mr. Mkapa's victory in the presidential race are many. The major impetus was provided by retired President Julius Nyerere who campaigned vigorously for Mr. Mkapa as the only person who would fight against evils like corruption, tribalism and religious strife. With regard to the overwhelming number of votes from the south, it is clear that Mrema's ridicule of and innuendos made against his opponent did not make a substantial impact on the southerners' vote, when they had a chance to have their own son in State House. A look at the cabinet list shows that Mr. Mkapa has rewarded them with important portfolios. The Minister for Works (responsible for road

construction) is a southerner, the Finance Minister comes from Songea and the Minister for Defence (Mr. Majogo) hails from Lindi region.

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Poverty reduction in Mtwara–Lindi 1972–95. A history of paradigm shifts

Timo Voipio

ABSTRACT

Shifts in global development thinking during the past twenty-five years are analysed in this chapter in the context of the Mtwara and Lindi regions of southern Tanzania. A comparison of Finnish and British professional development planners' approaches to reducing rural poverty reveals interesting differences as well as clear reflections of global fashion. Two drastically different perceptions of "integrated" rural development are identified: one where integration takes place on the planner's desk and the other where outside support for local initiatives and aspirations appears as a meaningful whole to the rural poor. Donor organizations that depend on successful projects to sustain themselves have for years found it safer to define problems and to measure achievements in their own terms, rather than by trying to learn from the poor about what type of lives and capabilities they hope for and aspire to. This chapter encourages donors to be sensitive in their analysis of difference at the aid encounter. In addition, the strengths and weaknesses of central and local government institutions as channels for poverty reduction are compared. Recent changes in Tanzania's political climate, including multi-partyism, suggest that local councils can become important forums where various local interests, perceptions and visions of desired social change could be democratically negotiated among local people as well as between them and outsiders. Participation could facilitate relevance, feasibility, ownership, sustainability, and legitimacy in rural development cooperation.

INTRODUCTION

In the Arusha Declaration of 1967, newly independent Tanzania declared war against poverty, ignorance and disease. Finland joined Tanzanian forces in this war on the south-eastern frontier, in Mtwara and Lindi regions, as other Western donors did in other parts of the country. Since 1972, the assault on poverty in Mtwara–Lindi has been an important training ground for troupes of professional Finnish development planners and a source of learned lessons about rural development for headquarters in Helsinki.

Images of the enemy (poverty) and ways of defeating it (alleviation, reduction or eradication) have changed considerably over the years, with rapidly rotating commanders (or consultants) in charge.¹ To win the war on all fronts, an integrated approach has been favoured by generations of planners, but perceptions have varied as to what should be integrated, and with what. Integration requires knowledge, but there are conflicting perceptions as to whose knowledge should count, and for whose purposes more data should be collected. This question is important, because knowledge is power.

In this chapter, the roles of donors, central government regional authorities and local governments are discussed in the context of communication, empowerment and ownership. It is argued that there is inadequate knowledge about, and bias against, local governments as focal points for effective rural development and poverty alleviation. The unavoidable scaling down of government expenditures and structures (especially at the regional level) may before long lead to major rethinking about and transformation of the roles of regional authorities, as central government satellites, and district councils, as democratic institutions accountable to local constituencies.

Latterly, bottom-up planning approaches as advocated by some donors, and the potential (for many) or threat (for some) of multi-partyism have provided a growing role for the local people of Mtwara–Lindi in identifying the enemy (poverty) and in deciding how to fight it—or live with it.

1. The military language in this article on poverty and development cooperation is no coincidence. FINNIDA's policies on poverty alleviation, like those of most other Western donors, have been strongly influenced by the thinking of one of the main strategists of the US army in the Vietnam war, Robert McNamara. He later became the director of the World Bank, and had a remarkable influence on the birth of a universal Western "donor regime of truth" about the nature of Southern poverty and development aid's role in reducing it.

PLANNING FOR RURAL POVERTY REDUCTION

Alleviation, reduction or eradication of poverty has been the stated first priority of most global and national development institutions throughout decades of development work.

In the World Summit for Social Development in March 1995, the heads of state of 118 member countries of the United Nations committed themselves to the goal of "eradicating poverty in the world as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind" (UN, 1995). They declared year 1996 to be the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty.

According to a former president of the World Bank, "the basic mission of the World Bank and the core of its assistance program is the reduction of poverty" (Conable, 1991). His successor put it this way: "Sustainable poverty reduction is the overarching objective of the World Bank. It is the benchmark by which our performance as a development institution will be measured" (Preston, 1992).

For the Government of Finland, "reduction of the widespread poverty in the developing countries" is the first of the three fundamental objectives of Finnish development assistance (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1993).

In Tanzania, one of the poorest countries of the world, "sustainable poverty reduction has been one of Tanzania's major development goals" (REPOA, 1995). For the European Union, for many national development agencies of rich countries and for most governments of poor countries, the stated focus of all development efforts is the campaign against poverty (Hårstad and Silberberg, 1995).

In light of all these declarations and commitments, one is tempted to ask what the world would be like if all these powerful institutions succeeded in their joint "assault on poverty"? (World Bank, 1975) What would Futures beyond Poverty be like? What is the opposite of poverty, that is, a state where poverty is absent? To be able to answer this, we need to know what poverty is, and how it is understood and measured or evaluated. In the academic world there is no such thing as "poverty science", but in the grey zone between "academia" and governmental and commercial development agencies, a great volume of literature and administrative documents about poverty have been published, all trying to answer these crucial and difficult questions.

As we have seen, poverty reduction is not a new theme on the international development agenda. There have been—and still are—

many who are not poor who are willing to write and talk about those who are. Reduction of poverty—or increasing welfare—is a fundamental objective of every sustainable society. Any attempt at deeper understanding of these issues easily leads one to questions about values and value contradictions, with inherent conflicts between citizens as well as between universal and situational values. One is also led to questions about political power to decide which values, and whose values, should apply. Beyond this, there are unavoidable epistemological questions regarding the potential and limits of knowledge, measurement and precision. Poverty science, if it existed, would necessarily differ from any other contemporary science.

I have elsewhere introduced and assessed the central concepts and methods most commonly used in conventional poverty literature (Malaska and Voipio, Forthcoming). In this chapter, I focus my attention on the approaches taken by generations of European and Tanzanian partners in the Mtwara and Lindi regions of Tanzania to rural poverty reduction. What has the development community in Mtwara and Lindi learned about poverty, or its alleviation, either through local trial-and-error or from international development dialogues “trickling down” from Western universities and donor agencies to “bush-level” encounters between European “developers”, Tanzanian officials and local men and women, young and old, in the villages of Mtwara and Lindi? My observations are mainly focused on encounters between Finns and Tanzanians, both because I am a Finn and because Mtwara–Lindi has for twenty-five years been a key training ground for Finnish rural development planners. Furthermore, though a minor donor to Tanzania as a whole, Finland has long been the most important donor in Mtwara and Lindi. Other important donors in Mtwara–Lindi have been the British Overseas Development Authority (ODA), UNICEF, the World Bank and German Catholic missionaries.

The dominant definition of poverty today is summarized in the internationally authoritative World Bank Poverty Reduction Handbook: “Poverty is conventionally measured by the *income* and *expenditure* levels that can sustain a bare minimum standard of living” (World Bank, 1992). But high incomes and consumption cannot alone guarantee the absence of poverty, as the Handbook concludes: “Poverty is not just measured by income and consumption. Health, life expectancy, access to clean water, and so on are central dimensions of welfare”.

This broadened definition is formally widely approved, but seems to be too complicated, to be included in newspaper headlines or speeches by heads of state, political leaders or diplomats. They prefer to repeat the morally affecting declarations about the ... "over one-fifth of the world population, i.e., 1.3 billion members of the human race, who still live in poverty, with incomes of less than *one dollar* per day, without jobs, without basic necessities, without hope, in short: in conditions *below human dignity*" (UN, 1995).

Statistically registered incomes reveal that most inhabitants of the Lindi and Mtwara regions of south-eastern Tanzania earn less than 0.15 USD per day. According to the employment authorities, most of them have no jobs and they lack many so called basic necessities. Thus, according to the cosmopolitan, non-poor, development-diplomats' official statistics, nine out of ten inhabitants of Lindi region are absolutely poor, and are deprived of all human dignity.

Although this is the "official truth" on the scales of most Northern development agencies, this "truth" has its problems. Obviously no one has asked the people of Lindi and Mtwara whether they agree or not with the official truth. How do they perceive poverty? Would incomes over the one-dollar-per-day threshold relieve them of poverty in their own view?

For Finns, Tanzania has for many years typified "a poor developing country". The fact that much of Finland's development aid during the past twenty-five years has been channelled to the remote south-eastern corner of the Tanzania has been a source of pride to Finns. They have regarded this as evidence of the ethically respectable poverty-orientation of Finnish development assistance. In Mtwara and Lindi regions, generations of Finnish rural development planners have had an opportunity to try to give effect to their knowledge about appropriate means and methods of reducing rural poverty.

This chapter is an introduction to an empirical research project intended to find out, through participatory reflection with Tanzanian and Finnish informants, how perceptions of poverty and its reduction have changed over 25 years of Finnish-Tanzanian cooperation in south-east Tanzania. The project is also intended to establish how far Northern planners' definitions of poverty and human dignity correspond with the perceptions of the "objects" of planning work, the "officially poor" villagers of Lindi and Mtwara. Additionally, identify-

ing the sources of Tanzanian planners' and politicians' planning information about poverty will be attempted.

I briefly discuss the history of the Finnish–Tanzanian encounter, mainly in Mtwara–Lindi. I do not focus on Tanzania alone, but try to place this aid relationship in the context of changes in Finnish and Tanzanian society and ways of thinking during the past twenty-five years. I ask whether there has been anything peculiarly Finnish in the approaches of Finnish planners in Mtwara–Lindi. Some conceptual discussion follows about “integrated rural development planning”, “absolute” and “relative poverty” and about “emic” (local) perceptions on poverty. I pose questions about the relative appropriateness of central, regional and local government structures and NGOs as agents and channels for poverty reduction.

FINNISH PLANNING FOR TANZANIA'S DEVELOPMENT

Finland's development cooperation with Tanzania started in 1961 (Porvali et al., 1995), when Finland, together with other Nordic countries, began to negotiate with the newly independent Republic of Tanganyika about possible forms of future development cooperation. In 1962, an agreement to construct an educational training centre in Kibaha was signed. Initially, the Finnish contribution to Tanzanian development was mainly part of the joint Nordic initiative. In 1968, planning of another joint Tanzanian–Nordic project, the Uyole Agricultural Centre in Mbeya, began, and Finland was to administer it. That year, Finland started recruiting Finnish experts for various tasks in Tanzania, particularly for water and construction activities.

Tanzania has since then been the major recipient of Finnish development assistance. The decision to target Tanzania rested on a number of factors. The newly independent country's efforts at nation-building, as expressed in President Nyerere's speeches and writings, evoked interest in Finland, because of the parallels with Finnish history and the construction of Finnish national identity. Tanzania's policies, notably the Arusha Declaration of 1967, were seen as progressive and conducive to fast economic development as well as social justice (Nyerere, 1968; Huida, 1988). There was a widespread belief that development aid would be only a temporary operation, after which the nations of North and South could engage in diverse mutual cooperation as equal partners.

Many other donors selected Tanzania as a major partner too. In Finland's case, the decisive factor, however, was that other Nordic countries, pioneers in development cooperation activity, strongly focused on Tanzania. This offered Finland, a newcomer with limited administrative and financial resources for foreign aid, a chance to learn about Tanzania and about being a donor. (At that stage, unlike her western neighbours, Finland herself was still a net recipient of international assistance.) In the 1960s, Finland joined the other Nordic countries in assisting Tanzania by focusing on areas of specific Nordic competence and in accordance with Tanzanian interest in "the war against poverty, ignorance and disease" (Nyerere, 1968). Unknown to most Finns outside the Ministry for Foreign Affairs was that, contrary to all rhetoric, the greatest part of Finnish aid funding to Tanzania in the 1960s and 1970s was spent, not on primary education or basic healthcare, but on parastatal industries, followed by mining and construction (Porvali et al., 1995).

The then combined Mtwara–Lindi region became the target of Finnish assistance in the early 1970s during the burden-sharing negotiations between various Northern donors and the government of Tanzania. The Second Tanzanian Five Year Plan (1969–74) had identified the lack of rural water supplies as a serious bottleneck in the development of the interior of Mtwara (including Lindi).

In the past, investment in rural water supplies has been rather low over the whole Region and this has been a major handicap to settlement especially in the dry interior. Large parts of the interior, where water is a major problem, (only 5 persons per sq.mile in Nachingwea¹) are virtually uninhabited. In the future, particular attention must be given to supplying water to Ujamaa villages, new settlements and agricultural projects in the interior. (United Republic of Tanzania, 1970).

Along lines proposed in the Second Tanzanian Five Year Plan, a Finnish team of water surveyors started in 1972 to prepare a water master plan for the rural areas of Mtwara–Lindi region. The planning activities were followed after 1976 by the implementation of a major rural water supply and sanitation development project, managed by a Finnish consultancy consortium, Finnwater Ltd. Finnwater was a permanent feature of the landscape of Mtwara and Lindi until

1. Nachingwea district in those days comprised not only the area of the present Nachingwea district, but also the whole of today's Liwale district, which is still very sparsely populated.

September 1993, when the final Phase VII of the project was (slightly abruptly) terminated.

Planning was a central concept in Nordic-Tanzanian cooperation in the late 1960s and in the 1970s. According to Nyerere, the war against poverty required careful planning, loyalty and self-discipline from all citizens. This was the only way to curb capitalistic tendencies and the colonial exploitation of Tanzanian society (Nyerere, 1968).

The most ambitious effort of planned development in the early years of Tanzania's independence was the villagization campaign, or "*Operesheni Vijijini*". This entailed the resettlement of huge numbers of scattered rural households into dense rural settlements called "Ujamaa villages". The poor and marginal south-eastern regions of Lindi and Mtwara became a testing ground for the villagization campaign soon after the Arusha Declaration. By 1974, the campaign had been implemented there more comprehensively than anywhere else in Tanzania. Figure 1 shows that in 1970 nearly every second resettled Tanzanian (46 per cent) was an inhabitant of Mtwara or Lindi regions, and that 38 per cent of all Ujamaa villages were in the south-east. By 1974, the pace of villagization had intensified in other regions as well. Even so, 28 per cent of Ujamaa villages and 29 per cent of villagized people lived in Lindi or Mtwara regions. The continuing war against the colonial government of Mozambique gave Tanzanian leaders an extra reason for collecting the rural population of the border zone, Mtwara region, into controllable and defensible villages (Hydén, 1980; Mapolu and Philipson, 1984; Huida, 1988).

The 1970s were the golden decade of professional planning in Finland too. Exceptional numbers of an exceptionally large generation, born soon after the Second World War in rural Finland and educated in several new universities, got interesting jobs as planners of the great transformation of Finnish society. The 1960s and 1970s saw a wave of urbanization and rapid modernization in the economically growing Finnish welfare society. There was much planning to be done by the rural-rooted urban planners, planners of state-led social welfare services, regional economic planners in rural regions which had to adapt to the modern world following serious out-migration, education planners of the new schooling systems, etc. Some of the bravest young planners were attracted to the challenge of doing what Swedish, Norwegian and Danish planners had already started: planning development cooperation projects in "underdeveloped" Africa.

What perhaps distinguished Finnish professional development planners from their Nordic—or British—colleagues was the fact that many Finns still had living memories of poverty, for example during the World War. Moreover, some planners may have been influenced by oral family histories of relatives who had really starved to death either during the Finnish Civil War of 1918 or during the Great Finnish Famine, 1867/68.

THE GLOBAL MODEL: INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

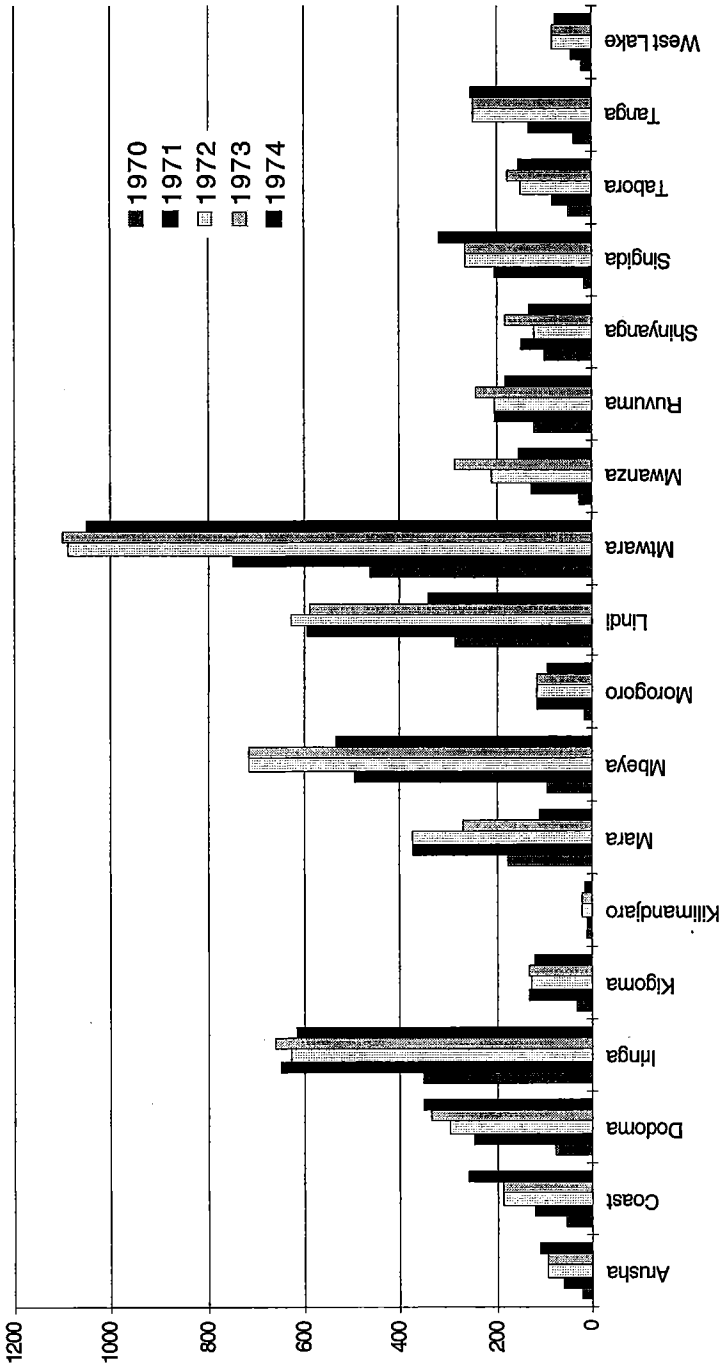
In July 1974, immediately after the main population movements of *Operesheni Vijijini* had been completed in Mtwara and Lindi, two teams of Finnish planners arrived in these regions, one team to each region. Their task was to prepare integrated development plans for the two regions for the Third Tanzanian Five Year-planning period, 1975/76-1979/80. This arrangement stemmed from negotiations between the office of the prime minister and second vice president of the United Republic of Tanzania and the then ambassador (now president) of the Republic of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari.

What made the Finnish planners think they knew something the Tanzanians did not know better themselves?

Finnish planners' efforts to identify development opportunities for Mtwara and Lindi must be understood as a part of a long continuum of development planning for these two regions. The postwar government had already embarked on major development schemes in the area, trying to establish a megalomaniac groundnut scheme in Nachingwea, linking Nachingwea to Mtwara by railway, and improving port facilities at Mtwara to meet high demand for groundnut exports. In fact, the present town of Mtwara came into being as a part of the ambitious British plan. The groundnut scheme, however collapsed for economic reasons¹ before the end of colonial rule in Tanganyika.

1. The feasibility analysis of the groundnut scheme was based on unrealistically optimistic assumptions about world market prices for groundnuts. From the beginning till the bitter end, export prices could never cover production costs in Nachingwea. See Lord, 1963).

Figure 1: Number of Ujamaa villages in Tanzania 1970-74 (Source: Mapolu and Philipson, 1984)



Soon after independence and the union with Zanzibar in 1964, the government of Tanzania started a system of centralized five year plans. The First Five Year Plan was limited to nation-building, that is, national-level plans, but the Second Five Year Plan (1969–74) included detailed plans for each administrative region (United Republic of Tanzania, 1970). Two Finnish teams produced the plans for the Third Five Year Plan, and the regional plans for Mtwara and Lindi for the Fourth Five Year period were drawn up by two teams of British consultants. After the Britons, the Finns again showed interest, and following preparations in 1986–88, a new integrated development programme, *RIPS (Rural Integrated Project Support)*, was begun in 1988 in the two regions with Finnish funding. After five years of RIPS Phase I, the two governments agreed to assign a new team of Finnish planners (RIPS-PAT, i.e., Preparatory Assistance Team) to involve inhabitants of the two regions in a process of redirecting the activities initiated in RIPS-I to better meet the needs and aspirations of local people and their communities. Since October 1994, the implementation of RIPS Phase II has been continuing on the basis of participatory planning carried out during the interim RIPS-PAT phase.

During all these years, the rural development planning concepts and approaches in Mtwara and Lindi have reflected variations in global as well as Tanzanian and Finnish development thinking.

What were these shifts in “global fashion” and what were their reflections in Mtwara–Lindi? The concept of integrated rural development planning (IRDP) was avant-garde in professional development planning in the early 1970s. IRDP grew out of mainstream development thinking in the early and mid-1970s, when it was widely realized—not least by Western development economists—that economic growth and the “trickling down” of its benefits to poor people did not bring about desired development in rural Third World societies. IRDP was related to other alternative approaches of the time aimed at “an assault on poverty”, “equitable growth”, “employment creation”, “redistribution with growth”, “basic needs”, “the new international economic order” or “redistribution before growth”, and many other beliefs (Launonen and Ojanperä, 1985). For most thinkers and players of the time, “integrated development” equated with “planned development”. Hence, integration would primarily take place on the planner’s desk.

The IRDP approach was adopted in many southern countries, including Tanzania, following the shifting emphasis in development strategies from industrial-orientation to agricultural-orientation, and the realization that agricultural growth alone was not conducive to rural development at large. This realization was formulated into a new rural development strategy which usually had an explicit poverty focus. In the international donor community, the World Bank was particularly active and influential in promoting the new policy of integrated rural development and it "seized every opportunity to experiment with it wherever possible" (Kleemeier, 1982:76).

The rural development strategy of the World Bank was initially announced by Robert McNamara in his presidential speech in Nairobi in 1973, and it was later embodied in the Rural Development Sector Policy Paper in 1974. The main characteristics of the World Bank's—and consequently many other donors' (including Finland's)—rural development policy were:

1. defining a special target group, i.e., the rural poor
2. approaching the problem of production and productivity increases among the rural poor through a concerted effort where production and social services as well as economic infrastructure services were to be integrated into rural development projects. Thus, the bank's policy paper declared:

Rural development is a strategy, designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people—the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. The group includes small-scale farmers, tenants, and the landless (World Bank, 1974).

In regions like Lindi and Mtwara, where 90 per cent of the population are small-scale farmers, who more precisely would qualify as "the poorest", and how could they be identified?

In its Rural Development Policy Paper, the World Bank defined "poverty" in terms of low incomes. Since the purpose of rural development was to reduce poverty, it had to be designed to increase production, productivity and income. The social components were to be subordinated to the priority of production intervention (Launonen and Ojanperä, 1985).

Rural development recognizes, however, that improved food supplies and nutrition, together with basic services such as health and education ... can also indirectly enhance their [small-scale farmers'] productivity

and their ability to contribute to the national economy. [Rural development] is concerned with the modernization and monetization of rural society, and with its transition from traditional isolation to integration with the national economy (World Bank, 1974).

The last statement confirms the predominantly production- and modernization-oriented theme in the Bank's definition of rural development. One can ask whether the Bank's concern about rural poverty was ever primarily motivated by an interest in the welfare of the people concerned or by the desire to integrate those regions' resources into the centre of the national and international economy, with the poor people providing the necessary labour to convert those resources into an extractable form for the use and benefit of the economic centre.

The target population of the World Bank's rural development strategies, the "rural poor", was defined as follows: "Approximately 85 per cent of the 750 million poor in the developing world are considered to be in absolute poverty—based on the arbitrary criterion of an annual per capita income equivalent to \$ 50 or less".¹ The remaining 15 per cent were judged to be in relative poverty—having incomes above the equivalent of USD 50, but less than one-third of the national average per capita income.²

In 1985, when the World Bank reviewed many of its rural poverty-oriented projects, it discovered that poverty-oriented projects had performed on average as well economically as other production-oriented projects. The poverty-oriented projects had tended to be much smaller than non-poverty-oriented ones. However, the World Bank's own project performance audits (PPAs) of the two major regional integrated projects in Tanzania that it had funded—in Kigoma and in Tabora—classified the projects as failures. As a result, the whole concept of IRD was questioned and then abandoned by the Bank. As is well known, in the Bank's view policy problems were the central issue in Tanzania. Liberalization—promotion of the economic private sector—was the policy change that was made a condition of continued

1. By 1995, either inflation or rising standards had lifted the threshold of absolute poverty as high as USD 370 per year. In other words, the poor have to run faster now than twenty years ago. In 1974 one could avoid the stigma of being "absolutely poor" by sweating one day per week for a dollar (and resting the remaining six days). In today's world there is no rest: if you can make a dollar per day, you have to sweat every single day to avoid being categorized as an "absolutely poor" person.

2. World Bank, 1974. I have discussed the concepts "absolute" and "relative poverty" elsewhere (Malaska and Voipio, 1995).

World Bank support to Tanzania. Policy priorities and orientation shifted towards agricultural growth.

The "poorest of the poor" do not control the necessary productive resources to make them eligible for agricultural credit. Thus, the World Bank's rural development policy emphasis changed from institution-building and the social service sector to the direct production sector. This meant that World Bank financial support to the agricultural sector was to be targeted on a new special group of small "contact farmers", a middle peasantry. The working methods of World Bank-supported agricultural extension workers came to be known as T & V (training and visit). The basic assumption was (and is) that extension messages can best be "trickled-down" from scientists through extension workers to the contact farmers. It is hoped that "ordinary farmers" will want to imitate the modern methods they see the contact farmers using.

Finland's decision in the mid-1980s to continue large-scale support to integrated rural development programmes in Mtwara-Lindi (and in some other countries), in spite of the change in World Bank policy, can justifiably be interpreted as a vote of no confidence in the new neo-liberal strategy that was to become Official Donor Truth for several years. In a way, Finland wanted to play it safe. On one front, in intergovernmental negotiations between Tanzania and her donors, Finland wanted to show a "trendy" neo-liberal face, emphasising the need for macroeconomic austerity measures and encouraging (in the Nordic-Tanzanian dialogue in 1984) other Nordic governments to join the IMF, the World Bank and other Western donors in pressuring the government of Tanzania to accept the severe macroeconomic policies measures that the IMF was demanding as a condition for additional credits. However, soon after that, in January 1985, during his visit to Tanzania, the foreign minister (the then chairman of the Finnish Agrarian People's Party) expressed Finland's willingness to increase her support for integrated rural development in Tanzania (Seppälä, 1986).

The Finnish ambassador to Tanzania and several FINNIDA officers hoped that the new Finnish-funded IRDP could be built on the foundations of the Uyole Agricultural Research and Training Centre in Mbeya, to ensure visible results. Finland had long supported the Uyole centre as a promising institution in a highly promising agricultural region.

The government of Tanzania, however, realized that it would have no difficulty in attracting foreign donors to support Mbeya—the potential grain basket of Tanzania—for which a completed RIDEP¹ document, produced with funding from the FAO, already existed. The government asked the Finns to consider sponsoring an IRDP in Mtwara and Lindi regions instead, since no other donor had the slightest interest to start work in that semi-dry, low-potential, severely isolated area, the poorest corner of the country. The area was familiar to FINNIDA, thanks to an early IRDP planning effort in the mid-1970s, and the ongoing rural water supply project. Professor Marja-Liisa Swantz's strong arguments for choosing a less privileged area for Finnish funding proved far from insignificant in changing the minds of FINNIDA. Soon Finland gave her consent and started to identify an approach for "a new kind of IRDP", the so called "Rural Integrated Project Support Programme" (RIPS).

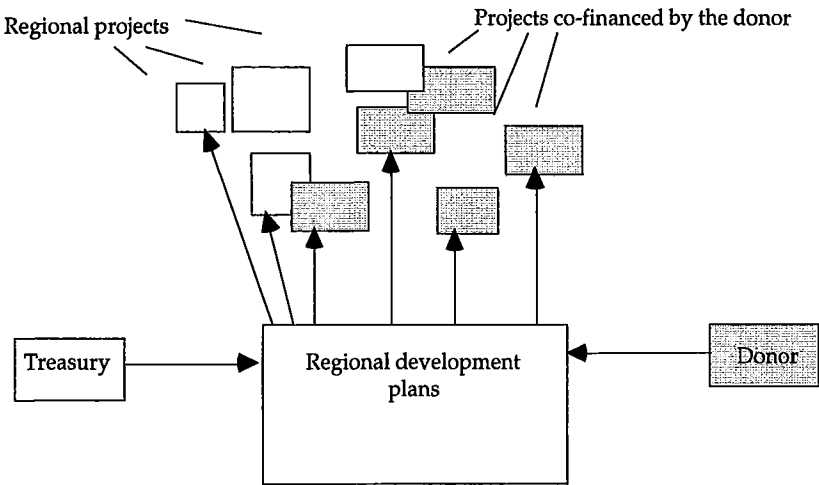
What had been the approaches used in previous rural integrated plans in Mtwara-Lindi?

BRITISH AND FINNISH PERCEPTIONS OF INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING IN TANZANIA

"Development" (*maendeleo* in Swahili) in the Tanzanian context has generally been understood as "plans" (*mipango*) which are effected through "projects" (*miradi*) that are brought (*inaletwa*) to the community from outside through the government or through external donor agencies. In the Tanzanian system it has been the role of the political leadership, the president, parliament and the central government, to make national plans, which include two categories of project: a) those with "national impact", and b) those with "regional impact".

The purpose of using external consultants—like Finnplanco Ltd. and Finnconsult Ltd.—to prepare regional plans was to conceive and present the existing development problems and opportunities so professionally and convincingly that Tanzania could attract foreign donors. These could be the same ones who financed the planning efforts, but it was hoped that they would also commit themselves to funding the implementation of the plans—or at least part of them—over the third national five-year-planning period in Tanzania, 1975-80.

1. Rural Integrated Development Plan

Figure 2. *Flows of funding for regional development projects in Tanzania*

In the Finnish–Tanzanian rural development plans of the early 1970s “poverty” was not explicitly spelled out. Rather, it was taken as an existential characteristic of “underdeveloped” Tanzanian society and a distinctive factor for comparing Tanzania and Finland, but much less an indicator of differences between members of Tanzanian society, which was seen as a homogenous mass of poor people. The interest of development professionals focused more on manifestations of underdevelopment in various geographical or administrative parts of the country. Regional comparisons were commonly made, not least because the whole of Tanzania was divided by external donor agencies into “RIDEPs”, Regional Integrated Development Plans, with almost all the twenty regions of Tanzania being served by one donor each.

Finnish planners based most of their recommendations for the Third Five Year Plan on the foundations of the Second Five Year Plan. A comparison of the main development problems in Mtwara and Lindi regions, as identified by the mainly British planners attached to BRALUP (Bureau of Resource Assessment and Land-Use Planning) and the ERB (Economic Research Bureau) in the late 1960s and by the Finnish planners in the early 1970s shows strong continuities but also some interesting differences (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. *Main development problems of Mtwara-Lindi as identified in the Second and Third Five Year Plans*

| Main development problems of (combined) Mtwara and Lindi region as identified by the Second Five Year Plan, 1970 | Main development problems of Lindi region as identified by Finnplanco Ltd., 1974 | Main development problems of Mtwara region as identified by Finnconsult Ltd., 1974 |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Lack of water in the interior | 1. Lack of water supply (only 25 per cent of population reasonably served: one of the lowest rates in Tanzania) | 1. Poor rural water supply |
| 2. Low population in the dry interior, thus low agricultural output | 2. Malnutrition: consumption at only 45 per cent of the recommended level | 2. Low levels of nutrition and dependency on food imports from outside the region |
| 3. Lack of organization and communications in fisheries | 3. Population increase (2.8 per cent per year) | 3. Poor social infrastructure (health and education) |
| 4. Very poor quality of road communications within the region and with other parts of Tanzania | 4. Poor communications | 4. Regional isolation from other parts of Tanzania (poor roads) |
| 5. Low agricultural output (especially cashew nuts) in the densely populated south-eastern parts | 5. Low income level | 5. Low intensity of cashew nut production and local processing of cashew nuts |
| 6. Lack of necessary rural infrastructure (water, feeder roads, inputs and extension) in the new Ujamaa villages of the interior | 6. Health conditions: poor accessibility, lack of personnel, insufficient preventive care (vaccinations, nutrition and health education) | 6. Poor integration of preventive health and agricultural extension in primary and adult education |
| | 7. Lack of education and vocational training | |
| | 8. Lack of reasonable housing | |

For Finnish planners, these problems were clearly interrelated. But some problems seemed to influence others, while some were influenced by the others. The "bottleneck" problems which seemed to hinder progress in other spheres were poor communications, low income level, lack of education and training, and lack of water supply. Those problems which were largely influenced by the others were low income level, malnutrition and health conditions.

In 1974, the Finnplanco team recommended that in Lindi region the greatest development efforts should be based on local human resources, not only on public funds. The integrated plan that emerged after eight working months by eight professional Finnish development planners, however, recommended investment of public funds in social and physical infrastructure and direct productive activities in the proportions set out in Figure 3. The Finnconsult planning team, also consisting of eight Finnish planners, made similar recommendations about investment in the Mtwara region in the period 1975-80 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. *Mtwara and Lindi IRDPs 1975-80. Breakdown of development and recurrent costs as proposed by Finnconsult (Mtwara) and Finnplanco (Lindi)*

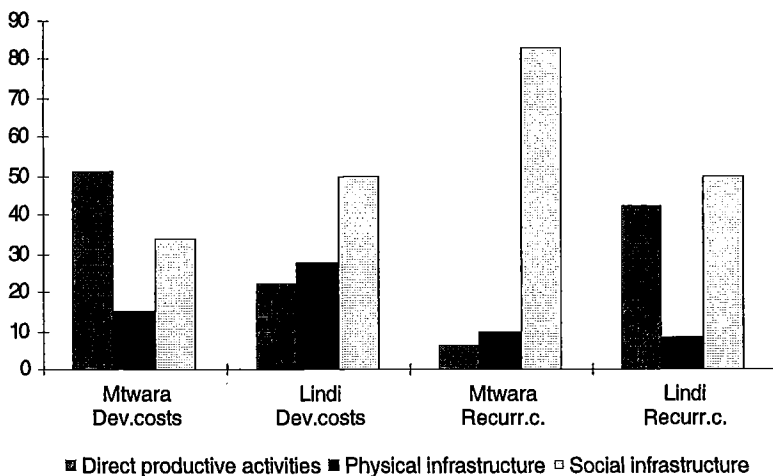


Figure 3 shows the breakdown of investment and recurrent costs in Mtwara and Lindi regions as respectively proposed by Finnconsult

Ltd. and Finnplanco Ltd. The various investment needs are grouped into:

1. *Direct productive activities*, including
crop production
livestock development
natural resources, including forests and fish
2. *Physical infrastructure*, including
telecommunication
roads
urban infrastructure
3. *Social infrastructure*, including
health services
education
water supply

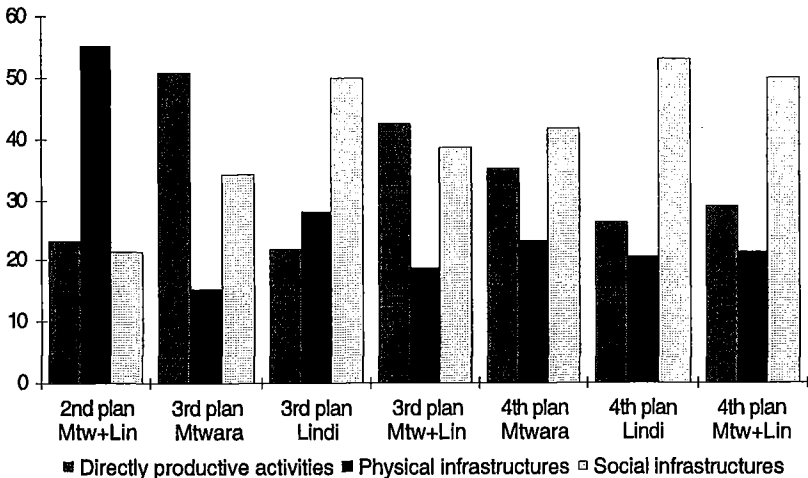
The height of the bars indicates the proportion of total planned development or recurrent expenditures intended for direct productive activities, physical infrastructure and social infrastructure respectively. From Figure 3, it is evident that the running costs of health services, schools, shallow wells and piped water schemes were expected to eat up the lion's share of recurrent budgets in both regions. Mtwara was apparently regarded as having a higher productive potential than Lindi, as investments in farming and livestock dominated other uses in Mtwara. In Lindi region, the greater part of the development budgets was expected to be spent on building schools, clinics and water supply services. Probably these basic services already existed in Mtwara, because almost all the regional recurrent budgets were expected to go to maintaining these basic services.

Finland, however, had insufficient resources for funding the total programme as planned for the Third Five Year Plan by the Finnish consultants. Finland chose instead to fund the development of one priority need, the rural water supply services in the two regions. The government of Tanzania had to try to attract other foreign funding for the other development needs identified by the Finnish consultants. Most of the projects were, however, left without funding.

Towards the end of the Third Five Year Plan, the British government promised to sponsor the preparation of the Fourth Five Year Plan (1981-86) in the two regions. The British approach was ambitious and made Tanzanians believe that the large teams of scientists under-

taking the baseline studies and the professional plan-writers (United Republic of Tanzania, 1981a (Mtwara) and 1981b (Lindi)) would soon be followed by major project implementation and major development investment. In their analysis of development experiences to date, the British criticized the Finnish-made Third Five Year Plan for having paid too much attention to social welfare. The British suggested that this bias should be corrected in the Fourth Five Year Plan by putting additional emphasis on investments in direct production, mainly farming. The major projects proposed by the British planners in 1981 were, however, largely the same as those proposed earlier by the British planners of BRALUP and ERB for the Second, and by the Finnish consultants for the Third Five Year Plan. Besides, the British-made fourth plan (both for Lindi and Mtwara) in fact proposed that a larger budget share be spent on social infrastructure than the Finnish-made third plan, as can be seen in Figure 4. This compares the breakdown of development (investment) budgets in Mtwara and Lindi regions in the three successive five-year plans between 1969 and 1986. Against the background of Tanzanian national policies of free universal education, health and water, this is not surprising. In spite of British rhetoric, the proportion of investments in production in Mtwara region was, in fact, radically reduced in the British-made fourth plan as compared to the Finnish-made third plan.

Figure 4. Comparison of proportions of development budgets proposed for Mtwara and Lindi regions in the Second, Third and Fourth Tanzanian Five Year Plans



However, the plans evidence a clear difference in the bias or vision of Finnish and British planners: Finns emphasized the need to strengthen local human resources whereas the British were more concerned with agricultural production and productivity.

A government change in Britain, and the advent of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, however, led to major cuts in British aid. The plans for Mtwara and Lindi—with the exception of a few small projects like goat keeping, paddy farming, etc.—collected dust on the shelves of the two regional offices until 1986. In that year a new team of Finnish planners arrived in Mtwara and Lindi on behalf of FINNIDA to identify a new approach to Finnish-funded RIPS. The team wrote:

The programme is called the Rural Integrated Programme Support (RIPS). The Mission emphasises the concept of "support" and recommends that RIPS should be perceived as a support programme rather than a project of its own. Thus the support should consist of import support, material, training and technical advice for the existing projects rather than externally initiating new ones.

The concept "integration" has as many interpretations as there are "integrated projects". The common line between various interpretations is that a programme is implemented in a spatially limited area. The different components of a programme are expected to be supportive of each other, creating a chain of development impacts. Often the various components are supportive of each other only on paper. The programmes are not implemented in a vacuum and the existing administrative and economic fragmentation hinders the outcome of sound orchestrated results. On the other hand, some forms of social and economic infrastructure (e.g., road construction and primary education) are "integrative" in themselves—they are logical preconditions for many other elements of development. In the RIPS programme ... the concept of integration has been interpreted as ... integration ... with the whole institutional structure in the regions, and the development strategy of Tanzania.

Here, it is interesting to observe how the various teams of planners of integrated rural development have given effect to the ideal of integration, i.e., of integrating donor support with "local institutional structures". Two totally different approaches have both had their supporters, and most teams have taken a position somewhere between the two opposite poles, A and B.

A. Integration of several small independent projects on the programme coordinator's desk

In times when donors' total budgets grew rapidly (as was the case with FINNIDA in the 1980s), donor desk officers often preferred to channel aid funds to large industrial or construction projects, because large amounts of aid dollars could be thus disbursed without the need for more than a few simple administrative—mainly procurement—documents. Such practices inspired development researchers and other critics to argue convincingly against huge capital-intensive projects and in favour of small poverty-oriented projects in the countryside.

For overburdened aid administrators, "integrated rural development programmes" provided an attractive solution to the dilemma: a large amount of dollars could be disbursed from headquarters by the signing of a single "integrated" programme document. The stress and responsibility for finally distributing rural aid dollars could be delegated to a consultancy company, most often called "the implementing agency". Attractive fees secured interested consultants whose task was to identify promising development opportunities, to allocate money to them, to oversee the activities and to "integrate" (mainly by using a stapler) progress reports and financial reports of several different and largely independent "sub-projects" into one single "programme progress (or financial) report", and to send it to the donor's headquarters.

At later stages, some of the more ambitious consultants took the "management"—or "social engineering"—of such rural integrated programmes as a serious professional challenge: how to keep all the threads in the hands of a single "manager"?; how to "orchestrate" large crews of local or regional government officers from diverse professional backgrounds to plan projects and to report on their progress in a uniform (or "integrated") manner, in line with the logical planning framework required by the donor's latest project planning and reporting guidelines?

B. Demand-driven integration in the village

From the villagers' point of view, little but the colour of the Land Rovers arriving in the village has appeared as "integrated" in such

integrated programmes, as the following imaginary—but typical—case study shows.

On Monday the villagers have been politely available so that the *forestry* officers (whose daily allowances are paid by and who report to the IRDP) can deliver the extension message according to which part of the village forest has been included on a list of national forest reserves. This means that the forest has to be left intact, and that the village women will have to walk longer distances to fetch firewood for their families. On Tuesday the same villagers have left their shambas to see the IRDP-supported *agricultural extension officers* arriving in their IRDP-fuelled Land Rovers. The officers' main message is—in the name of the targets set in the national food-security plan—that every village will have to clear an extra field to grow cassava. A suitable area has been identified in the area which the forestry officers had declared a forest reserve. But, the picture would not be complete without the IRDP-funded *water officers* who arrive on Wednesday—to mobilise villagers to provide “self-help” labour for a new shallow well project in the middle of the very same forest.

On the IRDP coordinator's desk, the progress reports of all three sectoral teams seem to make a nice “integrated” whole. If the villagers were asked, however, they would probably prefer the opposite of such “supply-driven” integration, “demand-driven integration”. This would be based on a process of participatory planning, where various people from the village have an opportunity to articulate their own development plans, to discuss and negotiate among fellow villagers about ways to reach each and every one's individual and common goals, and to advise government officers and donors on the specific mix of outside support, that could cost-effectively promote the various development opportunities identified by the villagers themselves.

A village-driven IRDP could not by definition consist of several separate sub-projects, implemented by sectoral government departments. In Tanzania these would be *Ujensi* for roads, *Maji* for water, *Kilimo* for crops and *Elimu* for schools, etc. Instead, villagers might, for instance, wish to establish a school *shamba* where elders could demonstrate to the children not the latest farming methods but methods which they had found most useful in the particular microecological conditions in the village. *Kilimo* and *Elimu* officers could have a role in facilitating and documenting such events and lessons for the benefit of future generations or neighbouring villages. The villagers might invite *Ujensi* officers to provide advice and assistance (for example drainage drums) to build a strong bridge over the stream behind the school, so that the school *shamba* could be extended across

the stream, thus enabling it to provide food security for the village. Labour would be provided in off-season months on "food-for-work" terms by less fortunate villagers who had failed to produce enough food for the whole year on their *shambas*. They too could learn new farming skills at the school's demonstration farm. In years of good general harvest, the village could sell the extra stocks to purchase new corrugated iron sheets for the school building, and invite water officers to advise the village tinsmiths in setting up rainwater harvesting and storage systems for the school. The village's traditional birth attendant could invite district health officers to use the newly covered classrooms and the safe water in the school tanks for evening classes in safe motherhood and hygiene for village women of reproductive age.

Two donor-funded programmes in Mtwara–Lindi have systematically tried to promote village-oriented integration of development efforts.

The interim RIPS-PAT programme between RIPS Phase I and Phase II (in 1993–94) set in motion a long series of *Participatory Rural Appraisal* (PRA) events in ninety villages in the two regions. The programme officers arrived in the villages empty-handed and open to any analyses of development constraints and opportunities as perceived by various villagers (young and old, male and female, wealthy and poor). In the ongoing RIPS Phase II, demand-driven activities integrated by the villagers themselves have been labelled "Locally Integrated Area Programmes", or LIAPs.

The UNICEF-funded Child Survival and Development Programme (CSDP) in Mtwara region has had serious accountability problems. But it has also had remarkable success in promoting a spirit of shared responsibility and integration among local government officers from various sectors who have made up joint task forces to promote basic UNICEF-messages about mother and child welfare in the villages. Thus, unusually, in CSDP areas well coordinated teams of various officers (water, agriculture, community development, education, roads, planning, etc.) have been involved in promoting (or: "animating" as UNICEF calls it) safe water, monitoring infant growth, nutritious food, income generation, girls' education, etc. in the villages. Though this is clearly a top-down project based on a pre-planned and fixed package of extension messages (and not on demand-driven participatory analysis by villagers), the CSDP has

shown that it is possible to cross sectoral and departmental boundaries in rural development work. Consequently, the actions appear reasonable and integrated to the villagers as well as the officials.

Next, we look more closely at one of these development interventions which strongly seeks to appear integrated to the villagers. We will notice that demand-driven work is a major challenge for any professional development organization, since more ownership by "them" (the villagers) in many cases means less control by "us" (professional planners). Instead of focusing on what should change in the village, we begin by asking what should change in the institutions involved in planning village development.

SENSITISING DONOR-DRIVEN IRDPS AND TANZANIAN STATE BUREAUCRACIES FOR POVERTY-ORIENTATION

The latest in the series of IRDPs in Lindi and Mtwara regions is the Finnish-funded RIPS Phase II, a four-year programme whose foundations were laid during an eighteen-month interim period called RIPS-PAT (Preparatory Assistance Team) between April 1993 and September 1994. The evidence from RIPS Phase II is still too fresh to be analysed by an historian, but the lessons of the interim period are well documented and analysed by some of the people and organizations involved in the process.¹ They provide valuable observations which can—with certain cautions concerning the uniqueness of time and space—contribute to a more general theoretical understanding of the dynamics of poverty-oriented rural development interventions.

Between 1988 and 1993 the government of Finland channelled some twelve million USD through RIPS-I to projects for roads, cooperatives, extension services, agricultural education in primary schools, etc. However, like so many other projects, RIPS became trapped in the bureaucratic interface between donor practice and Tanzanian government organization. A mid-term review in 1991 concluded that too much money had gone to administration and office

1. I am particularly grateful to Lars Johansson for his thought-provoking retrospective analysis of the RIPS-PAT process, published in condensed form in the *Forests, Trees and People Newsletter*, No. 26/27, 1994, on which this section is based. The full version is available in the *RIPS Phase Two Programme Document*, Annex 5, final draft, 31 August 1994. The author of this paper also draws here from his own participant observations as the socio-economist and one of the facilitators of the participatory planning process in RIPS-PAT.

construction without benefiting rural people. The consulting company had mystified decision-making by defining its own role as the "implementing agency".

Severe cuts in Finland's development aid budgets, combined with increasing uncertainty about the effectiveness of the intervention, resulted in considerably reduced disbursement pressures in Mtwara-Lindi. The two governments agreed that a period of eighteen months would be set aside, using lower budgets, to try to reform the programme's approach. Participation and sustainability were the key requirements for the new planning process. This time, villages would be the point of departure for planning and not the regional offices. The new RIPS would support organizations working in any sector in the two regions, as long as the means involved rural people directly, and the ends were consistent with objectives of sustainable development.

The strategy included four steps:

1. Approaches and methods for participatory planning had to be developed and tested. District consultation workshops were held with regional and district officers and with local people from four villages in each district, to experiment with forms of village work.
2. A way had to be found to institutionalize this type of work so that many teams, mainly of local government officers, could work simultaneously on many different issues in many different locations (there are over 900 villages in Mtwara-Lindi.) A two-week training course in participatory rural appraisal (PRA) was organized to train trainers who were to repeat the training in all seven rural districts.
3. The third step depended on what new initiatives would emerge after the training workshops. By the end of 1993, some 200 regional and district officers had been trained in PRA. Fieldwork had been carried out in sixty different villages and thousands of villagers had contributed by articulating their understanding of development opportunities. A series of thematic or topical PRAs were organized on specific issues such as marine environment protection, goat-keeping, environmental deterioration on the Makonde plateau, women's informal organizations, rehabilitation of cashew forests, credits for water harvesting, etc.

4. A new series of district consultations would follow in order to collect all the experiences from the dispersed learning and pilot projects, prior to preparing a final programme document for the second phase of RIPS.

At some point, the participatory planning process began to lose momentum and some of its direction. After several days of mutual learning in a village environment, the initiative for change usually remained with the district officers, who were often not able to organize any follow up, or to change their own policies and practices. Cross-sectoral pilot projects did not fit the hierarchical and authoritarian departmental structure. The administrative burden of supporting many small projects outgrew the small project organization. Delegation was difficult since the donor (FINNIDA) still held the consultant company responsible for financial administration using procedures designed for larger, simpler and more predictable projects. Tanzanian officers and villagers found it difficult to believe the sincerity of the stated intention to delegate power and responsibility away from the expatriate advisors, since all the money still came from—and all reports had to be submitted to—the “managers” in the consultant’s field office.

After many frustrations, an understanding began to emerge about the systems of institutionalized patronage of which development projects had become a central part in Mtwara and Lindi. There seemed to be a deeply entrenched idea that development was something designed and delivered to people by experts and donors.

Villagers of southern Tanzania are used to being required to participate in projects brought about by government and donors. They realize that the project organizations need success stories to sustain themselves, since they depend on donor funding. Consequently, villagers try to benefit from projects by participating in exchange for material goods in a process similar to the way voters in modern Western democracies vote for politicians that promise privileges to their group.

Many development—and research—projects do indeed promise give-aways as rewards for participation in externally conceived projects. Villagers can mobilize considerable pressure in bargaining for give-aways. Agricultural projects end up giving away agrochemicals to the wealthiest farmers simply because this is the easiest and quickest way to meet the output targets defined in the project document

and monitored by donor representatives. The cooperative, agricultural education, and beekeeping projects of RIPS Phase I were essentially give-aways in return for output that could be monitored. To make things worse, this output was often expressed in participation rates rather than as achievement or performance. The most meaningless conceivable project is one that simply pays people to participate and then reports their participation as the output.

In the case of Mtwara and Lindi, this participation-for-give-away mentality not only regulates relations between villagers and donors, but also between villagers and the government of Tanzania. The villagization campaign was exceptionally intensive in the south. To a large extent, people accepted it on a similar *participation-against-promises-of-development* basis. It is not wrong to say that in many villages people are still waiting for the government to deliver.

Since then, the administration has become dependent on international and bilateral development agencies which systematically promote development models that are driven by external rationality and external inputs. The "logical framework planning" guidelines adopted by many donors today demand precisely the mechanistic connection between inputs and outputs that enables villagers to trade their cooperation against give-aways. Project staff think they will lose their jobs unless they report predetermined outputs achieved through predetermined inputs. Consultants sell their services by becoming specialists in logical framework jargon. Development projects are viewed as "packaged products" with an exchange value, and not as collaborative undertakings based on reciprocity and sharing.

In the case of RIPS-PAT there was, fortunately, considerable support from local leaders and donor representatives for a view of projects as *what people do themselves for their own good*. The role of government and donor agencies was to facilitate and support local ventures, and not to provide prescriptive plans and inputs. The argument that outsiders had to start by learning about local initiatives was well taken. Tanzanian authorities far-sightedly recognized this proposition as compatible with policies to reduce dependency on state-led projects.

These arguments led field teams to look for indigenous ventures that resembled development projects in the villages. Sadly, this pursuit of poor people's own projects soon became an administrative problem, and almost had to be abandoned. Ordinary poor people

have a wealth of ideas and underused resources for creating a better world, but they do not frame their livelihood strategies in terms compatible with the donor-dictated project jargon. It soon became evident that there are no sustainable *projects* out there waiting for a little support.

Through wealth rankings and social maps, and through accumulating evidence of a disintegrating social fabric, a new awareness of continuing social stratification was reached. It also became increasingly evident that development projects often fuelled these processes of stratification instead of overall economic performance and welfare. Poverty-oriented projects had to be different, and there were no models.

Out of this project discourse came the notion of projects as being simultaneously negotiated and collaborative. The learning process is not only to identify development projects. Development is a learning process, and sustainability can only be understood as an emergent property of a learning system.

This realization was hard to reconcile with the task given by the donor to the RIPS-team to write and appraise a five-year development plan according to the logical framework format. It seemed increasingly important not to mystify development and take the initiative away from local people through abstract concepts like *outputs* and *indicators*. The strategies that proved workable did so because they were locally intelligible and based on subjective representations of reality, so that they could be negotiated in Swahili in village workshops among people with different perspectives and interests. Personal commitments to a coalition of people proved much more important than scientifically adequate project logic, but required a totally different approach to planning.

The second phase of RIPS² started in October 1994, based on the plans conceived and working approaches tested during the eighteen month RIPS-PAT period. The programme for RIPS-II centres around more than forty open-ended pilot projects and local initiatives. Each of these is associated with a working group of different actors, including local volunteers, administrators and experts. Every working group makes its own incremental short-term action plans and monthly "deviation-from-plan" reports and proceeds at its own pace largely without blueprints.

Initiatives supported today include: cashew sanitation, revolving goat loans, oxenization, decentralized seed production, seed banks for women's groups, fish farming, community-based protection of the marine environment, natural forest management, land tenure studies and information on land rights, training and organising village artisans, post-primary education, trials with peer-group credit schemes of the Grameen type, recurrent PRA-training for extension workers, locally integrated agricultural extension programmes, marketing of bee products and support to start a local radio station and video production unit.

The strength of the present RIPS lies in the emphasis on communication and the media. By practising PRA, government officers are beginning to find new roles as facilitators, reporters and lobbyists for local interests. At the conclusion of the eighteen-month period, the coordinator of the interim period, Lars Johansson, wrote about the diverse experiences as follows:

Sustainable projects are not designed, but grown ... through social acts of facilitation, learning, participation, negotiation and accommodation. The process demands attitude change from many, creativity from project staff, patience and commitment from local people, and some rethinking of what projects are for from central authorities and donor agencies.

The ritualization of the entrenched "participation-for-give-aways" exchange system has to be met first through realising that the dependency is actually an interdependency, and then, following this realisation, through replacing exchange with reciprocity and packaged projects with services. Because in exchange you pay as little as possible for as many goods as possible, whereas in reciprocity you try to give something valuable so that you one day get something valuable back.

Why is it that development agencies prefer to deliver projects that are like products? The question may seem out of place, but ... [it is not] ... A European Community publication says straightforwardly that a development project has come to an end when "the 'product' has been made and 'sold' to the benefit of the target group."

Everything in the RIPS-team's analysis supports the proposition that we must attempt to reform the institutions involved in rural development. We cannot just change the content by improving the designs of instrumentalist interventions with a business-as-usual attitude. It is the form of development cooperation that must be changed (Johansson, 1994).

WHICH CHANNEL FOR THE OUTSIDE DONOR'S POVERTY ALLEVIATION INTERVENTION?

If the RIPS-PAT's analysis holds true, which of the existing institutional channels can best deliver or consume the donor's resources in order to reduce the poverty of the intended beneficiaries, the rural poor. In a poor country like Tanzania, there are people at all levels of administration who consider their individual poverty deep enough to be a morally (albeit not legally) acceptable target for poverty reduction with donor money. Therefore, the effectiveness of the alternative channels of development aid needs to be analysed in four dimensions:

1. their reliability in avoiding mismanagement of donor funds
2. their ability to communicate with the intended target population, to understand their development plans and to implement direct donor-funded interventions in support of them
3. their ability to create enabling economic, social or institutional environments for the intended beneficiaries' own plans to be realized without direct donor intervention
4. their sustainability in the long run, i.e., their potential to continue the activities after the termination of donor funding and after the final departure of donor personnel.

Development aid is normally part of the diplomatic relations between two independent states. The political and administrative structures of the recipient state strongly determine the availability of alternative channels for donor intervention. According to international law the central government has the ultimate right and responsibility for inter-governmental agreements regulating aid interventions. The extent of subsidiarity, i.e., the autonomy of sub-national levels of institutions, however, varies strongly from country to country. This variability has strong implications for such fundamental issues as "sensitivity", "ownership" and "sustainability" of the development intervention.

In the case of Tanzania, four alternative public channels exist for donor-funded IRDPs:

- central government authorities in Dar es Salaam
- regional authorities
- district authorities
- village authorities.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are a fifth option.

According to Semboja,¹ donors are poorly informed about the advantages and disadvantages of these institutional channels of development cooperation within existing Tanzanian structures. This can be partly explained by the two drastic changes in the Tanzanian local government system in 1972 and in 1984, and the resulting confusion among donors, whose institutional memory is often surprisingly short, due to the rapid circulation of embassy staff and HQ desk officers.

Instead of making the effort to study how Tanzanian society really works, many donors have opted to bypass public structures (especially local government) altogether by establishing separate project coordination units (e.g., the PCUs of RIPS-I). The duties of these parallel units have included planning, coordinating, monitoring and, sometimes, implementing and supervising of all donor-funded activities in the region or district concerned. Though "efficient" and "accountable" from the point of view of the donor, the democratic and sustainability implications of such parallel enclaves have caused grave concern among critical observers.

To understand the evolution of Tanzanian political and administrative institutions below the national parliament and central government level, it is conceptually and operationally useful to distinguish between two totally different forms of *decentralization* of authority from the central government to lower levels.

1. *Deconcentration* means decentralization within the central government. Such a change took place in Tanzania in 1972, when district authorities were dissolved altogether and all local issues were delegated to the regional authorities, formally headed by the president's representative, the regional commissioner (RC), but practically managed by the regional development director (RDD) and the officers in the subordinate sectoral departments.
2. *Devolution* is decentralization of authority from the central government to local governments, (district councils or village governments), which are not legally part of the central government, but primarily accountable to local constituencies (Semboja, 1995).

1. Semboja, 1995. The best references on the local government system in Tanzania are Semboja and Therkildsen, 1989; Semboja and Therkildsen, 1991; Therkildsen and Semboja, 1992; and Semboja, 1995

From the point of view of the rural poor, the intended ultimate beneficiaries of rural development programmes, the choice of assistance channel makes a lot of difference.

In the governmental structures of independent Tanzania, there was a devolved system of independent local governments until 1972, when that system was replaced by a party-controlled deconcentrated administrative system. Again in 1984, another major change took place when a devolved system was partly reintroduced. District councils were re-established in 1984, but many elements of deconcentration were retained. The district executive directors (DEDs) continued to be nominated by the president, and the regional level retained a lot of authority, resulting in a hybrid system. The central role of the party continued until 1992 when a multi-party system was reintroduced (Semboja, 1995).

If in a deconcentrated system regional development plans are bad, a citizen can attempt to change them only by changing the national government and by hoping that the new government will appoint better civil servants to the region concerned. In a devolved system, the potential for accountability is greater. Especially in a multi-party setting, unsatisfactory district councillors (*madiwani*) can be replaced by the ordinary people in the next elections.

Donors—including Finland, but excluding the Netherlands—have seldom opted to organize their “integrated rural development programmes” through the district councils. For them, even the decision to work with regional authorities has appeared as a brave step towards the grassroots, as compared with ordinary projects implemented through a ministry, parastatal company or some other central authority. From the point of view of villagers, however, regional authorities often appear as alien satellites of central government, or as an extra tax burden on primary agricultural producers.

Have recipient governments done much to encourage donors to create direct contacts with local governments? Typically, central government officers have given donors the impression that making plans and contracts with the regional—not to mention district—officers would be a sympathetic but risky move for donors, since these officers are simply too ignorant and too poorly educated to coordinate donor-funded projects. (In Tanzania, educational requirements are actually biased against local government, i.e., lower qualifications are required for the district officers than for regional or central government offic-

ers, as if the work at district level were somehow less valuable.) Efforts by donor representatives to establish direct contact with district councils in the recipient country may have been interpreted as a sign of mistrust or separatism by central government officers in the host country.

The establishment of parallel donor organizations in order to get the things done has been very common, and the temptation to continue to do so is today as high as ever. Yet, nothing indicates that this strategy has become more commendable now than it was before. In several cases, parallel project planning, coordinating, monitoring and implementing units have rendered local government involvement unnecessary. Only very few individuals are "seconded" to the donor-funded project's special teams which do not report to the district executive director, not to speak of the political wing of local government, the elected district councils.

In contemporary donor discourse, it is very popular to talk—often ignorantly or arrogantly—about the advantages of working through non-governmental organizations, as a positive and democratic alternative to corrupt, undemocratic or stagnant government structures. Very rarely do donors discuss the strengths of local government. For instance, local governments are (or at least have the potential to become) people's institutions, with elected councillors and village leaders. Integration of donors' development interventions is rarely perceived as integration into local government's plans and budgets. This fact has remarkable implications for sustainability. Yet, in many cases the local government system is the only realistic base on which bottom-up/participatory/process planning, implementation and monitoring can be built. Local governments have a core staff, basic infrastructural facilities and powers to make and enforce by-laws in support of the projects (Semboja, 1995).

In sum, bypassing democratically elected local institutions has denied integrated rural development programmes institutional ownership. Second, recurrent cost implications of completed projects have been nearly impossible to plan. Third, the system has been weak on institutional capacity building. Fourth, by working outside the local government system the donor-funded IRDPs have lost the opportunity to use the legal powers of the district council (e.g. the right to make and enforce local by-laws) for furthering the programme's objectives (Semboja, 1995).

MAINTAINING DEPENDENCY THROUGH PROMISES AND EXPECTATIONS OF “DEVELOPMENT”

This line of thinking clearly makes more sense in today’s Tanzania than it did ten or twenty years ago. During the post-Arusha Declaration period, until the mid-80s, the central government, and behind it the ruling party, was perceived as the sole provider of “development” (*Serikali inaleta maendeleo*), including free basic services and goods. Thus, for example, the contribution of local authorities to construction costs of dispensaries, schools, etc., was abolished in 1965. User contributions to maintenance costs for various services, e.g., water supply, which in the 1990s have reappeared on the agendas of most donors and government departments, were abolished in 1970, (Semboja, 1995) in the spirit of “development”.

It is fair to say that this perception of “development” as a “promise from above” was not a uniquely Tanzanian phenomenon. It was typical of the globally dominant ideology of state-led modernization of the 1970s and early 1980s. It was widely believed then—on both sides of the contemporary fundamental ideological barrier—that new powers of science, technology and politics would finally break the “rule of necessity”, the burden that had regulated human life in all previous cultures. In modernising societies, “development” has been the promise that has turned the “hopes” of improvement into “expectations” that needs will be defined and satisfied by “development projects” brought to the people by the government, alone or supported by a donor. The difference here is that traditional “hope” referred to a different “not yet” than modern “expectations”. Hope springs from the necessity that fosters desire. Hope is oriented toward the unpredictable, the unexpected, the surprising. Expectations spring from needs fostered by the promise of development. They are oriented towards claims, entitlements and demands. Hope appeals to the arbitrariness of a personal other, be he human or divine. Expectations build on the functioning of impersonal systems (e.g., the government) that will deliver nutrition, healthcare, education, security and more. As against these systems, hope and desire appear as an irrational legacy of a dark age, and the quality of human existence begins to be measured in terms of imputed deficiencies which translate into needs (Illich, 1992).

This translation, for most of the world’s people, has happened during the last thirty years. Needs have only very recently become a universal experience, and in the same period, “development cooperation”

has emerged as the joint effort of world humanity to—in the words of President Kennedy in 1961—“help the people in huts and in villages of half the globe in their struggle to break the bonds of mass misery” (Illich, 1992. Also in Malaska and Voipio, 1995).

The first instrument that was created to establish the line between acceptable and unacceptable standards of human life was the GNP. This device—in Ivan Illich’s words—“is a surprising mental eggbeater that compounds all goods and all services produced by all people and defines the resulting omelette as the gross value of a nation. This gross national hotchpotch strains from reality all and only those characteristics that economists can digest” (Illich, 1992).

The preponderance of economic achievement indicators as measurements of the quality of human life or of the success of a society is a well-known bias in Tanzania, including Mtwara–Lindi. Tanzania has for years been among the five “worst” nations of the world on the GNP per capita rankings published by the World Bank. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have done Tanzania a favour by starting to publish alternative lists, where the nations of the world have been ranked according to different criteria. For example, these criteria include their achievements in terms of reducing relative deprivation measured in longevity (life expectancy), education (literacy and mean years of schooling) and resources (modified income per capita to measure utility), in the case of the Human Development Index (HDI) introduced by the UNDP.¹ These criteria place Tanzania much higher up in the rankings of the nations of the world.²

1. UNDP: *Human Development Report*, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995; Jazairy et al., 1992; See also Semboja in Bagachwa, 1994

2. Some very basic social indicators give evidence of a higher-than-average Tanzanian level of poverty for Lindi and (especially) Mtwara regions.

Table 2. *Indices of Malnutrition for under-5s by region, Tanzania mainland 1991/92 (percentages)*

| No. | Region | Weight for age | No. | Region | Weight for age |
|-----|---------------|----------------|-----|----------|----------------|
| 1 | Mara | 18.9 | 11 | Arusha | 29.4 |
| 2 | Shinyanga | 19.7 | 12 | Tanga | 30.5 |
| 3 | Dar es Salaam | 19.0 | 13 | Ruvuma | 32.9 |
| 4 | Mwanza | 20.7 | 14 | Singida | 33.5 |
| 5 | Tabora | 24.1 | 15 | Morogoro | 34.0 |
| 6 | Mbeya | 24.4 | 16 | Kigoma | 34.1 |
| 7 | Rukwa | 25.2 | 17 | Coast | 36.7 |
| 8 | Kilimandjaro | 26.0 | 18 | Dodoma | 37.0 |
| 9 | Kagera | 26.8 | 19 | Iringa | 37.1 |
| 10 | Lindi | 28.5 | 20 | Mtwara | 48.7 |

Source: Cooksey in Bagachwa, 1994. Figures represent percentage of children below -2 standard deviations from the median of the reference population. N=6095.

There is much to be criticized and improved in these social indicators and many books and articles have been published attacking and defending HDI and the equivalent indices developed by IFAD. They are, however, moves in the right direction. Their net impact has been to draw attention in an immediate and powerful way to the importance of the type of lives that people are able to lead. The challenge remains for officers and consultants responsible for monitoring and evaluating the IRDPs—including RIPS in Mtwara and Lindi—to develop local equivalents of HDI and other human welfare indices.

The main problem with the social indicators and the derivative indices is that they assume human needs to be similar the world over at all times, in all cultures. Amartya Sen has summarized his view on the “cultural relativity of living standards” as follows:

“Poverty is an *absolute* notion in the space of *capabilities* but very often it will take a *relative* form in the space of *commodities* or *characteristics*” (Sen, 1985, cited in Hawthorn, 1987).

That is to say, there are certain capabilities—e.g., the capability remarked upon by the founder of economics, Adam Smith, to appear in public without shame—which are absolute. If they are desirable at all, they are desirable for all. It is the resources or commodities that are needed to realize them, and not they themselves, which will vary through time and across space. In late eighteenth-century Glasgow, as Smith himself remarked, it may have been impossible to avoid shame without appearing in a linen shirt. In late twentieth-century Finland it may be impossible to avoid it without being able to buy one’s children a bicycle or jeans in the latest fashion. It is one of my research interests to find out if in a rural village in contemporary Mtwara-Lindi the resources or commodities required to allow one to appear in public without shame are similar to or very different from what was required in the same village twenty years ago.

International comparisons have suffered from the vagueness of the concept of “relative poverty”. If the poverty line in a given society is fixed entirely relative to “average” income, poverty will be impossible to eliminate, even in the richest of nations, because there will always be some who are relatively poor compared to other fellow-citizens of that prosperous society. Even today, those on the poverty line in Finland earn (in terms of monetary incomes) more than fifty times the average income of someone in Tanzania.

Sen suggests that this speculation can be substantially eliminated if we see the standard of living in terms of "functionings" and "capabilities". A functioning is the achievement or the satisfaction of some human need, whereas a capability is the ability or potential of a human being to achieve that end. Some functionings, such as being well nourished, may make more or less similar demands on "commodities" (such as food and health services) irrespective of the average wealth of the community in which a person lives. Other capabilities have commodity demands that vary a good deal with average wealth, for example, to lead a life without shame, to be able to visit and entertain one's friends, to keep track of what is going on and what others are talking about, and so on, requires a more expensive bundle of goods and services in a society that is generally richer, and in which most people have, say, means of transport, expensive clothing, radios or television sets, etc. Thus, some of the same capabilities relevant to a "minimum" level of living require more real income and wealth in the form of commodity possession in a richer society than in poorer ones. The same absolute levels of capabilities may thus require greater relative incomes. There is thus no mystery in the need for a "relativist" view on the space of incomes even when poverty is defined at the same absolute levels of basic capabilities.

The relevance of all this theorising to the planners and administrators of IRDPs say in Mtwara-Lindi is, in terms of Sen's suggestion, that the "basic needs indicators" as achievement indicators for development intervention should be formulated in line with functionings and capabilities, and that the "basic needs" in terms of commodity requirements are only instrumentally (rather than intrinsically) important. In other words, the need for commodities for the achievement of any specified living conditions may vary greatly with various physiological, social, cultural and other contingent features. In every society there are, however, certain human capabilities—such as the capability to appear in public without shame—which are absolute.

NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH: EMIC PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD

Everywhere, poor people are engaged in efforts to cope with, alter or escape poverty and the processes causing or perpetuating their poverty. Such efforts contain important information about the con-

straints and opportunities that poor people face as well as the objectives they struggle to accomplish. Being sensitive to such efforts and exploring options for fostering conditions that would support poor people in these efforts, constitute essential elements in identifying poverty-reducing strategies, policies or interventions. Hence, the formulation of strategies should be informed from below, i.e., from poverty analyses undertaken by poor people themselves at the local level, in order to address their specific expressions of poverty and specific local processes as well as to support poor people in their judgment of and efforts to escape poverty or to cope with it.

The realization that outsiders' and local people's criteria for poverty are seldom identical calls for modifications of "our" concepts to fit local conditions. This view recognizes the starting point of development as an active partnership between poor people and researchers.

Seeking *emic*, i.e., local perceptions (especially from marginalized people) inevitably constitutes an intervention, or an encounter between outsiders and insiders involved in development projects (people and organizations with different frames of reference, interests, loyalties.) What from the point of view of a non-poor outsider seems to be a rational poverty-reducing strategy, may involve too much risk to be acceptable to a local poor person.

This requires sensitive analysis of differences, suggesting that perceptions of poverty are multi-layered, fragmentary and diffuse, not unitary and systematized. What is labelled poverty (or well-being) is a product of interaction and dialogue between different actors or networks with conflicting interests and loyalties who negotiate about whose definition will be employed. The meaning of poverty emerges from a struggle between contrasting images, perceptions and interests. Knowledge about poverty can never be objective but remains of necessity perceptual (Kotalová, 1994; Malaska and Voipio, 1995).

Local knowledge about poverty and livelihood reveals the following characteristics:

1. Such knowledge is often articulated within conceptions of local cosmologies. People tend to employ metaphors when conveying a sense of meaning about activities for gaining a livelihood. These metaphors are not unequivocal, nor do they lend themselves to precise measurement. Therefore, they cannot be easily built into the models of positivist science as applied to development man-

- agement or even modern development anthropology. Symbol analysis, hitherto considered to be anthropological esoterica, should be integrated into current development research.
2. Knowledge is not equally distributed within households and communities. It may be hidden or muted, and is always affected by differential access to and control over public discourse. It is therefore essential that forms of sharing, disseminating and transforming local knowledge (such as definitions of poverty) enter the research agenda on poverty reduction.
 3. The process of knowing (learning about the conditions of the poor) is interactive, value-bound, context-determined and interpretative. Therefore, a detailed, reflective look at the encounter itself (who the actors are and what their interests, shared views and disagreements are) is of utmost relevance to a truly participatory assessment.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter, we have traced the historical evolution of approaches to rural poverty reduction by professional development planners in two rural regions of Tanzania, one of the poorest areas of the world according to official development statistics. By concentrating on the case study of Mtwara–Lindi we have recognized local reflections of the generational shifts in global thinking about poverty, and the roles and relations of the state, local government and individual rural poor people, civil servants and expatriate professionals. By comparing the problems and opportunity analyses of British and Finnish planners we have identified differences in the ways professional planners from two fundamentally different European welfare states have perceived poverty processes and development opportunities for rural people in Mtwara and Lindi. We remain with the challenge of finding a legitimate role and mode for development cooperation to support rural Tanzanians in escaping their poverty—not defined by us in terms of our commodity possession indicators but as perceived by themselves in terms of the deprivation of their capabilities to hope for and aspire to the types of lives they wish for.

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The recovery of cashew production in southern Tanzania

Pekka Seppälä

ABSTRACT

Southern Tanzania is known for its cashew production. Cashew trees spread steadily from the 1940s onwards until they covered a substantial part of the upland land in the mid-1970s. This was also the time when production reached its highest level. Since then, production has decreased drastically. It was not until a recent trade liberalization that cashew production partially recovered.

In this chapter, the author analyses the various issues that have affected cashew production in southern Tanzania. He shows how the history of this production has been affected by a number of institutional changes which have influenced production levels. The major national development ideologies have been "tested" on the crop and production has been affected by agricultural politics. This history covers all the classic confrontations between state and peasantry, between smallholders and estate owners, and between traders, labourers and cultivators. Additional factors are a racial confrontation among traders/processors, and ecological factors. The author concludes that although cashew has produced large incomes, the smallholders have not necessarily been those who received the major part of them. The disillusionment of the smallholders is perhaps the major factor which has determined the production level over the past two decades.

INTRODUCTION

Many Tanzanians associate southern Tanzania with cashew production. In agricultural terms, southern Tanzania has a reputation as backward but it is highly praised for the production of cashew which is an important foreign exchange earner, even on a national scale.

Tanzanian cashew production is significant on two counts. First, Tanzania has a substantial share of the world market.¹ In 1994, Tanzanian production was about 7 per cent of the world market and its share may well be increasing (FAO, 1995). Second, Tanzania has a reputation as a producer of prime quality unprocessed material. The quality of the crop depends on natural conditions, which are very favourable in the southern regions and, to a lesser extent, throughout Tanzania's coastal regions. International demand for cashew is high because its taste is preferred to groundnuts and several other nuts. Processed cashew nut is sold in small amounts as a snack (mainly in Europe) or as an ingredient for other dishes (mainly in India). Cashew nuts can also be easily processed for sweets and other confectionery. Because of its good storage capacities and ease of processing, cashew nut differs from other traditional articles of Tanzanian export in that income elasticity is high and markets are far from saturated.

Cashew production has had its historical ups and downs. Cashew production grew steadily during the 1960s and early 1970s in Tanzania. Then production levels fell dramatically and remained extremely low for a long period. Since the liberalization of trade during the 1990s, production levels have again risen rapidly. This suggests that cashew has been a successful feature of the structural adjustment programme (SAP) and of the Tanzanian economy.

This conclusion holds true at the general aggregate level. However, many cautionary remarks can be made about the facts and the relationship between the facts. Perhaps this cautious tone reflects wider concerns about the effects of SAP.

The effects of the production on the local economy are also subject to debate. In very general terms, it can be asked whether extensive cashew cultivation creates development (as growth) or underdevelopment (i.e., dependency and inequality). This paper presents the issues and arguments in this debate.

In this paper, one question predominates: are the small farmers of southern Tanzania the major beneficiaries of the liberalization of the cashew trade? This question entails a string of other questions: what are the unintended side-effects of liberalization?; what are the modal-

1. In this article we speak solely about the cashew nut. This can be sold raw or processed, which means shelled. The shell of the nut contains "oil" which is formally called "cashew nut shell liquid" (CNSL) and which has industrial uses such as in oil paints. Cashew trees also produce cashew apples which can be used as animal food or for making alcohol. Cashew trees also provide firewood.

ities of trade liberalization?; how do politics affect the implementation of rural development programmes? and what can we learn from institutional economics?

The paper attempts to answer these questions by counterposing each applicable argument. In the first section, liberalization of trade is discussed at the level of economic trends. In the second, I look at the history of cashew and the historical patterns influencing the current situation. In the third section, I investigate recent cashew production and trading patterns. In the fourth section, I discuss the politics of liberalization. I end the paper with an appraisal of the overall effects of trade liberalization.

THE LIBERALIZATION OF TRADE IN TANZANIA

It is widely held that the Tanzanian economy was in deep trouble in the early 1980s. The World Bank and foreign donors began to press for a revision of economic policies. The reforms were packaged into a conventional structural adjustment programme. As early as 1983 the Tanzanian government had started to implement its own version of adjustment. Nevertheless, it refrained from signing the official contract with the IMF until 1986, by which time internal and external pressure had mounted considerably (Kiondo, 1991).

Since 1986, the Tanzanian government has implemented structural adjustment programmes, although with varying degrees of commitment. As Hydén and Karlström (1993) have stressed, Tanzania has been slow to implement adjustment measures for several reasons. First there was strong political opposition to the weakening of state supremacy. When this issue was resolved in the mid-1980s, highly unstable political fronts emerged because there was ambiguity over the likely distributional effects of the reform programmes. Liberalization of crop trade has advanced at an uneven pace, varying from crop to crop and from region to region. Nevertheless, after a slow start the liberalization measures gained pace. In the 1990s, Tanzania is counted as one of the proper adjusters by the World Bank.

In terms of aggregate economic indicators, the years of SAP have been positive. After the initial years, GDP increase has exceeded the rate of population growth. Export figures also show a slight increase.

These aggregate figures hide as much as they reveal. First, with Sarris and van den Brink (1993) one can ask whether the pre-reform

economic crisis was mainly a crisis in the *official* economy—a crisis with relatively small effects on living standards of the majority of the rural population. Second, one can seriously question the changes resulting from trade liberalization. Export levels for traditional export crops have not increased substantially (with the exception of cashew). In monetary terms, export growth largely results from the development of non-traditional exports of minerals, such as gold and diamonds (EIU, 1994/1, 29; TET, 1993). It has been argued that these new exports had largely developed before liberalization. However, the trade was conducted “unofficially” and did not enter the trade statistics.

In sum, the changes caused by trade liberalization have been smaller than expected. Certainly trade liberalization has not led to the expected boost in major export crops.

Cashew is the only crop among the six big export crops (cashew, coffee, cotton, sisal, tea and tobacco) whose production has grown substantially. The increase has taken place since the 1990/91 growing season. After that date, the cashew trade was gradually liberalized. Exports reached 46,000 tonnes in the 1993/94 farming season (*Daily News*, 9.7.1994). Many, mainly Indian, merchants have become involved in the trade. Sixty-three export licences were allocated for the 1994/95 season in Mtwara alone.

Private exports have been facilitated by a process of institutional change in the 1990s. Price liberalization has been gradually effected and cooperative marketing structures have lost their central role. Initially, a new cooperative law was introduced in the early 1990s. This had limited effect because of the huge economic difficulties facing the regional cooperative unions. The past record of the cooperatives discouraged people from forming new cooperative structures. Another development was that the Cashew Nut Board of Tanzania lost its monopoly of exports of the crop. Private traders soon took over both the collection and exporting functions.

The position of Asian traders is central in cashew marketing. It is strengthened by the fact that most cashew is processed in India before it is sold on the world market. The role of the foreign and Tanzanian Indian traders has caused resentment in the local African business community. Local businessmen argue that exports of unprocessed cashew represent a large loss of profit. This argument is not unconnected with racial tensions and increasingly vocal views on the harm-

ful role of the Indian business community in exploiting natural resources. However, the situation is much more complex. In order to fully understand it we need to look back into the past.

THE HISTORY OF CASHEW IN SOUTHERN TANZANIA

Cashew trees were introduced into East Africa by the Portuguese in the seventeenth century. The trees spread naturally and now exist as a wild species in the coastal belt, especially in Mozambique (Brown, 1985:16). The nuts are the main product of the trees but they also produce a fruit, which is the basis for an excellent alcoholic drink. The export of nuts started early in this century. It is estimated that exports from Portuguese Africa to Bombay reached 11,000 tonnes in 1933. This level of export was matched only during the 1950s across the border in southern Tanganyika. In Tanganyika, serious discussion on exports began in 1933 when Gibson and Co. from Kenya applied for an exclusive licence to buy cashew nuts in the southern province for processing in Kenya. This application was not granted. Instead, the provincial administration started to campaign for planting more trees and the commercialization of the nuts. The export figures were 173 tonnes in 1942, 4,000 tonnes in 1945 and 7,000 tonnes in 1950/51. During the 1950s, cashew had established itself as a major cash crop in the region and in the country (Hassett, 1984:36-9).

Indian traders played a decisive part in commercialising cashew in Tanganyika. Those living on the coastal belt had trade connections with southern India. Another factor is that India is itself a major producer of cashew nuts. However, as early as the 1940s the capacity of Indian processing factories outstripped the local supply of nuts. Moreover, domestic supply was seasonal and did not coincide with supply from Africa. Thus it was very beneficial for India to import nuts (Brown, 1985:16).

In this regard, one must remember that the racial occupational categories imposed by the colonial government gave Indian traders a legitimate position to trade on behalf of Africans. If such restrictions had not existed, it is likely that the African traders would have played a much stronger role.

During the colonial era, the ample land resources were one reason for the spread of cashew in the southern province. Another likely factor in this spread was that cashew trees gave some security of land

tenure. Still another factor was the small labour input needed to plant trees. Cashew can also be interplanted with cassava, allowing for combined weeding of both crops. In short, the labour requirements were small in relation to possible benefits.

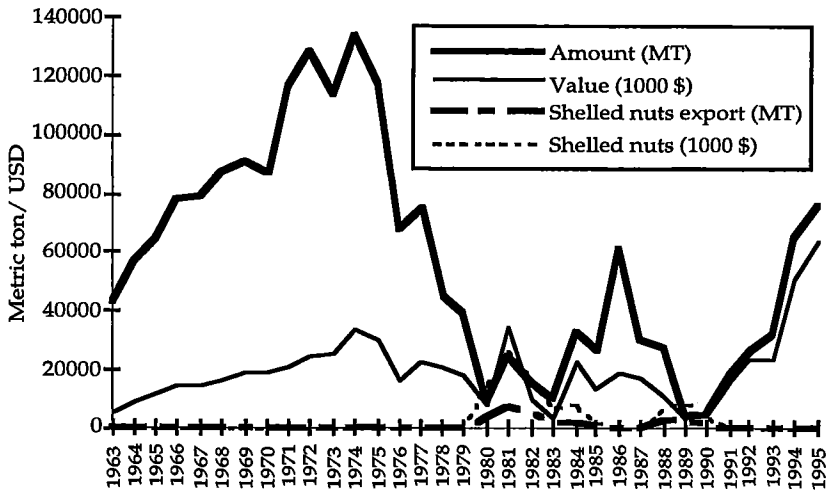
The growth of cashew production was impressive during Tanzania's first decade of independence. The value of raw nut exports increased from Tshs. 36m in 1961 to Tshs. 196m in 1974. The amount of CATA (Cashew Authority of Tanzania) purchases increased from 74,000 tonnes in 1965/66 to 145,000 tonnes in 1973/74. Then the production level fell dramatically to below 100,000 tonnes in just two years (Ellis, 1980:2 and 38). Production has never fully recovered since then, as is shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. *Tanzanian cashew exports*

| Year | Value <i>USD million</i> | Volume <i>'000 tonnes</i> | Unit price <i>USD</i> |
|------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1980 | 7.3 | 9.1 | 808 |
| 1981 | 34.3 | 25.2 | 1365 |
| 1982 | 9.5 | 17.2 | 554 |
| 1983 | 6.5 | 10.5 | 619 |
| 1984 | 21.9 | 33.5 | 655 |
| 1985 | 11.5 | 23.6 | 487 |
| 1986 | 15.0 | 17.8 | 842 |
| 1987 | 12.4 | 11.2 | 1111 |
| 1988 | 16.1 | 16.3 | 987 |
| 1989 | 7.4 | 9.1 | 812 |
| 1990 | 11.0 | 10.0 | 905 |
| 1991 | 18.5 | 16.2 | 875 |

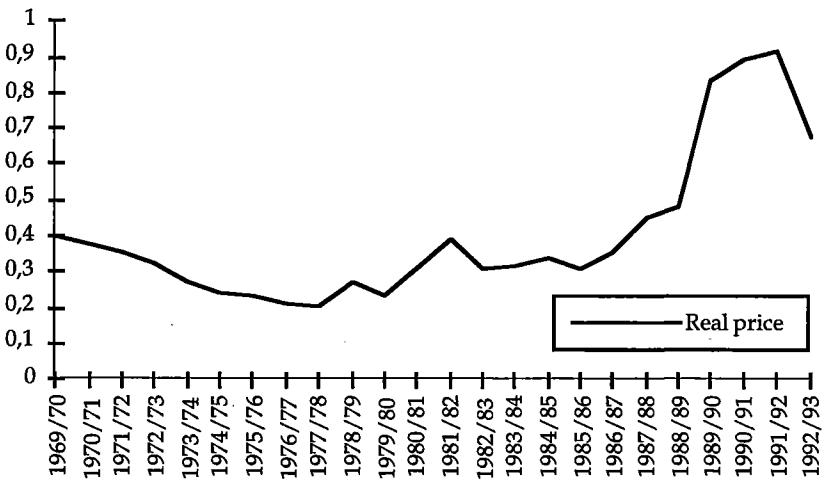
Source: TET 1993, 39.

Cashew nut and shelled cashew nut export



Source: FAO STAT database.

Real producer price (CPI Dec. 1990=100)



Source: TET 1993b, 109 and Ellis 1980, 40.

Table 2. Cashew production level and producer prices

| Year | Official producer price Tshs. | Official purchases of the raw nuts '000 tonnes |
|---------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1962/63 | 0.54 | 43.2 |
| 1963/64 | 0.65 | 56.7 |
| 1964/65 | 0.70 | 64.6 |
| 1965/66 | 0.70 | 73.4 |
| 1966/67 | 0.70 | 84.2 |
| 1967/68 | 0.72 | 73.2 |
| 1968/69 | 0.76 | 118.0 |
| 1969/70 | 0.90 | 110.3 |
| 1979/71 | 0.90 | 112.5 |
| 1971/72 | 0.90 | 126.4 |
| 1972/73 | 0.90 | 125.6 |
| 1973/74 | 0.90 | 143.3 |
| 1974/75 | 1.03 | 117.5 |
| 1975/76 | 1.03 | 82.4 |
| 1976/77 | 1.06 | 97.6 |
| 1977/78 | 1.11 | 68.4 |
| 1978/79 | 1.63 | 57.1 |
| 1979/80 | 1.80 | 41.4 |
| 1980/81 | 3.00 | 57.2 |
| 1981/82 | 5.00 | 44.4 |
| 1982/83 | 5.00 | 33.0 |
| 1983/84 | 7.00 | 48.3 |
| 1984/85 | 9.80 | 32.1 |
| 1985/86 | 12 | 19.0 |
| 1986/87 | 18 | 16.5 |
| 1987/88 | 30 | 24.4 |
| 1988/89 | 40 | 19.3 |
| 1989/90 | 84 | 19.0 |
| 1990/91 | 110 | 33.0 |
| 1991/92 | 137 | 36.0 |
| 1992/93 | 125* | 19.3 |
| 1993/94 | 140-300* | |
| 1994/95 | * | |

Sources: TET 1993b, 109 and 113; Ellis 1980, 40.

* Unregulated price. During 1992/93 the government still announced the floor price.

The fall in production levels has given rise to several different explanations. The first explanation is that the implementation of the villagization programme has seriously affected cropping patterns and access to cashew trees. New villages were far away from the old

cashew fields. After villagization (conducted largely during 1972–1974), the farmers were also obliged to concentrate on building houses and securing food production. Second, the prices of food crops went up relative to cashew prices, which had the same nominal price year after year. Third, few new trees were planted and existing trees had passed their prime. Planting was not sustained because peasants felt uneasy about government intervention and ‘advice’, the unpopular and erratic practice of grading and the deteriorating prices (Ellis, 1980). A fourth possible explanation is that the high figures in the early 1970s partly result from the smuggling of nuts from Mozambique. Fifth, fungus seriously affected the crop during the 1980s and it is possible that the disease was already prevalent in the late 1970s.

Basically, the three first factors relate to the local peasant production system and its interface with the state, while the last two factors have their origin elsewhere. It is not possible to rank these explanations or even conclusively compare the social factors with, say, the fungal disease.

CURRENT PRODUCTION AND TRADING PATTERNS

Production of cashew has started to increase again in the 1990s. The official production of cashew was 60,000 tonnes for the 1993/94 season and 80,000 tonnes for the 1994/95 season. There are several factors for this, which need to be compared.

First, producer prices have increased, making cashew profitable once more in comparison with other crops. Whereas the government-controlled price was Tshs. 110 in 1990/91, the price on the unregulated market fluctuated between Tshs. 140 and 300 in 1993/94. During the 1994/95 buying season the prices were still high. Second, land values have increased and buying cashew trees is a convenient way to get easy access to large pieces of land. Several cases of dubious land sales and land appropriations have been reported in the regions. Third, a sulphur antidote to fungus was developed during the 1980s and some positive results have been reported. However, peasants do not fully understand the cause of the disease and the way treatment should be undertaken. Thus they have adopted the sulphur treatment cautiously and, have not always heeded the treatment recommenda-

tions of the extension officers.¹ The results in terms of increased production of nuts have naturally been variable. It has also been reported that access to sulphur, handled largely by private traders, is erratic. A large majority of peasants have not been able to afford sulphur. Thus, increased production is mainly generated by a minority of wealthy and accumulating cultivators (Derbyshire and Gongwe, 1992; ODA, 1992).

These factors are central in an overview of the general production level of cashew nut. In southern Tanzania these factors play a varying role in different localities. Detailed variations exist from district to district, village to village and from year to year.

The development of the cashew trade has been equally uneven. A major shift has occurred from government-controlled trade to private trade. Here again, local variations are remarkable. We start with the case of Lindi.

The Lindi regional cooperative society is practically defunct. It collected some 3,800 tonnes of cashew nuts in 1990/91. The following year the collection amounted to 1,000 tonnes, and during the 1992/93 the cooperative was unable to fund crop collection. The Central Bank of Tanzania entered the scene and funded crop buying through cooperatives during the 1993/94 season.

The demise of the regional cooperative unions has naturally affected primary cooperative societies which could, in theory, be forced to pay the debts incurred as a result of mismanagement at the regional level. Measures were taken to strengthen the primary cooperative societies in 1993 in the Lindi region. The village-level primary cooperative societies were amalgamated into larger units covering several villages. This exercise was conducted in a rather top-down manner and generated very little enthusiasm among the peasants. Only a few persons paid for shares in the new primary cooperative societies. From the peasant perspective, control of the cooperative societies was moved further away and handed to local elites.

Private traders were allowed to buy part of the crop from 1991/92 onwards and to export from 1992/93 onwards.² For taxation pur-

1. The rejection of sulphur arises partly from the complex patterns of interplanting which are prevalent in poor soils where cashew is cultivated. The use of sulphur necessitates cashew monoculture instead of interplanting. If cashew were cultivated in pure stands, this would increase labour demands for the crop.

2. Steven Jaffee (1994) has made a detailed analysis of the large traders during these early years of liberalized trade.

poses, they were ordered to buy through the primary cooperative society. An interested trader was first required to obtain a trading licence which specified the buying location and the amount. The trader then visited the primary cooperative society and provided it with funds to buy the crop from the farmers. The primary cooperative society is responsible for actually buying the produce, including weighing and scaling the crop. Both the primary cooperative society and the district authorities charge a levy for their services. The trader is responsible for transport and, if he has the capacity, the export of the crop.

Different versions of trade privatization can be detected in Mtwara, Newala, Masasi and Tunduru. In these districts the cooperative union has been able to retain a role in input distribution and produce sales, partly due to government- and World Bank-supported cashew programmes. The Mtwara cooperative union has also been able to maintain its position by delaying the licensing of private traders and acting as sole buyer during the early buying season.

An interesting position has been taken by the Newala Development Foundation, which is officially a non-governmental organization but which works closely with the Newala district council. It has been given a mandate to impose a tax on cashew amounting to ten per cent of crop value. This is then used for education and transport development in the district. The levy decreases the amount paid to the farmer and has generated resentment in the district. One consequence has been the "smuggling" of the crop across the district boundary to areas where the levy is not collected.

Locational differences in the pace of privatization have facilitated the rise of middlemen who exploit the unsettled marketing conditions. A common type of middleman is a local trader who buys cashew nuts from peasants who have a small crop of a few kilos collected from untended fields. Sometimes, the sellers are wives or children selling the crop clandestinely to escape the disapproval of the male owner of the trees. It should also be noted that nuts theft is a large problem in many villages and thieves are often cited as a major reason for not weeding and tending cashew trees. During 1992/93 and 1993/94 local small-scale traders could buy at prices which were up to 50 per cent below the announced first buying price. They could sell at the announced floor price in another location where buying had

already started, or speculate as the price fluctuated during the buying season. Either way, profits were huge.

Speculation is also based on the control given to licensing authorities and primary cooperative societies. Private traders have to deal with these authorities and can reap large benefits if their buying licences do not cover the whole amount of the crop actually bought. There is no means to estimate the level of unlicensed trade because there is no functioning system of determining the amount of crop actually exported from the country. One consequence of privatization is that production and trading figures of cashew have become very unreliable.

THE POLITICS OF THE CASHEW TRADE AND PROCESSING

Liberalization of the cashew trade has created new constellations of interests and new lines of conflict. The old conflicts mostly related to the producer prices versus the world market prices or the profits of the peasants versus the state apparatus. The state apparatus comprised the politicians, processing authorities and marketing authorities as a single front. A single parastatal (Cashew Nut Board of Tanzania) controlled input supply, output marketing, crop processing and exporting. After liberalization, this front has split into several segments.

The liberalization of cashew trade has naturally reduced the power of the state authorities. The winners have been the private traders. The central state agency, namely the Cashew Nut Board of Tanzania, still tries to influence the rules of the game. Although the Cashew Nut Board of Tanzania has withdrawn from its export monopoly and from price control, its chairman stated in early 1994 that cashew nut buying is haphazard and that this threatened the future of the cashew nut industry, and also the economic interests of farmers.

The chairman further stated that the Board would support the position that cashew nuts should be processed in the country before being exported (*Daily News*, 1.3.1994). This is an overtly political statement. While the idea of local processing (which can be motivated with national level benefits, i.e. (increasing the value added within the country) is most welcome, the actual implementation of this approach is very difficult. Those traders with export capacity include companies originating in (or tightly related to companies in) India and Singapore.

They use Mtwara port to ship unprocessed cashew to India. At the same time, the southern regions have several cashew factories which lie idle because of operational problems and also because of serious faults in technical layout (the input-output relation is very low as the machinery breaks the nuts, considerably reducing the value of the product). The factories were constructed with a World Bank loan during the 1970s. The Cashew Nut Board of Tanzania controls the existing processing plants but the plants are no-longer operational and thus they are an unsuitable solution to the processing problem.¹ Yet in 1993, the prime minister recommended that some of the factories should be put into operation (*Daily News*, 13.3.1994). This would most likely require their privatization or at least joint ventures with private companies. So far no interested buyers have appeared.²

The pressure thus existed for traders to process nuts within Tanzania. In response, the traders had a meeting before the buying season of 1994/95 where they stated that they "are determined to form an association that will support government efforts in rehabilitating the cashew nut industry with a view to improving the crop output". It was also reported that the traders "discussed in length a proposal by the government that in future no raw cashew nut will be exported. They urged the government not to do things in a hurry, but such important moves should be taken step by step" (*Express*, 27-29.10.1994).

Some traders made moves in this direction in 1994 and 1995. They leased some of the cashew factories, started to renovate the premises and to employ people. One factory was opened for a short period in Lindi. Plans for opening many other factories were in circulation. A critic noted that these leasing arrangements signalled to the government that the traders were serious. Meanwhile, the government continued to grant export licences for raw nuts and local processing remained at a very low level.

1. The World Bank has not openly discussed its role in the building of the large factories. Its own evaluation of the relations of the World Bank with the government of Tanzania shows that the World Bank fully supported capital intensive technologies and parastatal control until around 1980. After that year the Bank's policy changed completely (cf. Jaffee, 1994).

2. This kind of joint venture has taken place, for example, in Mbeya where the regional cooperative union has joined hands with Rajani Industries to rehabilitate Mbeya Gineries. Due (1993) reports a privatization discussion concerning Manawa Ginnery and Morogoro Cooking Oil Refinery and National Food Company and Tanzanian Tea Authority.

The following buying season 1995/96 witnessed the continuation of the controversy. East African reported that "the buyers are offering very low prices or setting up buying camps in unauthorized areas, so as to evade paying taxes and local governments levies" (*East African*, 18-24.3.1996). In the same article the chairman of the cashew board "appealed to the government to review the cashew nut market and give the board the mandate to take measures against private crop buyers who violated the country's free market regulations. The government should ensure that all exported nuts are processed, as they then fetch up to three times the price of unprocessed nuts".

The political choice between processing in old local factories or Indian factories is a choice between two unsatisfactory alternatives. An innovative solution to the political problem would be the development of the new labour-intensive processing technology in Tanzania. This technology, however, would incur capital costs and compete with established technologies in India. The Indian processing facilities have the additional benefits of low labour costs and state subventions.

Another important political issue concerns the distribution of sulphur to the farmers. In some districts, the cooperative union has been able to distribute large amounts of sulphur at a reasonable price. Many private traders have also been active in this field. Whereas private traders earlier sold sulphur on credit to farmers, the current volatile situation discourages traders from engaging in such arrangements. The lack of credit facilities means that only a small group of the farmers has the capacity to use sulphur.

Just before the collection for the 1994/95 season the deputy minister of agriculture said in a public discussion on sulphur provision that current government policy was to disengage from activities which could be carried out by the private sector. He said that the supply of farm inputs had been left in the hands of private companies, businessmen and cooperative societies (*Daily News*, 9.7.1994).

THE DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFITS

The World Bank has long been a central player in cashew production. It was instrumental in constructing the cashew processing plants in the 1970s. Since 1985, it has supported a major project aimed at revitalising cashew production and the cashew industry. Throughout, the

aim of the World Bank has been to increase production for the world market.

With the liberalization of the input and output trade, the distribution of benefits has become a crucial issue. The distributional effects are important, first, between different farming groups and, second, between farmers, traders, processing agencies and the state.

The distributional effects among farmers can be illustrated through two typical cases of farmers. The first is the smallholder with an acre of cashew at a distant plot. He has no interest in either weeding the field or using sulphur for the treatment of his old trees. He harvests 30 kilos of nuts, which he sells to a local trader for Tshs. 80 per kilo. The money is enough to buy one piece of *kanga* cloth. Another example is a local district councillor who is engaged in several circles of crop trade. She has been able to secure sacks of sulphur and rent a blower from an Indian trader, as well as employ people to weed the fields. The price she received for her nuts was Tshs. 140 and the total income from 20 bags of nuts is Tshs. 250,000. Even with the costs of sulphur and labour, she has a sizeable profit which enables her to buy several acres of cashew trees.

A study of the major cashew areas in southern Tanzania estimated that 70 per cent of households had cashew trees and that 50 per cent of all households harvested some nuts in 1990/91.¹ About 50 per cent of the farmers who did harvest, produced small amounts totalling only 10 per cent of sales. On the other hand, half the crop is sold by only 10 per cent of farmers (ODA, 1992:6-7). A later study in two cashew-dominated villages in Masasi revealed that the poorest group received half its total income from cashew sales, the moderately wealthy group slightly less, and the richest group almost three-quarters of its total income (Lamboll et al., 1993:18).

Westergaard and Kayumbo (1970:8-9) noted that larger farmers used hired labour for various tasks related to cashew production. Later farming studies have noticed a similar pattern. However, cashew cultivation does not easily develop into large-scale plantation agriculture, but instead tends to be articulated with the smallholder economy. This relates to the cultivation patterns of the crop. The labour requirement per acre is relatively much lower when cashew is

1. The agroecological variation within the major producing regions is large. This explains some variation in cashew production. For agroecological variation, see e.g., ODA (1979) and URT (1985).

interplanted with other crops. Second, the individual plots are often very small. A capitalist can most easily accumulate large blocks of land only in distant areas where the trees have been abandoned for several years and production is difficult to rehabilitate. Third, crop-stealing is a local device for distributing wealth more equally. For all these reasons it may be more beneficial for large-scale capitalists to remain outside the production sphere but engage in input supply and produce trade. However, village-level differentiation may well increase with cashew as a major component in the accumulation strategy.

The distributional effects between the farmers, traders, workers and the government are complex. Before liberalization, this matter was a political matter based on decisions on the ratio of producer price to export price of the raw nuts. Between 1962 and 1975 this ratio was between 50 and 72 per cent but then fell as low as 30 per cent. A large part of the mark-up was used by the inefficient marketing parastatal. After trade and price liberalization, competition between exporting traders was first fierce and the price of cashew nut escalated. During 1995/96 and 1996/97 seasons the nominal price has remained at the previous level. Although traders have managed to make a profit, the farmers as a group are also a winner in a liberalized marketing situation. The state has kept crop levies/taxes at a moderate level.

STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND CASHEW

The aggregate figures show a substantial increase in cashew production. Discussions with farmers reveal that the increase has taken place in few localities and among few farmers. The current situation shows production levels which are still below their full potential.

The World Bank has through its interventions advocated complex technology to boost cashew processing in Tanzania. First it advocated factories which did not live up to expectation. Then it advocated the use of sulphur which could be delivered to only a small fraction of the farmers. At the same time, the more modest strategies of increasing production and processing have been systematically ignored. Cashew production has been seen as separate from local farming systems and household production patterns, although in reality it is an important complement in terms of interplanting and seasonal work. As to pro-

cessing, the technical options to have nuts processed with 'appropriate technology' has not advanced significantly. Internationally, promising systems of 'appropriate technology' for cashew processing do exist.

It may or may not be that full-scale liberalization (i.e., the export of raw nuts instead of the processed nuts) is harmful to national interests. However, the important initiative, taken by the Cashew Nut Board of Tanzania, for advancing processing in Tanzania may be undermined because of its political connotations. Suggesting local processing without concrete implementation plans or resource allocations can be interpreted by the private sector as a political move which needs to be notified but which can still be manoeuvred. Hydén and Karlström (1993) have noted that ambiguity is prevalent in Tanzanian politics. Many parties involved hold that just "anything can happen", and this attitude certainly discourages responsible long-term commitment. The unpredictable policies of organising processing and trade do not provide a "conducive" production environment and thus do not necessarily serve the farmers' interests. Neither do they generate sustainable ways of rehabilitating the exhausted cashew fields and thus increasing the level of production to earlier peak levels.

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Newspapers

Daily News
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Express



PART II

**WOMEN, MEN AND
DEVELOPMENT**

Villagers' perception of poverty: Kineng'ene village, Lindi district

Bernadeta Killian

ABSTRACT

It is one thing to measure development with externally imposed indicators and another to measure it with the criteria used within a certain cultural setting. In this paper, the author provides a view of rural development as perceived by the villagers in Kineng'ene village near to Lindi town.

The chapter provides a holistic overview on a village as a locus of rural development. It analyses the promises and prospects that institutional development has offered the villagers. It depicts the distinctions that exist in the village between the men and the women, the rich and the poor. Although the past record of economic growth has been less successful than expected, there are villagers who still look forward with a degree of optimism. While the future is unpredictable, the village setting has its points of anchorage which provide cultural continuity and economic opportunities.

This study is a descriptive study of living conditions in a coastal village in Lindi district. The fundamental question of the study was who are the poor and the disadvantaged? The basic purpose here was to identify different potential target groups and the way they can improve the well-being of their lives. Several target groups have been identified, for instance, small-scale farmers, small non-agricultural entrepreneurs, rural and urban women, the urban poor, etc. In relation to this, different institutions and organizations have been trying to formulate and implement various programmes and policies in order to increase the social, political and economic empowerment of the poor, discriminated, disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

However, there has been a problem of identifying the actual potential target group in different contextual situations. The problem has become more serious in recent years due to the rapid and fundamental changes taking place in all spheres of life, that is, socially, politically, as well as economically. In addition, even the few studies which exist on the poor and identification of poverty are based on donors' or researchers' conception of development/transformation. Therefore, what is being measured is what is considered to be important to the researcher/donor rather than to the people being studied. The information which is available is a result of conditions which are affected by donor/professional interests (Chachage, 1994). In this context, it should be noted that most concepts on who is poor and who is not originated in developed countries, where the indices to measure the poverty line were developed and applied to those societies for a long time (Midgley, 1984).

Given this, it was decided that in the study, rather than approach the question of poverty and poverty alleviation in a pre-conceived way, which assumes that there are universal criteria which can be applied everywhere, it would be best to approach the issue with an open mind. The purpose was to get to know what was happening in the countryside and what villagers would like to do. Thus, the aim of the field work was to set out to answer questions such as: What kind of conceptions do villagers have of how production is and should be organized? What are their conceptions and indicators of development/ transformation? What are their conceptions of empowerment? What are their indicators of poverty? What are their indicators of improvement? How do they conceptualize good living standards? What would they like their lives to look like in ten years time? In a nutshell, what is people's self-evaluation of their life situation? The answers to these basic questions were to reflect on issues such as: history and transformation which have taken place over time in the rural areas, gender relations through history, the historical role of children, the socio-economic structural positions of various categories of rural people, the relations of these groups with power structures, power holders and politics in the area.

The findings of this study in relation to the indicators of poverty, empowerment, good living standards etc., do not necessarily point to the same universal criteria of health, life expectancy, shelter, diet, education, etc. They basically reveal that there is no single indicator of

poverty or good living standards. In other words, a certain indicator can be important in one area and less important in another. It is within this context that this chapter will present a descriptive field report of the villagers' conception of their lives and how they would like to improve their living standards. The village studied is called Kineng'ene in Lindi district in Lindi region. The unique characteristic of this area is that the region is regarded by many to be "exceptionally poor" compared to other regions in Tanzania.

KINENG'ENE VILLAGE

Description of the study area

Lindi is one of the oldest towns in Tanzania. It was established in the 11th century by Arab traders. In colonial times, Lindi region belonged to the then southern province of Tanganyika, together with Mtwara and Ruvuma. After independence, the provinces were abolished and instead smaller administrative regions were formed. In this process, the Lindi and Mtwara regions were constituted as one administrative region, until 1971 when Lindi was declared a separate administrative region.

Developmentally, Lindi is one of the most neglected regions in Tanzania. Historically, the region has been very much affected by the nature of the colonial relationship that existed during colonial rule. As a result, this relationship led to an absolute and relative decline in opportunities in the region as compared with other regions. Increasingly, it also led to a change in the opportunities available to people in various social positions relative to one another. In this regard, Liebenow (1971) argues "... it was a policy decision of the colonial administrators, rather than colonialism itself, that was responsible for the isolation". This is correct, given the fact that it was the very same colonialism that created potential opportunities in some regions and neglected others.

In the post-independence period, despite the popular slogan of nation-building, no serious attempts were made to transform the poor colonial set-up in the region. As a result, the region continued to be marginalized. Moreover, the geographic location of Lindi, coupled with its poor infrastructural connections to the hinterland, has aggravated its economic vulnerability compared to other more favourably

located regions such as Morogoro, Arusha, Iringa, Kilimanjaro, etc. Although communication is a very important catalyst for development, for about six to eight months in the year, the region is cut off from direct land communication with advantaged regions like Dar es Salaam. There is only one road from Dar es Salaam (the main commercial centre and former capital city) to the region. It runs through the Rufiji river and, during the annual heavy rains, the road becomes impassable. This situation, which has existed for years, is supposedly going to improve, though it is taking a very long time.

In addition to the problems caused by Lindi's geographic isolation, there has been very little effort to improve the sustainable economic base of the region. Since independence, the most creative response by the government to the economic challenge has been the blossoming of the cashew industry. Unfortunately, this took place in response to better prices and without proper planning, without the improvement of roads or the construction of market places. Worse still, the technology installed in many of the cashew factories (which at the time had not been tested other than in Tanzania) proved to be of poor quality, hampering the sustainability of the cashew industry in terms of both employment opportunities and production capacity. All of this had a great impact on the socio-cultural relations of the people in the region. In other words, their culture has been continuously shaped by the existing socio-economic situation. Given the fact that the area is basically characterized by poor economic opportunities, it has been difficult for people to feel a sense of willingness to engage in risk-taking activities which might improve their living standards.

The socio-economic conditions of Kineng'ene village are a clear reflection of the general situation of the region's level of development. Kineng'ene village is located 18 km south-west of Lindi town within the Lindi urban district. The village is in the Mtanda ward jurisdiction. According to the 1988 census, the village has a population of 16,126 inhabitants and about 4,000 households.

A brief account of economic transformations

The history of the village is intimately linked with the actions of the post-colonial activities of the ruling majority party, Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). There was no Kineng'ene village before the mid-1960s. Then it was the surrounding lowland area

(known as Mmwiwi), which was inhabited. The area was covered by small settlements namely, Mmukule, Ngurumahamba, Nchochoro, Mtange, Nandidi, Nandemo and Ntutu. In the mid-1960s, when the political pressure for people to move closer to each other to constitute a village emerged, people started moving from the lowland areas to the upland area which was more accessible for administrative purposes. Previously, however, people used to come to the uplands to look for firewood. In the Mwera language, firewood is called *neng'ene*, hence the name Kineng'ene. Kineng'ene was constituted of all the above-mentioned smaller settlements. The village was later surveyed and registered after the villagization process in 1974.¹ The majority of the people living in the village are immigrants from outside Lindi region villages and also from other villages within the region. Culturally, the population is mixed, and includes communities such as the Makonde, the Mwera and the Yao. The coastal Swahili culture has a relatively strong influence in the area.

By far the most important economic activity in the village is small-scale agriculture. Most farming takes place on individual holdings which are fragmented into several parts. Generally, the people are engaged in subsistence farming. As a respondent, Mr. Lingombe said, "*Sisi ni watu wa pwani hatulimi sana,*" literally meaning that "We are coastal people and thus agriculture is not our main activity". This is also reflected in the size of their farms. The average size of a farm is one acre, but there is a lot of variation from family to family. Most of the work is carried out using a small hoe, while tractor cultivation is rare. The practice of ploughing with oxen is traditionally non-existent. The dominant crops in Kineng'ene include cashew nuts, cassava, millet, maize, rice (paddy) and coconut. Cash crops are mainly cashew and coconut.

The introduction of cash crops in the area originated during colonial times. The Germans built roads, established sisal plantations and introduced new cash crops e.g. cashew, cotton, groundnuts, etc. Within a few years, expectations proved entirely unrealistic and the production of these crops collapsed. It was in the 1940s and 1950s that the British colonial masters began again to encourage the cultivation of groundnuts and cashew. Commercial cultivation in the area spread

1. The villagization programme was part of the government's policy of "socialism and self reliance" whereby people were forced to live together in village communities for the immediate purpose of bringing about collective development.

in the 1950s and 1960s, because of an increase in support from the colonial administration. The favourable constellation of international and internal market forces at that particular time was another motivating factor.

The production of cashew declined drastically during the post-villagization period. People were shifted from their areas of origin to nucleated villages. Kineng'ene village became what it is today as a result of this process, during which it became increasingly difficult for the villagers to take care of their cashew farms as they were now too far from the village. In addition, the price of cashew on the international market started to decline and hence reduced villagers' morale in taking care of their cashew groves. Throughout the period from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, the villagers experienced terrible economic hardships, as cashew production did not earn them enough money. Consequently, people at both Kineng'ene village and others in the region stopped concentrating on cashew cultivation; instead, their efforts shifted to coconut production as a cash crop.

At the beginning, coconut production was partly for private consumption (oil) and partly for sale. After the decline of cashew, coconut became the major source of cash. This remains the case up to the present. Currently, coconut fields are being expanded as a result of the increase in prices. This has led to new developments, whereby, a rising number of small private businessmen from town come to the village to buy coconut and cashew products. Sometimes they buy the produce while it is still on the farms, due to the increasing competition among themselves. These middlemen are the ones who benefit most as a result of the changing agricultural forms and the crisis facing the villagers. At the same time, the commercialization of food crops like cassava, maize, paddy and vegetables also began. In fact, some villagers cut down cashew trees and planted these crops so as to earn a greater income. Changes in climatic conditions in the mid-1970s may also account for a shift in the type of crops which are cultivated. The area experienced periodic droughts, as result of which cassava production became very important. Besides being a major food crop, cassava has become an important cash crop in the area.

Cashew production picked up again in the mid-1980s. Essentially, the expansion in cashew cultivation is a result, firstly, of pressure from the government, secondly, better producer prices and thirdly, the introduction of special pesticides (sulphur) for treating cashew

trees. Thus, many people have returned to cashew cultivation expecting to earn more cash. Again, given the severe economic crisis facing the area, it is difficult for people to wait for the ripening of periodic cashew or coconut products. Indeed, only a few villagers own large farms. This has meant that many people continue selling cassava to make ends meet. It is this practice of selling cassava to town dwellers and exporters which makes Kineng'ene village experience problems of serious food shortages every now and then. As one respondent said, "Shortage of food is basically due to the fact that cassava, which is grown for food, is now for sale before it is dry". On top of this, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs are rarely used in the area. Some villagers pointed out that "traditionally we are not used to the practice of using fertilizers on our farms". A few villagers said, however, that they only use fertilizer on their farms when they have the money to buy it. The village agricultural extension officer also said "I have little work to do because of the lack of agricultural inputs to demonstrate to the villagers. The government does not have funds to distribute those inputs to the people. Only very few villagers can afford to buy by themselves and are the ones who yield good harvests". Thus, apart from the fact that people are not traditionally used to the application of fertilizers, a lack of income seems to be the major obstacle for many of them.

In terms of social services development, the village has had no dispensary and the villagers have been compelled to get medical services from Lindi town. The dispensary building is now under construction. The construction work is being conducted under the sponsorship of the town authority and with communal village efforts. According to the District Personnel Officer, the dispensary was supposed to be opened at the end of March, 1994. This project also includes the construction of three houses for the personnel.

Likewise, the village has been facing serious water problems for quite a long time. A water supply system was installed in the village in the early 1980s. However, the system was out of order by 1986, when the hand pumps, pipes and other equipment were stolen from the water points. The local government, through the town authority, has begun to re-install the water system in the village. While the work requires collective efforts, it seems to be lagging behind, as recently villagers have tended to be slow in performing communal work, and their minimal participation in the project is hindering progress.

As far as education is concerned, there is a primary school with the capacity to take 250 pupils from class 1–VII. The school was established by missionaries in 1967 and the government took it over in 1977. According to the school's Acting Head Teacher, the enrollment of children to school is currently going down mainly because of parents' attitude of giving low priority to education. This is partly due to the fact that children are increasingly more useful to their parents in domestic work, agricultural activities and petty trade. In addition, many of the villagers are increasingly unable to pay for the various school "contributions" and other expenses.

THE SOCIAL CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE

Traditionally, people in this area are basically matrilineal in the lineage and clan pattern. In this context, the tracing of the lineage is through the mother's side, and the maternal uncles have a central role in decision-making. Changes that have taken place over a period of years have, to a large extent, transformed the nature of the previously existing social relationships. The matrilineal pattern appears to be somehow weak and less influential. The uncles' role, for example, is only felt during marriage and initiation ceremonies.

People in this village practice initiation ceremonies for both girls and boys. The process involves taking children (8–11 years old) to the bush for training and for circumcision of the boys. These ceremonies are traditionally conducted once a year, usually after the harvesting period. Recently, however, the government decided to restrict the frequency to once every three years. At the beginning, people did not take the order seriously, but persisted in holding the ceremony every year. Since the government's order became seriously enforceable, the ceremonies tend to be conducted as instructed.

Although the communities in the area have historically been matrilineal, the elders have always played a very important role even in a transformed village like Kineng'ene in issues like the settlement of local disputes, reconciliations, marriages, funerals, etc. This is partly because the communities in this area have never had authority in the form of chiefs, instead, the clan organizations dominated and within these, the elders played an important role. Attempts by the colonial governments to impose chiefs in the area proved futile. It is the elders who train/trained children during initiation ceremonies. These elders

trained groups of children (boys and girls separately) on how to become good and responsible youths and future parents in their society.

With the government's restriction of the frequency of the initiation ceremonies, the role of elders as informal teachers is being increasingly eroded. According to the villagers, the government has restricted the ceremonies periodically on the pretext that they interfere with the school schedule, and also affect the children's performance during the school sessions (as if a child had to undergo initiation every year). The most important limitation, however, is the fact that food scarcity and low income have reduced the capacity of many villagers to host a feast for relatives and friends for a whole week after a child's initiation.

The role of the children is mainly to support the family in various economic activities, especially agricultural activities and petty trade. However, many youths in the village (especially after completing primary education) are not interested in agricultural activities; they prefer to engage in petty trading like selling charcoal and coconut and working in the salt pans.

Previously, women played a very important role as midwives. This was common at a time when, for example, a girl conceived while in school or out of marriage. The older women could never take such a girl to the hospital and instead helped her to deliver at home, and forced her (if she refused) to mention the name of the man who made her pregnant. This practice has now stopped, through the emphasis on modern medical treatment.

People go to the hospital when they fall sick. In addition, being coastal people, Kineng'ene villagers normally prefer the so called *kombe*. This treatment is administered by Moslem sheikhs or other traditional healers, mainly by using a paper written in Arabic script in red ink and dissolved in water. It is a common practice and many people believe in it. It has implications at a relational level, because many people respect and fear traditional healers since the general understanding is that one can be cursed/condemned by healers through the use of the Koran. People fear healers and witch-doctors.

An important characteristic of the village is the traditional *ngomas* (dances) which are very common in the village, especially in the evenings. The most popular *ngoma* is called Deda, which is performed mainly by the youths. These are accompanied by drinking a lot of

local beer and *mnazi* (coconut wine). Alongside this there is an institutionalized practice of agricultural group work called *mkumi*. This is a widespread system whereby villagers from neighbouring families go and work for one of these families and their work is paid for either by food or local beer. Both men and women take part. According to the respondents this system is useful mainly because "We don't have modern agricultural equipment and by working together we make the job easier".

On an individual level, most of the labour is provided by household members, although better-off cultivators may use hired labour for big jobs such as bush clearing (but these are very few). As a matter of fact, the agricultural produce obtained per season cannot sustain one family's requirements for a whole year. As the village school acting head teacher said, "Throughout the year the farmer in Kineng'ene village is incapable of producing a surplus. Hunger is always courting the villagers."

Socio-economic differentiation of the villagers

The villagers basically distinguish between three categories of people. People who own large tracts of land for coconut and cashew cultivation make up about 10 per cent of the population. Among them, those who keep livestock are considered to be in the upper echelons of this group. Livestock has always been comparatively unimportant in the production system in the Lindi region due to tsetse fly infection, poor grazing areas and the existence of poisonous plants. However some cattle, goats and sheep are kept. Ownership is restricted to a minority of households and productivity is very low. The village has 54 cows, 184 goats, 52 sheep and 2 pigs. There are basically only six private cattle-keepers in the village, and some cattle are owned by the local village government itself. The largest owner has 18 head and the smallest 5. The village owns 4 head. There are 20 goat-keepers and the largest owner has 39 goats. The majority of the other owners have one or two goats. The 52 sheep in the village are held by eight individuals.

Some members of the above-mentioned well-off group reside in town. Those who stay in the village, live in comparatively good modern houses roofed with corrugated iron sheets. At least they have adequate food to sustain their families and can also afford to buy other basic necessities and pay what is demanded by the school. Yet,

they are very few indeed. In the case of good houses for example, only 6 houses have corrugated iron sheet roofs. It is this particular group which may also hire some people to work on their farms or as watchmen in coconut fields.

The second category are people who engage in subsistence farming, mainly concentrating on crops such as paddy, maize, millet, cassava, groundnuts and other cereals. They are about 70 per cent and own a piece of land of an average of one hectare. They also have a few coconut trees and a few cashew trees, which hardly suffice for commercial purposes since they cannot afford to buy expensive pesticides (sulphur costs Tshs. 8,000 per bag). These people do not hire labour, but depend mainly on family labour for their activities. They live in simply constructed houses built with poles and mud and roofed with grass or *makuti* (coconut leaves). Most of these houses do not have windows. Villagers in this category suffer from food shortages especially during dry seasons. To supplement their income, they also engage in petty trading, selling small quantities of coconuts and coconut oil, fresh cassava, poultry, coconut wine, local beer, doughnuts (*maandazi*) etc.

The third category are those at the bottom (about 20 per cent). These people basically own a very small patch of land, while some have no land. Many are youths, some of whom have just finished their schooling. Villagers in general regard this category as a pathologically lazy bunch, who have a natural aversion to agricultural work. Normally, members of this category do not have food at their disposal nor anything to sell. They live in poorly constructed houses, which often leak during the rainy season. This group depends on selling its labour. Women, as well as men, engage in piece-work or casual labour through which they can earn usually around Tshs. 400 a day. This is not enough to sustain their lives, especially in periods of scarcity when food becomes very expensive.

According to some members of this category, their condition has been created by scarcity of land and a lack of implements and capital in general: "We don't have the money to buy our own clothes, let alone our children's. When we grow crops we naturally harvest very little." Some of the economic activities undertaken by the third category of villagers are carpentry among men and pottery-making mainly by women. The majority of youths are engaged in making and selling charcoal. Old people, in the words of Mr. Hamid Salim

Makinda, complain that, "Youths have no other job to do apart from doing trade with charcoal. They don't have even small farms. They are very individualistic, caring for themselves without any consideration of the lives of the old and those who are disabled." Many of the youths flock to the coast, where they are employed in the salt pans. They work for a part of the year on the coast and return during the rainy season, as little salt making is normally done then. Others are employed as watchmen in coconut fields and there are those who migrate to towns—Lindi, Mtwara and Dar es Salaam to become street vendors (the so called *machinga* in Dar es Salaam).

Gender relations

Despite the fact that people from the villages were traditionally matrilineal, traditional Swahili culture of the coast has had an influence on gender patterning in terms of roles. One of the most conspicuous aspects in the life of these villagers is the limits imposed upon women from actively taking part in public occasions. Of course, the fact that it is uncles and elders who have been decisive in many of the decisions made in a lineage or clan may explain this. Traditionally, men and women held separate meetings when deciding on issues which affected the community. Thus far in the whole village, all the chairpersons of the *vitongoji* (village sections) are men.

When it comes to agricultural work, both women and men work, although women work more hours compared to men. I personally noted that while a husband and his wife go to the farm in the morning, the wife goes back again in the evening and leaves the man either at home or at the *pombe* shop (local beer club). On top of this, women are responsible for taking care of children and all domestic chores. At the same time it is the husband who takes a larger share of the income within the household. In this case, women's role in decision-making is very limited. On the crops produced, for example, they can only make independent decisions on how to use the harvest either from vegetables or other insignificant crops. Any crops stored in a big quantity within the house are men's property, who are the ones to decide on how to use them. Women had the following to say on the issue of decision-making in the household, "*Kama mpunga ni ndani siwezi kuchota kupika hadi mume wangu aniruhusu, hasa wakati huu wa njaa*". ("If there is rice stored in our house, I cannot just take it and cook

without my husband's permission. And this is so particularly during these times of food shortages."). At the same time, there are female-headed households (either due to divorces or just single parents). These women take their own decisions on internal issues affecting their families.

Conceptions of empowerment and organizational aspects

It was after the villagization process of 1974, that a village government was established in the village for the first time. By then the village was part of the Lindi Rural District. The village was taken over by the Town Authority in 1982, following the passing of the Local Government Act (No. 8) of 1982. With this administrative change, the village government and its committees were abolished and in its place the *mitaa* (street/area) system took over. Kineng'ene became the *mitaa* within a larger administrative unit of Lindi urban district. The *mitaa* chairpersons are directly accountable to the ward authority and further to the district authority. It is because of their varied experience that villagers have mixed feelings when it comes to the question of empowerment. There are those who want the previous village government system for the reason that the existing institutional set-up suppresses their freedom to make their own decisions at the village level. Mr. Issa Athuman who was once the village chairman during the village government system said, "We want our village government back. We don't have the money to spend in town to attend different meetings. After all, this is a rural based village, how can it be part of the town?" Mr. Hamid Salim Makinda, the current *mitaa* chairperson added, "Despite the fact that our village is under the town authority (Lindi urban), there is a great administrative difference between this *mitaa* and those in town. If you go to town, you will find women employed by the town authority to clean the streets, why don't they come here also and sweep for us, too? If that is impossible, then it is better we remain rural."

The above are just examples of the remarks made by the villagers who prefer the old system of village government. Their main argument is that the villagers currently have no power whatsoever to decide on anything, since all decisions and priorities are made by the town authorities. On the question of setting priorities, for example there was a time when the village was in great need of safe water.

When the Town Authority started to build a dispensary, people were reluctant to go and work on the construction site on the pretext that there was no place where they could fetch water for the work, and in addition, no food was provided at that particular time. The main point here is that most villagers did not consider the construction of the dispensary to be among their immediate priorities, rather the water shortage and provision of food were more important concerns. Prior to 1982, the village government council, for example, was empowered to allocate land. Currently, officials from Lindi allocate land. According to villagers, it has become difficult for a villager even to build a house since the land authorities in town claim that some areas already belong to legal owners whom even the villagers do not know. Some villagers added the further comment that it is the lack of control of their own programmes which led to the mysterious disappearance of the installed water supply equipment.

In contrast to the above view, there are a few villagers who prefer the existing system mainly because it has been able to provide some necessary social services, notably, health and water. This group seems to be optimistic that within a number of years, village life will be transformed to an urban kind of life. This is the category of those who are relatively well-off.

Popular mobilization at village level

Generally, local communal actions by villagers are not very articulate. The villagers are aware that there has been a major problem in mobilizing them for water and health projects. When asked why they engage in this behavior, some respondents said, "As long as there is no single organizing force like the overall village chairman to mobilize the people and make the ten-cell leaders accountable as it used to be, it is very difficult to have effective mobilization." Currently, the *kitongoji* (a branch within an area) does not seem to be an effective tool for mobilization. Moreover, the multi-party system makes mobilization even more complicated. "The era of *kujitolea* (self help) is now over ..., those are CCM (ruling party) policies." Such were the kinds of responses of some villagers, mainly youths. Among the newly emerging political parties in the village, the Civic United Front (CUF) is very influential.

Generally, state-villagers relations have been changing over time. For quite a long time there has been antagonism, because of the introduction of by-laws which force the villagers to pay taxes, make contributions to the school and pay many other miscellaneous contributions, as well as the restriction of the initiation ceremonies. Another by-law forces villagers to grow at least one acre of cassava before any other crop as a means to fight hunger. However, this by-law is becoming irrelevant, since the crop is now widely grown as a major cash crop. Through the abolition of taxes, together with improvements in the water service and the forthcoming health centre, the relationship is becoming less antagonistic, but not necessarily mutually appreciative.

Religious institutions also play a certain part in mobilization. Unlike the church, which has very few followers, the Muslim leaders try to exert some power/influence over their members especially with regard to party affiliation. During the Friday prayers, some people have been using the mosque to try to influence members of opposition parties (especially CUF) not to engage themselves in what they call 'chaos'. They are mainly elders in the mosque who critically oppose the youths' support of multi-partyism.

Furthermore, certain forms of traditional popular mobilization exist. Among them are the initiation ceremonies whereby many people come together voluntarily (and not by force as is the case with government mobilization campaigns). As an off-shoot, another form of mobilization has developed recently, whereby groups of people (both men and women) celebrate the anniversaries of their initiation ceremonies. This is called *chikudi*. It is mainly an informal association which, in addition to the celebrations, offers support for each other when problems arise. Another form of mobilization is through traditional *ngomas* (dances) performed at different times, especially during the marriage ceremony, *Id el fetri*, Christmas days, harvest times, etc. Moreover, there is a special time for a *ngoma*, which is very popular in the area and is called *ngoma ya mizuka* (a dance which is performed to cast out evil spirits or ghosts). The dance is performed by women, but it is led by an influential man, who is a specialist in dealing with evil spirits. The women usually dress in white and red. The dance is closely associated with Muslims, and hardly any Christians participate in this performance.

PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY

Villagers' indicators of poverty

The majority of the villagers take the view that indicators of poverty are shortage of food, lack of a coconut or cashew farm and engagement in wage labour. Families who do not have a reserve of food are regarded as poor. Those who do not own coconut trees or a cashew farm are considered to be extremely poor. In general, the villagers' reaction is, "If you don't have a cashew farm or coconut trees, where are you going to get money to buy essential things for your children?" That is poverty. Likewise, a person who sells his labour to those who own big farms is considered to be poor. To many villagers, poor housing is not regarded as an important indicator of poverty. They argue that there are people who rent rooms in modern houses who are still poor as they do not have farms and live by selling their labour. This is clearly reflected by one villager who, when asked to evaluate his own living standard, said "I think I am alright as I have a big farm for coconuts as well as cashew. On top of that, I have two big houses." When I asked him to show me the houses, they were two large houses constructed of mud, with a grass roof, very unstable doors and no windows.

The villagers see indicators of improvement in terms of the availability of affordable agricultural equipment and inputs such as tractors, fertilizers, and pesticides. These will improve farming methods and productivity. An increase in productivity is important as it will enable them to earn more cash and hence be able to increase their purchasing power. The majority regard good living standards in terms of ownership of large lands for cash crop production. The villagers' view is summed up by the words of Ali Nurdin who said "People who have about 10–20 acres of coconut fields, cashew and cassava are the ones who live well. They earn money and can therefore buy food and other necessities." More importantly, families with plenty of food are regarded with reverence as examples of having good living standards. In addition, the ownership of livestock indicates a good standard of living.

Villagers' views on the future

The majority (especially the well-off and most of those in the middle range) are very optimistic about the future. One respondent, Mr. Mohamed Athmani, summed up this view, "It is my expectation that in the coming ten years, the village's economic situation will improve for the better. Already there are some signs, given the increased producer prices for cashew nuts and cassava." Others argued that the fact that the dispensary is near completion shows that there will be a vehicle or an ambulance in the village soon. They see no reason why health services should not improve in the future. The renovation of the road to town is seen as an indicator of positive future prospects, as this will encourage more businessmen to come to the village to purchase their agricultural crops. Crucial to all this are the questions of the improvement of social services and economic opportunities. In this context, it is expected that people's lives will probably improve either through agricultural production or trade activities.

Not all villagers are, however, optimistic about the future. They are mainly in the lower income brackets. They hold the view that their lives will not change for the better unless the government does something to raise their living standards. In other words, this group depends exclusively on the role of the government to improve their lives. These are the ones who consider themselves to be poor and see their lives becoming poorer every day. They do not find their life situation improving at all, instead they are continually marginalized.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the villagers are very much aware of their situation and even the forces which affect their lives. They know exactly what they lack and what makes them poor. The most important thing to be done is to open up more opportunities, find new alternatives and strategies in order to promote various mechanisms for villagers' development. It should be noted that income generating activities become effective, among other things, when there is sustained income growth through constant expansion and the markets are integrated at the local, regional, national and even international level.

Furthermore, the findings show that the powerlessness which relates to the villagers' lack of participation in matters affecting their lives is another factor affecting their poverty situation. The villagers do not have autonomy or control of the internal processes of transforming their environment. Here villagers' participation is crucial,

given the intrinsic fact that people take care of their own interests, socio-cultural norms and environmental factors in solving their problems. More importantly, therefore, is to focus on the underlying causes of the problems as explained by those who consider themselves to be poor. Thus, a tendency of having preconceived assumptions that a particular community is extremely poor and judging it through generalized or universal criteria of poverty is an immediate obstacle to human development, as it can easily lead to the wrong prescription to cure the problem. In this case, internal community self-evaluations should be a first step in any attempt by a government agency, donors or non-governmental organizations to try to assist people to improve their living standards. Only after certain levels of development, when interaction between various communities become possible, will this act as a catalyst for further changes in terms of perceptions, understanding and tools for development.

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Notes on research on women and their strategies for sustained livelihood in southern Tanzania

Marja-Liisa Swantz

ABSTRACT

In this paper, the author analyses women's economic and social situation in the southern Tanzania. The paper draws on many kinds of material which together give a wide perspective on women's and men's relative positions in relation to economic resources and social well-being.

The author provides selected glimpses into the history of southern Tanzania. She then introduces the more recent development efforts into the discussion and evaluates their effect on gender issues. She uses matrilineal descent, girls' initiation rites and marriage patterns as indicators of change in the social organization. The analysis shows that gender relations differ considerably from the pattern prevalent in much of northern Tanzania. There are also communalities. Women in the south need, like women elsewhere, to defend themselves by joining together and creating groups of mutual support which enable women to maintain a variety of livelihood strategies.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper I study the women's situation in southern Tanzania¹. I also make remarks on the historical and social factors which have contributed to their present situation. Certain conceptual and theoretical choices have directed my approach. My original focus was on women's access to sustainable livelihoods, but I soon realized that a focus on economic issues would be biased against some important

1. I use "southern Tanzania" here to mean only the Mtwara and Lindi regions.

social processes. I can also detect many changes in women's rights and capacities as compared to the earlier period. I prefer to use the term situation rather than position since "situation" implies change while "position" is a more static concept.

I prefer the concept "sustainable livelihood" rather than "sustainable development" because it describes the struggle which the people in southern Tanzania have in maintaining a reasonable level of living without famine or extreme poverty. Women pursue a great variety of activities in order to sustain family livelihood and communal solidarity. I argue that by describing and analyzing village women's everyday economics we get a fairly accurate picture of what in today's parlance is referred to as the economics of poverty. Its basic characteristic is a multiplicity of tasks, a variety of largely informal ways for pursuing daily living, and reliance on reciprocal social relations. Insecure livelihood requires social safety valves which need purposeful care. Thus "economics" does not cover the field of activities for livelihood. The concept has to be broadened to comprise perpetuation of life with all the activities that are needed for it. Women cannot pursue economics separately from their regenerative tasks in life. This makes women's economics more wholesome than the view which is dominated by an economic view of life.

The research question of this paper is built around a critique of the conventional economic analysis of rural development. I assume that *interdependence and sociability are basic for human life*, but the economic social construction has all but destroyed this understanding since the times of Adam Smith. The overemphasis on individualistic profit making degrades communal values, which are then seen as a hindrance to economic success (Marglin, 1995). Unfortunately, the failure of socialist experiments such as *ujamaa* in Tanzania has further degraded attitudes towards the communal management of resources. The thrust towards maintaining communal values and economically viable cooperation still prevails in conditions of lesser affluence. Upholding communal supports and interdependence is a necessity in conditions of poverty since without them survival would be threatened. Distorted economic development, the one-sided positivistic scientific bias and technology it has given birth to, have resulted in material affluence, but brought impoverishment of spiritual and human values and a material poverty gap in wealthy industrial countries. Affluent countries suffer from problems of poverty, hunger,

migration, drugs, pollution and racism which are clear evidence of maldevelopment. Today's global search is for a holistic mode of sustained life.

In this study I try to see whether women in southern Tanzania can provide examples for such a holistic mode of sustaining life. In this area, the main responsibility for the families and the immediate community falls on women. They cannot take great risks and engage in many innovative endeavours, yet, everyday living in itself requires inventiveness, flexibility and perseverance. Women manage by forming alliances and associating with other women, but selectively also soliciting help from men. For example, recently women's workshops were held in Masasi, Mtwara Region, and Mnacho, Lindi Region, on subjects centring on women's legal rights and their everyday economics. The majority of women attending were members of some informally or loosely organized groups which pursued combined economic and service activities and supported one another socially and in times of special need. Men, on the other hand, had their membership in formal savings associations or had an insurance policy rather than small support groups. To what extent men too have a community rather than an individualistic basis for their economic activities, whether they more than women have assumed economic ways in sustaining livelihood, needs to be further investigated.

Rather than assume that close social relations are solely a burden since they prevent individual profit making, or that informality and working with other women is merely a feature of women's poor economic sense, or a sign of their inability to manage their affairs efficiently, I suggest that holding on to close social relations is a value statement on the part of women. They affirm the non-individualistic social basis of life. While it is more common to perpetuate communal values in conditions of poverty than of affluence, it is also a cultural preference.

Failure to implement development plans in the thirty years of international development thrust has brought the "donor community" to the recognition that development cannot be pursued without "people's participation". This recognition is not enough. The basic conflict between the orthodox and more communally based economics also needs to be recognized and its implications analysed thoroughly. International and local efforts to overcome material poverty can succeed only if they recognize the wholeness of life which

binds the villager to his/her tradition, to neighbours and relatives, and creates communities. Whether this statement also has some bearing in the neo-impovertised countries and communities in the West is a question of great topical interest, which gives the study of southern Tanzanian communities a wider than merely local significance.

This paper sets out to accomplish three tasks. *The first part* deals with methodology. It maps the weaknesses in the prevailing statistical approach to measuring development, particularly in relation to women's economic contribution. The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods give people tools to analyse their own needs, of local distribution of wealth and of resources available to them. PRA methods lead to action and trigger people's creative energy for improvement of their living conditions and development based on people's own cultural and social modes of life. *The second part* of the paper presents a brief look into history and the changes which have affected women's situation in southern societies. It also takes up some of the traditional aspects of life which form part of the social field and affect livelihood. In *the third part*, the paper then goes on to describe from the women's perspective how the women's economics work in their pursuit for a viable livelihood within the socio-economic situation of the southern regions today. Several problematic issues are suggested for further participatory research and mutual learning. In a concluding section I assert that the emphasis on participation which prevails today in the donor community is in conflict with the economic thrust which is pursued at the same time. The contradictory trends reflect a wider global drift between global and local, macro and micro-economics which affect the political processes at ground level and repudiate local successes. However, even in conflicting situations PRA can create political awareness which gives political clout to the local forces in general and women in particular.

METHODOLOGIES

Measuring economic development

According to current international statistics, Tanzania is regarded as the world's second poorest country (World Development Report, 1995) and Lindi Region as the second poorest of the Tanzanian regions. This cannot be the case in real life. If it were, the world would

not be all that badly off. Tanzania has assets which make it a good place to live, and Lindi region has still inadequately tapped resources for better ways of living. For people in Lindi, the calculations seem unjustified and in many ways misconceived. There is a need to find more adequate ways of describing the real economies of rural people and of bringing macroeconomics in line with people's everyday economics, so that the two interlink better and are mutually supportive. One of the main reasons for the skewed statistics is the invisibility of women's productive and reproductive work and the informal ways that people on lower economic levels make their living.

An overhaul of the ways of measuring is an acute need and there are signs that changes are on the way. *The Human Development Report* (UNDP, 1995) uses social indicators such as literacy, education, infant and child mortality, longevity, gender equality, women's status and women's participation in government and working life as measures. On the basis of these indicators, it lists 26 countries below Tanzania in the order of development.

In using PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal), we get a better picture of local realities. By investigating women's everyday economics through a mutual learning process, we also find out why and at which points the calculations fail. They fail because the measures are wrong, the measured units are wrongly identified, the ways of measuring are inadequate, and what is measured reflects inadequately people's actual state of sustenance and the level of sustainability of their livelihood. This analysis is significant in order to correct the wrong impressions given internationally of the level of development in Tanzania. More importantly, it is necessary in order to direct the available resources in support of the real needs and efforts of the people. Otherwise, rural people are expected to work under exploitative conditions, which do not enhance their capacity to produce and do not result in a more secure livelihood.

Some reasons for skewed statistics, and consequently wrongly directed efforts for development, are the following:

First of all, there is failure in the collection of statistics because those in charge do not have adequate transportation facilities and collection is sporadic at best. From time to time, new efforts are made to equip the agricultural officers for collecting data on cultivated crops or size of the fields, as was reported by the Ward Agricultural Officer in Mnacho. Distortions in the data appear when, for example,

fields in a sample village were selectively measured to improve the statistics. Another example is the revenue collectors, who on behalf of the District Councils, fulfil their duties sporadically at the markets, but their collection suffers from the "eating" which goes on by the collectors. The recorded figures of fish sold at fish landing sites or trading posts are also very inadequate. A Regional Fisheries Officer in Lindi told of new support by the FAO to provide weighing scales on a few sites where accurate measuring can be done when the fishermen bring their daily catch.¹ But even there transport is needed to get to the sites. Even at the new landing site in Kilwa Kivinje, we found recording was done only of fish sold by auction on the days when auctions were held. Generalizing from a few sites at which the recording is even at its best irregular, gives an inadequate picture of the total sales.

Secondly, the measured units do not reflect the total production figures because much of the produce is consumed directly by producers, or it is exchanged or sold locally with inadequate recording. Most of the women's local sales take place on this level, yet they are large enough in volume to sustain their families on a day-to-day basis.

Licences granted in official market places enter the recorded revenue, but very few women ever acquire licences. The women at town markets say that those who try to do so find that they have to pay bribes to expedite the process or have to wait for months or even years to get their licences. In the southern villages there is no rotating market system, but women say that they pay the collector 40 or 100 shillings on the merchandise that they set out for sale usually in front of their houses, or some at the market places. How much of this local revenue gets recorded as formally marketed produce would be worthy of investigation. Villagers are often suspicious even about the District Council payments, since they see little return for them in terms of services. One questions why the money has to be channelled through a district centre and not be used directly for the services needed.

Products are transported to other areas and even sold or exchanged across the regional and national borders with no records. Mtwara borders on Mozambique and traffic across the river and along

1. In the mid-seventies, when landing sites were built and provided with scales with World Bank assistance, the recording was more accurate for the period in which the scales worked and even cold rooms were in operation in several places. I refer to my own reports from Bagamoyo district, especially from Sadani (Marja-Liisa Swantz and Aili Mari Tripp, 1996).

the seashore is constant; Mtwara and Lindi carry out centuries old sea trade, the volume of which is not known.

An inadequate salary structure tempts officers into making private profits through bribes or engagement in trade, so they have no desire to publicize the available information (e.g. revenue from logging and other forest products or from fish trade).

Women's reproductive as well as productive work, especially cultivation and gardening, gathering roots for medicine and food (*ming'oko*), leaves for vegetables and medicine, fruits, mushrooms, to mention a few, is ignored and its contribution both to direct food production and to local trading is considered only in small part.

Child labour in local trading and in daily sustenance goes without public attention. Parents send their children to sell produce or children themselves engage in petty trade or hunt birds, rodents, flying ants, locusts and do small-scale fishing.

It is considered that not all products are sufficiently significant for recording, since they do not figure in international statistics or are not within the modern production structure e.g. honey enters the records only when officially marketed, yet it is a significant local trading and food item especially in the Liwale and Nachingwea districts.

Items and articles such as tools and raw materials, wood for carvings and fibre for baskets and mats, and scrap iron for smithing are produced and sold or exchanged locally.

Local labour contributions are inadequately recorded because of the way concepts "labour" and "employment" are made use of and categorized in international statistics. Much of the local labour is *kibarua* or *kipande*, casual work on a daily basis without contracts.

People exchange direct social services which would cost large sums if produced commercially. Care of children, old people, the sick and disabled is totally unrecorded work.

When these productive, reproductive and social activities are taken into consideration, a different picture is gained of the ways in which people sustain their lives. Furthermore, if people were supported in the endeavours which are central to their livelihood, they would be in a better position to increase production, their own assets and the cash revenue of their districts. Since the statistical system is based on western economic thinking, it leaves aside large areas of life and inadequately corresponds to the economic reality of rural situations such as those prevailing in southern Tanzania.

Participatory rural appraisal and sustainable livelihood

Many, if not most of the development plans which have been thrust on people, have turned out to be non-viable. The developers did not recognize that their own training needs to gain a better understanding of people's practical knowledge base. In the Lindi Region a series of unsuccessful plans started with the catastrophic Groundnut Scheme in 1947. The Makonde Water Scheme had a somewhat better record, but people had their difficulties with it, since purchase of water from the water posts was more or less compulsory. People were not supposed to store water in jars for fear that it was collected elsewhere. Liebenow's graph of the administrative orders concerning different fields of development and environment is a most striking presentation of the "folly of the Europeans" (Liebenow, 1971). It continued with the Finnish and British made Master Plans and the Finnwater Water Development and VIP sanitation schemes. Since then "people's participation" have become the magic words with which it is hoped past mistakes can be corrected.

It is paradoxical to talk about "people's participation in their own development" or even in "sustaining livelihood". We should rather talk about the development agents' participation in people's efforts to create a firm base for their livelihood which will not be liable to collapse when the first calamity sweeps over them.

People are still expected to participate in development which is largely planned from outside by wiser experts and well-wishers who think they know better than the local people what is good for them. This is indicated in the all too common phrase, "We have to educate the people" with the connotation that we know what "the people" should learn and what they should or should not do. While it is self-evident that "they" as well as "we" are always in need of more education, even scientific knowledge is built only on shifting sand, so it is not easy to find the right balance between externally produced knowledge and the respect of people's own knowledge and skills on which new knowledge and practice must be built.

Yet, working from the "bottom-up" with concepts that arise from the everyday economies of Tanzanian rural people makes it possible to take into consideration people's non-quantified and socially significant ways of maintaining their livelihood. The effort to develop theory from people's everyday reality does not pertain only to people in Tanzania, but also to other developing societies in similar situations

elsewhere, perhaps even to industrialized countries. It derives support from other practice-related studies toward a more adequate and comprehensive economics described as "whole economics" or "social economics".

The global objective of the Rural Integrated Project Support programme, RIPS, in Mtwara and Lindi Regions is the sustainable livelihood of the poor majority. Central to it is a people-centred participatory approach with the village as the base for all the work.¹ Doing participatory analysis with the people introduces the analyst to the thinking, experiences and opinions of those people. The RIPS programme strives to look at the situation with the eyes of those whose chances in life are the weakest, as much as it is possible for any "outsiders" to do so who do not actually live every day in the village. This orientation has implications for the way the programme interprets economics. It relates to the poverty alleviation programme which has been adopted by the Government of Tanzania and in general also by the "donor community".²

The RIPS programme assumes that if a secure, sustainable basis for people's livelihood is achieved, poverty is alleviated. This has consequences on the way economies are shaped. To gain a sustainable livelihood does not necessarily mean the same as "development" if it is defined in terms of the GNP as shown above. A closer study of and acquaintance with the actual situation of rural communities reveals that the level of livelihood is not compatible with people's buying power and consumption figures. The standard of people's living thus measured gives a distorted picture of the degree of poverty.

In the RIPS programme, we make an effort to involve people of all categories, men and women, young and old, ordinary villagers and government bureaucrats, in giving expression as to how they see their situation. When they publicly face crucial issues which affect their lives and the relationships within their community, new avenues of action also open up. People learn to document their thoughts by using concrete methods of drawing on the ground, placing seeds and stones and markers in squares and working out transects of terrain and his-

1. Some of the villages can better be classified as small towns because of their size and style of living, e.g. Mnazi Mmoja, Mahuta and Mnacho; RIPS is also active in peri-urban areas around Mtwara, Lindi, Kilwa, Newala, Masasi and Liwale, although the focus is on rural areas.

2. I refer to Timo Voipio's and my own research, while also many papers prepared for this volume, deal with the subject (e.g. Bernadeta Killian's paper).

tory. These are methods initially worked out for Participatory Rural Appraisal by Robert Chambers and his co-workers. It involves villagers participating through the action of walking, drawing and writing on the ground or on paper in dialogues and debates with political leaders, technocrats and researchers.

Participants are also given voice through radio programmes and videos about issues which they want to communicate to decision makers or the general public. Fisherwomen defend "our sea" against invading commercial fishing vessels, villagers fight for their right to the forests and animals in their territory and herders claim their grazing grounds. Old and young build arguments and clash with their radically differing views, but are then willing to seek compromises and make contracts in search of new ground for sharing the often scarce resources. As concrete examples can be given the contract which was made in Samora and Magumchila villages in Newala district, Mtwara region, between the youths who lacked land for cultivation and the elders who owned the non-producing cashew trees. The youths were given land for growing cassava in exchange for doing the clearing of the cashew fields for the elders. It included cutting down trees and doing heavy work which the older men could not manage themselves. Another example comes from Nandagala village in Lindi Rural District, where the youths organized themselves and formed a *kamati ya usumbufu*, "trouble-shooting" committee. They took the responsibility upon themselves of influencing the leadership of the village and of pressing for a change of corrupt members on the education and economic committees. They also started over twenty small projects in groups for earning their own income, for which they were given loans on a revolving basis.

During a process of participatory planning and gradually evolving implementation, we learn how people sustain their lives, their communities and environment, what communication and safety nets and exchange systems they use, what resources they have at their disposal and make use of, how their social organization operates in changing conditions, what their goals and strategies in life are, what prevents them from making better use of available resources and assistance offered to them, and last but not least, what kind of an integrated social and economic approach could more comprehensively support bottom-up development. Genuine participatory planning makes implementation part of the planning process and with it, not only

does more accurate information become available, but the plans are tested in action.

Through this process, people get a chance to do their own ranking of their fellow villagers' relative wealth, whom they consider well-off, who are average in their living style and whom they consider poor. This process of self-analysis has also given women a chance to express themselves and to reorganize their activities on the basis of mutual trust.

Participatory wealth ranking

While material poverty, especially a lack of food security, is a real problem for many people in Mtwara and Lindi Regions, the grouping of sections of population as "the poor" is not a very inspiring starting point. I am not sure that we who work with the RIPS programme want to publicize its goal as poverty alleviation, although it is part of the terminology of today's development goals. There is a good reason to be very careful about the use of words. Words create false impressions, not only for the external public, but they also shape people's thinking about their own situation. A participatory approach cannot deal with people as "victims of poverty" or "targets" nor can it "mobilize" people, nor "package" its messages to people. Eliminating non-participatory language does not always succeed, but ill-chosen words reveal the top-down philosophy and strategies of their users.

Before development programmes tackle poverty alleviation, they have to know how people's own definitions of poverty compare with the development agencies' concepts of poverty. Through PRAs and detailed participatory research, we document which villagers classify themselves or are classified by their neighbours as being poor and what the villagers conceive poverty and wealth to be. Common sense tells us that many of the rural people's basic needs are not met and poverty is clearly visible. However, it is necessary that people get a chance to describe and analyse their own situation and to see what resources and choices they have for improving their situation. People must be allowed to think out in theory and practice what they consider to be their priorities, as already clearly outlined in Nyerere's *ujamaa* policies, before well-meaning developers from outside come to promote specific development projects. An outsider looks at the situation with different eyes than the insiders.

The wealth ranking analysis made by individuals and groups in villages as one of the methods of PRA generally divides the village population into three, sometimes four wealth groups. The top group is usually small or even non-existent (in resource endowed villages the top group is 20 per cent and in resource poor villages it may be lacking altogether). The middle group is the largest and the bottom group again is usually smaller. There are villages, however, in which the bottom group is described as the largest. In Mbamba Kofi the top group was only 6 per cent and the bottom group formed one half of the population according to people's own ranking. The middle group had some property, such as a sewing machine, bicycle, a radio, a mud house and small food crop farms. The well-off had good houses, wells, large food and cash crop farms and possibly some businesses. For the lowest group, the most important characteristic is generally a lack of food or insufficient seasonal supply of food, small plots of land for cultivation and a small house or no house. They might be unable to cultivate more, even if land were available, because they do not have household members free or willing to do the cultivation. In Msanga Mkuu, all had some land but the poorest had only food crops and thatched clay houses. There the largest group was described as being wealthy, *wenye uwezo*, having cash crops, doing fishing, having shops and houses, and earning money from the fishing trade in which they usually employed other people to do the manual work. The fishermen among them go to Pemba and Kilwa seasonally. Up to 60 per cent of those described as wealthy also had farmworkers cultivating their fields. No mention was made of the large number of children who did not go to school, but preferred to fish. In general, education has not played a role in wealth ranking. Many of the wealthy elders had not attended formal schools. In Nanguruwe, the ranking was based on sufficiency of food. In the first and second categories people would have enough to eat but in the lowest one people said that they ran short of food for the greatest part of the year. In Nanguruwe, no people were ranked as belonging to the wealthiest category.

Women analyse their economies

PRA methods which RIPS has used are concrete and give participants a chance to be active. Village PRAs are done with groups of villagers, sometimes in large groups which divide themselves into smaller

groups; at other times more selective ways of gathering people are used for specific purposes. Women are encouraged to participate actively in drawing the maps and charts on the ground and manila papers, in expressing their views about the results and in analysing their own situation. The analyses which are concretely done soon reveal the burning issues in each place. Women's meetings and workshops of several days have also been organized to give women a better chance to think through their own questions and to talk about them.

RIPS documents provide both principle answers and illustrative examples of how starting from people's own priorities in a participatory way is in itself already a way to poverty alleviation. I give a few examples of how a participative process helps women in analyzing and understanding their own economic situation. Women themselves know well how they work out their economy. When given opportunities, women describe their life situation and their economic conditions and tell how they have suffered from injustices.

A common woman's story is how the husband or father has deprived them of cash which they have themselves worked for, or they have been left without land when the husband has driven them out, or they have not received any inheritance at the death of the father or husband. Many researchers doing interviews have the experience that it is harder to get information from women than from men. But women respond when someone touches the strings which affect them most. Often it is easier for women to talk in a small group than alone. In order to assist people in their analysis of their economies one has to know something of their everyday reality. One has to be close enough to that reality to begin to understand how it works, which means that participation cannot be just a few days visit to the place where they live.

International rhetoric constantly repeats that women are "the poorest of the poor". If that is the case, then working with "women's economics" and learning of their ways of dealing with everyday situations give us an indication how so called poverty economics work. Women can come even from relatively wealthy families and still find themselves poor, if they control neither the resources nor the income they produce. They might also have to share family resources with another wife and an increasing number of children. Women are prone to depriving themselves of food in preference of their children

and they are obliged to feed their husbands even if they do not provide food. Women's responsibilities for family, relatives and neighbours do not diminish with diminishing resources or decreasing health. The analysis of the causes of poverty and of the ways in which women deal with it needs to be a large component in a regional programme.

If the assumption is right that women's economics demonstrate how the economies of the poor work, then we need to spell out its implications with women themselves. They have to narrate and document how they operate and manage their lives. I refer to the *Illustrative life stories* (below) for some of the histories.

CHANGING SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON WOMEN IN SOUTHERN TANZANIA

In this section, I describe some selected issues which have proved to be crucial for women's livelihood in southern Tanzania. In the historical section I discuss the extensive cultural contacts before this century and the relative isolation during this century. I also discuss the later migratory patterns, religious penetration and other cultural upheavals. In the detailed analysis of the local social system I pay special attention to the matrilineal system, initiation rites and domestic relationships. It is on this level that development has the most concrete impact on the life situations of women.

Brief historical notes affecting the social situation of women

Mtwara and Lindi Regions are plagued by a poor reputation which has been externally created. Their isolated geographical position has contributed greatly to this reputation. In an earlier phase of history, the sea was a connecting rather than an isolating expanse of water. One of the early trade routes which brought Islam to southern Tanzania and Central Africa went via the Yao country (Alpers, 1972:172-201). With it spread Arabic and Swahili literacy in Arabic characters and *jando* as an Islamized ritual of circumcision. It continued to spread from south to north, and the Yao became the carriers of new

ideas through their portage.¹ Even the missionaries going to Songea in the German time, before the roads were built, used the caravan route from Kilwa via Liwale and Tunduru. Another southern route went from Lindi or Mikindani via Masasi to Tunduru and south to Malawi, then Nyasaland.

Kilwa needs no introduction to anyone knowing the East African history of seafaring, of the gold and ivory trade and the flourishing community where, already in the Middle Ages, black people walked around adorned with gold and silk, as reported by Ibn Batuta. At the turn of the century and the first decade of this century the hinterland of Kilwa was the centre of the extraction of gum copal and wild rubber which were extensively exported.² Kilwa is still today a fishing centre with extensive links with other coastal places.

Against this background, it is fair to generalize that the area had its share of cultural interaction until the turn of the century. Its relative marginalization and isolation has taken place in the later historical era. In the following, I list some of the historical events starting from colonial times which have eclipsed the early glory. They have not only influenced its reputation, but also affected changes in the social fabric, particularly in the way women are situated in society. I leave aside the earlier history of the Portuguese rule of the coast, although one of its best preserved sites is in Kilwa Kisiwani and the effects of the Portuguese presence on Mozambique has affected the southern people more than other parts of Tanzania.

Mtwara and Lindi were labour recruitment areas for the colonial government. The Makonde, who now are the master carvers in and around Dar es Salaam, came originally to the sisal estates as labourers, until today they have also formed the core of the watchmen of city houses. They often migrated with their wives and families and lived

1. The Swahili word *ustaarabu*, earlier used for "civilization", indicates that the Arab ways were conceived to be "civilized". It is ironic that the word that has come to mean culture, *utamaduni*, also comes from a similar Arabic context, as its root word is the same as *medina*, the centre of an Arab city. Thus culture is pictured as "urban culture", urbanized ways of living! Ed Alpers has described the civilizing influence of the Arab scribes whom the Yao chiefs used for their literary work. This contributed to the islamization of the southern regions.

2. New information on the rubber trade from the Kilwa hinterland, which was a major economic centre, is available in Marcia Wright's latest research. In the 1996 ASA Conference there was a panel on new research on *Maji Maji* where Marcia Wright presented her findings.

in the small estate houses provided for the *manamba*.¹ It is likely that many of the Makonde who migrated to Dar es Salaam originated in Mozambique.

Migration across the border between Tanzania (Tanganyika) and Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa) has been frequent and has affected women's ownership and property rights unfavourably, since in the new place of residence there was no lineage land to claim or return to.

The cross-border migration became a situation of forced refugees during the long state of emergency when all legal travel over the border was forbidden and the regions were declared a restricted area. This recent isolation over twenty years, and an accelerated movement that the return of the refugees created over the border, has had long-lasting effects on women's land rights which still await thorough research. When people were no longer living on their clan land, women could no longer claim land as their inherited right.

Early islamization prevented participation of the population at large in education, because education was based on western models and thus had a Christian colour to it. The anti-education spirit hit women especially hard, because of Islam's tendency to keep women out of the public eye. Masasi was one of the earliest educational centres in Tanzania.

Islamization also affected the house styles in East Africa. Karl Weule, who travelled through the southern districts in 1906 and published an account of these travels in 1909, reports that in the earlier era, before a wider Islamic influence, there were no fences enclosing back yards. There was an open entry to people's houses which meant that women were free to communicate with outsiders (Weule, 1909).

The Christian missionaries came from countries in which a matrilineal social system was unknown. Thus the male authority of the traditional and Christian social system was mutually strengthened and the church rule contributed to the disappearance of the matrilineal system.

The traditional initiation ceremonies were perpetuated both by Muslim and Christian clerics. Islam introduced male circumcision into the traditional rites and the Anglican missionaries introduced Christianized initiation rites. Ranger has made a special study of the Chris-

1. Workers on estates were referred to by their number, hence the term *manamba*, numbers, in reference to them.

tian adaptation of the rites and points out that the educated African teachers were the strongest opponents of adapting them to Christian practice (Ranger, 1972:221–251). I return to discuss this topic later.

The villagization programme in the *ujamaa* spirit was carried out as one of the earliest experiments in Mtwara and Lindi regions. It was done as an emergency measure because of the Mozambican war situation. Rashid Kawawa, who himself hails from Liwale, was the Vice-President and the Vice-Chairman of the TANU party at the time. His personal view in 1976 was that the programme had been a great success in the South and he used it as an example for the rest of the country at the time when the critical phases of Operation Villagization were experienced in the country.¹

The re-division of land after the moves to concentrated villages meant that the land was given in the name of the head of the household, not individually to different household members. This meant that women could keep the land and trees which were theirs before re-division, but received land in their name only if they were single heads of households and there was no man who could be considered to be the head of the household. Perhaps a native of this part of the country would have heeded the authority of the *mjomba*, "the owner of the sisters", and divided the plots differently. We need to check village by village whether there were differences between the implementers. The situation of those already resident in the villages, who did not need to move, has in general been better than the ones who moved.

Paradoxes in the social system

Changing matrilineal system

The southern ethnic groups belong to the matrilineal belt of eastern and southern Africa. Karl Weule saw them in his time as clear evidence of an earlier evolutionary system of "mother right" and "matriarchy" following Bachhofen's ethnographic study. He writes:

Here we are still in the matriarchal stage, where the husband is nothing, so to speak, but a connection by marriage. He is his children's father, but is not related to them; in fact he belongs to a different clan. ... The mar-

1. Kawawa expressed these views when I had a personal audience with him and presented evidence from the Zaramo country of the difficulties that people were facing due to villagization.

riage, moreover, brings an additional faithful and unpaid worker into the household. For this is the land, where the man ... leaves his father and mother and either moves directly into the house of his wife's parents or builds his own close besides it. In any case, for some years, until his own family circumstances necessitate a different arrangement, he devotes all his powers to keeping his mother-in-law's establishment. He sees to the planting of the crops and their in-gathering, he breaks up new ground, in short he renders every possible service, and anticipates her every wish. ... The impression (is gained) that not only is the relation between mother and son-in-law nothing short of ideal, but that the behaviour of the young people in general deserves to be called exemplary (Weule, 1909:186, 282; cf. Swantz, 1985).

Weule must have been under the scientific influence of J.J. Bachhofen and F. Engels had also picked up the evolutionary view of matriarchy as being a more ancient order than patriarchy. In an earlier study I have argued as follows:

Although there is insufficient evidence to support such an evolutionary perspective, the women's usufruct rights to land and their influence within their kin group provided women in matrilineal systems with a more secure social position than they had in patrilineal societies ... Evidence of this is also provided by further observations of Weule, who claims that among the Makua and Makonde, mothers and mothers' brothers conducted the negotiations in matters of marriage and also in matters relating to the choice of the headman (Swantz, 1985).

Weule also describes the free way in which the women behaved and showed no signs of being retiring in front of a stranger.

The studies by Alpers on the Yao showed that the Yao retained their matrilineality even after the coming of Islam and Christianity up to the 1950s, until the time of independence. In 1961, Hokororo thought that the role of the "owner of the sisters" was so strongly established that even modernization was not going to shift it (Hokororo, 1961).¹ Mary Shuma has the same to say about the Mwera. According to her recent study of them she found that marriage still entails the husband's moving to the wife's premises, and the children are named after the woman's brother, the maternal uncle who is responsible for important rituals and ceremonies and has to be informed of them before they can be arranged. The bride wealth is handed to him when the sister's daughter gets married and he is responsible for bringing up the sister's children. Whether Shuma in

1. Hokororo, A.M, 1961. No doubt those of the conference participants who have gone through these rites can give us accurate information on what they have experienced and what the situation is today.

her short period with the Mwera was told what the custom was or still is, is not clear from her report (Shuma, 1994:120–132). My own superficial study indicates that today only some characteristics of matrilineality remain and the role of the mother's brother has become quite secondary to the role of the father. All of those in different parts of the regions whom I have asked from whom they inherit, if any, give "father" as an answer. However, it is likely that in rituals, the role of the mother's brother is still conspicuous. Even a suppressed legal system can be revived if a specific powerful interest wants to make use of it.¹

It is interesting, however, that Mary Shuma, a Chagga meeting a matrilineal system for the first time, discovered the positive side of it while she also saw the difficulties that young girls face in a system which does not give the impregnating man any responsibility over the child. She thinks that it is a consequence of the fact that the girl does not need to succumb to the man whose child she has given birth to as in a patrilineal group.² She keeps the right to the child who belongs to matriliney, but at the same time, in this case, she is left without any support if the matriliney no longer recognizes the responsibility of the lineage. A stable marriage is not considered a necessary institution, and the state does not have a social welfare system to give financial support. On the other hand, if the matrilineal family does take responsibility for the child, the girl can continue to have children without feeling personal responsibility, as Shuma suggests. Today's youth fall in between the systems in many different ways (Shuma, 1994).

An interesting question is the status of the matrilineal system in the historical development of customary law. There is enough evidence to show that within the legal system matrilineality was considered somehow to be primitive until very recently. It is difficult to judge how much the politics after Independence have changed this view. An effort was made to homogenize customary law in 1962. The draft which was agreed on in the Law Conference in Dar es Salaam

1. The country has an official legal system which has its basis in the colonial legislation, secondly non-statutory customary law which varies in different parts of the country, and thirdly, religious laws of which Islamic law can be appealed to through the religious functionaries. The Christian churches have only conciliatory committees, but do not have a separate legal function.

2. The recognition of responsibility of the father among the Chagga becomes acute if the child becomes ill. The child's ill-health requires an act of reconciliation (personal information).

abolished matrilineal inheritance and the authority of the mother's brother. This effort never led to practical consequences.

The concept of "customary law" has been contested by legal anthropologists. Traditional systems are context bound and could not be worked into a harmonized system. Elevating national civil law to a position of superior authority over the traditional and religious laws, could do away with the present difficulty that people, particularly women, experience when another system of law can be evoked to defend a cause of the more powerful party. However, the Muslim religious law cannot be easily overruled by a secular law.

Teenagers: between traditional and new value systems

Next I present the problems that arise from the traditional initiation ceremonies, since in them the traditions still live and continue to affect women's economic and social situation in several ways. I am concerned here mainly with the changes in the female rituals and how they affect women and society. I touch upon the male rites only where they have relevance.

Both *likomanga* rites for the boys and *chiputu* and *chikwembo* rites for the girls are still performed in one way or another. A group of Anglican, Catholic and Muslim villagers in Mnima told me that the rituals themselves were the same regardless of what religious group they belonged to, but as Christians, at the end of the rites, the boys and the girls were led in two lines in white clothes to church for the final blessing. According to Hokororo, because of the influence of the Catholic Church, "The circumcision ceremony is now a mere formality rather than an essential fulfilment of the old customary law: there are no more tortures and no more pagan practices, whether in the form of songs or actions." In my opinion, it is questionable whether circumcision was part of "customary law" or whether it was introduced by Islam. Hokororo gives a vivid picture of the kinds of tortures boys were subjected to in the old rites (Hokororo, 1961:17-18).

Hokororo also describes what he calls the central act in the girls' rites, the partial reduction of the clitoris and in some cases the deformation or elongation of the *labia minora* by between one to three inches (Hokororo, 1961:4). I have no information on whether this is still part of the rites and how painful it is. Interesting information from the other side of the border is available which sheds light on

these practices.¹ According to Signe Arnfred's recorded information from the meetings of the women's organization, *Organizao da Mulher Moçambicana* (OMM), the women defended their right to continue the initiation rites which the Frelimo Party had forbidden. In their defence, they explained the pleasure that both men and women received by the fact that women pull their small vaginal lips in order to make them longer and that this exercise already starts when the girls are still rather small (8–10 years old) before puberty. This was considered to be an integral part of becoming a woman (Arnfred, 1990:73–77). This meant that girls became aware of their sexuality and the purpose of lip-pulling at an early age. In this respect, transferring the initiation rituals to an earlier age does not totally deviate from the older custom. I have no information to what extent the practice has been the same on the Tanzanian side.

A whole set of problems arise between the traditional and new systems. They are not only detrimental to the women who are affected, but to society at large.

The introduction of UPE, Universal Primary Education, in 1977 and the threat of imprisonment of parents who took their girls out of school when they reached puberty led to the initiation rites being performed before the girls started school, at seven years of age.² Shuma tells of a father who was sent to do hard labour for six months in prison when he took his daughter out of school for two months for initiation. After that the elders got together and decided that the girls had to be initiated before they start school (Shuma, 1994:124).

The same father mentioned above expressed himself saying, "These children have to be initiated in order to be accepted as true members of our society anyway" (Shuma, 1994). Even when the girls are so young when they are initiated, they are still considered as becoming full members of the society, and similarly boys, if they are

1. The customs of tattooing and using a lip-plug are fast disappearing among the Makonde of Mozambique. It is possible that some of the rites connected with the initiation rituals are similarly changing (Arnfred, 1990:71–110).

2. I compare the situation with the formerly matrilineal Zaramo who had earlier gone through the transition to bilineality. The Zaramo have managed to combine the puberty rituals with school-going by shortening the period of seclusion or by staying for seclusion after they leave school. Some also leave school during the earlier standards. Among the Zigua, the seclusion time is short, and among the Kutu I found that the girl was sitting in after school hours. These alternatives are less detrimental than teaching children sex behaviour prematurely. Many children in Mtwara and Lindi start school later than seven years, which makes it possible to postpone the initiation by a year or two, but in the past it was performed after twelve years of age.

circumcised when still very young. This contrasts with the non-acceptance of the school youths when they leave Std. 7 and are "given back" to the parents (*wanakabidhiwa kwa wazazi*). The school is still an alien institution. When youths return from the school, the parents feel that they have been alienated from their children in terms of their values and ways of acting. There is no sense of them now having become grown-up members of the village society. On the contrary, there is a wide gap between them and the older generations.

Early initiation rites, in which most youths participate, have led to early practice of sex and increased teenage pregnancies. Traditionally a girl got married when she was initiated. The community anticipates that an initiated girl has a sexual life and bears children. The same prospect of public shame which accompanied early pregnancy of a non-initiated girl no longer protects a girl who, although young, has been introduced into adult life.

Schoolgirl pregnancies cause dismissal from schools and cut short girls' education. Lindi is reported to be one of the leading regions for school drop-outs due to pregnancy. Lindi rural ranked second in 1994 for high mortality rates among children and pregnant women. In 1985, the under fives' mortality rate was the highest in the country (Shuma, 1994:120).

Initiation instructions do not include the anatomy of conception or preparation for delivery, nor anything about childcare which cannot be taught to a child, even if sex is. There is a secret ceremony of *ntara* or *litiwo* or *malango* after the woman has conceived (Hokororo, 1961). Young pregnant mothers without husbands are likely to hide their state from older women and remain ignorant about the basics of pregnancy and childbirth, which contributes to deaths and illnesses. Shuma gives examples of such helpless pregnant teenagers (Shuma, 1994:128).

Early sexual practice and pregnancies increase the incidence of HIV syndrome and other sexual diseases.

Whether connected with initiation customs or not, there are taboos surrounding childbirth which cause worry to medical personnel.

The Regional Medical Officer of Mtwara has repeatedly raised the issue of deaths connected with pregnancy and childbirth, but to no avail. Nevertheless, the 2 per cent population increase in Lindi as compared to the national 2.8 per cent requires a better explanation than what is available at present. Not all pregnant mothers are young

but complications do occur. There are trained Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) in most of the communities and their record is generally good but long distances to hospitals and clinics force women even with difficult deliveries to have their babies at home.¹ Some of the TBAs were traditional midwives prior to training, others are selected for the task among capable women. Not all who are trained practise, and many of those who do, complain that the traditional gift-giving or paying for the service is not extended to the trained TBA, even if only two weeks training separates them from tradition. How many women and children die with no non-family witnesses around is not known.

Social change and domestic conflicts

Compared to the evidence presented in the previous sections, the present situation of the relationship between generations and between the husband's and wife's families gives a totally reversed picture from the early witness accounts by Weule about the free women of the South. However, Mary Shuma recognizes that a woman in a matrilineal society has more personal freedom than a woman among the patrilineal people. She is not so closely tied to the husband's family and does not need to submit her personal freedom to their authority, although she might lack the security of a more stable marriage.

When children have been initiated into society while they are children, the parents no longer have any authority over them when they mature. Both men and women express their total helplessness in getting a hold on their teenagers. Mothers complain that they cannot make their daughters do any work at home or in the fields (discussions with women in Mahuta and Mnacho, among others), and fathers (in the Mnacho workshop) could only wonder where their daughters had slept when they come home in the morning. This contrasts with the invisibility of young girls at public youth meetings where only male youths participate and the predominance of young men over women in public cooking places and at the market. There is a deceptive pretense of young women's chastity which keeps them away from men's eyes in public. In villages where there are Christian

1. On the way from Nachingwea to Mnacho on a bushroad we met a group of people trying to carry a parturient woman ready to deliver on a bicycle while she was having an epileptic fit. We were in a position to help to transport her to the hospital in Mnero. How many such women there are who are not similarly helped is not recorded.

youth groups, both female and male youths attend, but even there one wonders about the young age of mothers (meeting with the youth in Mnyambe).

When doing the village analyses with men and women and in the women's workshops, one woman after another told how they themselves, or women with whom they closely associated, were left with nothing when the husband walked off with the income they together or the wife alone had produced, in order to take another wife or to travel and have a good time (Matambarare PRA; Mnacho and Masasi workshops). In the case of divorce or the husband's death, the wife was left with little or nothing, if she could not verify in terms acceptable to the male inheritors that she had contributed to collecting the common property during the marriage. Only if the woman could give evidence that the land belonged to her through inheritance, that she herself had bought the piece of land or other property with her own money and worked for it with her own hands, or in theory, if there was a written testament in her favour, could she hope to keep it and pass it on to her children. Even then, the interpretation of law was unpredictable, since another of the three prevailing legal systems could be appealed to, or bribes resorted to, if the solution did not please the male inheritors.

However, in private discussions with women it is not uncommon that women say that they own cashew trees and have their own shambas. This was the case with the leading woman of the Nandagala women's group, whose fields the women cultivated; it was the case in a discussion with women in Mahuta, where a woman left by her husband nevertheless said that she had inherited trees from her father; women returning from the field said they cultivated their own fields; or a woman in Mnima said she lived in her own house and cultivated her own field. Two leading women in Naipanga had their own inherited trees and land. One had got her land from her mother's brother, the other had shared equally an inheritance from her father with three brothers. There is still much confusion about women's landrights. Much new research has to be done to clarify the present social system about when and how the change has come about.

Discussions reveal that there are remnants of the old system. The *mjomba*, mother's brother, still plays a role, the clan is still counted on the mother's side, and cross-cousin joking relations and marriages play a role. I also recognize that there is not just one system. The mix-

ing of the Yao, Makonde and Makua has taken place since they migrated to southern Tanzania over at least a couple of centuries. It means one cannot look for "pure" traditional systems. There were no large chiefdoms which would have homogenized customs. The *mamwenye* ruled over relatively small and fluctuating groups of people (Ranger, 1972:223). Different groups had different rituals and a different division of work and rights, yet there were some features common to all matrilineal societies.

Today the women in the southern regions do not have the same sense of ownership as they do in many other matrilineal societies.¹ Formerly in the south, a woman, at least after becoming a mother-in-law, could use the services of her son-in-law and exert her authority over him, or she could claim the children as descendants of her own rather than the husband's family (Weule, 1909). Today women do not talk about the relationships in which they have influence; they express an overwhelming sense of powerlessness, when they face men's dominant claim to the income they have earned, and of injustice after their hard work. Was men's dominance over household property in the matrilineal societies strong enough to exert itself as supremacy in the changing conditions? In Hokororo's words, "It is true that the supreme ruler of the family, as far as the control of domestic affairs is concerned, is the father" (Hokororo, 1961:11).² Yet women's missing sense of their entitlements are hard to understand in societies which until relatively recently have been matrilineal. Perhaps women today are too young to know that things were different before, or perhaps they were not!

1. I refer to the Zaramo who have changed their social system considerably and could be called bilineal, yet the women's right to the land they inherit from their own line is not questioned.

2. The authority of the father is strong in the Catholic Church order, in which marriage is a sacrament. I quote Hokororo, "The customary law regards a husband as a person who has come to marry and thus as one who cannot have a say in the affairs of the village to which he comes. He is there to do all that he is told to do, without interfering with the jurisdiction of the 'owner of the sisters'. The Church taught that they should regard husbands as heads and rulers of their families, the domestic affairs of which should be wholly under the husband's supervision." Hokororo goes on to say that the Church had to give in to the authority of the mother's brother and according to him at the time of his writing (published 1961) "the position of 'the owner of the sisters' is as secure as it was in pre-missionary times." According to Hokororo, the government had also accepted this, and he goes on to say, "the overlordship of the 'owner of the sisters' ... is one of the most strongly established family relationships to which both the Church and the Government have had to adopt in order to avoid further tribal complications".

It is somewhat paradoxical that so many political leaders and civil servants in Tanzania have come from the South. Women's potential power and wisdom has found expression in the women who have held top leadership in the UWT women's movement, while the women's situation in general has not been very encouraging.¹ The leaders were educated in the mission schools of the former Anglican Universities Mission and of the Catholic Benedictine Mission which has established strong educational, medical, and industrial centres in both regions. In spite of the male domination, the influence of both of these churches has been considerable in raising the level of education and skills, and also the general level of health of women as well as men. The life stories of ordinary women, of which I give samples under the heading *Illustrative life stories (below)*, show that women are strong in spite of the injustices they experience. This strength is concealed in the strategies with which women conduct their household economies and some of them extend it to larger business.

HOW WOMEN'S EVERYDAY ECONOMICS WORK

The main difference between main line economics and women's economics is women's everyday necessity to deal with fluctuating needs, responsibilities, and unpredictable calamities which do not allow concentration on a planned economic strategy. Communities with little economic security in terms of bank savings, insurance, or social security programmes cannot ignore needs caused by sudden illnesses or deaths in the family or community, hunger caused by drought which dries up the planted seed or growing crop and requires funds to buy new seed or food. The lack of security and the constant element of risk necessitate the use of accumulated reserves and make it constantly necessary to have courage and innovation to make new beginnings. Women are left with a greater share of social care than men and much of it goes unnoticed by the larger society.

Women as heads of households are usually described as the poorest of all. This is the case if they have been left with no resource base in land or houses. Yet single women, whether divorcees or widows, quite frequently feel freer to determine the course of their lives; they

1. We need only to mention Tekla Mchauru, the first General Secretary of the UWT, Kate Kamba, also a long time General Secretary of UWT, Anna Abdullah, a minister responsible for the UWT, etc. Also Rashid Kawawa and Benjamin Mkapa, just to mention two men, come from the south.

can keep the income they earn and have control over it. Such women can often determine where they want to live, especially if there is no land which binds them or their children to a certain location. Yet in a male-dominated society women frequently feel they have no respect if they live alone with no male backing. This leads to alliances which can be quite detrimental to women. However, because of the sense of shared fate, women feel a close bond to each other even if quarrels are also common among them. This leads them to working in groups and forming loose associations which go without recognition because of their informality.

There is much sharing among women in rotating credit clubs, in cultivation and other work groups, in social events and in times of difficulty, in collecting money at the death of a relative of one of the group members, in preparation for burials, weddings and other festivals.¹

Each group sets its own criteria in selecting members, "those whose lives are like ours" was the qualification of a group which called itself "*Tupendane*", "Let us love one another" in Mnazi Mmoja at the cross-roads to Mtwara, Lindi and Masasi/Newala. The group maintained that membership was not limited to those on the same economic level. In the group was a woman whose sister had died of AIDS and had left a ten month old infant for her sister to look after. She came to show the baby who was very severely malnourished. As a PRA team, we took it upon ourselves to bring the woman and the child to the nearby Catholic hospital and continued to follow up the case. It illustrated the limits of group care. The group had a membership of ten, not relatives, not a definite group of neighbours, not even all from the same ethnic background and one or two Christians in an otherwise Muslim dominated group. As rationale of why just these women, the answer was, "We share because we want development", and development was defined as being united and "unity is strength". To the question how it had happened that the baby had been left to become so badly malnourished, they said, "*Huwezi kumsaidia kila siku*", "You cannot help him every day". They had earlier said that they had got a loan for buying five goats and were being taught how

1. These social occasions are in no way only an obligation for women in the country in general. The higher people climb on the socio-economic ladder, the more they contribute to weddings and funerals and the men's role is well defined. As an anecdote, I mention that a Tanzanian researcher now in Finland mentioned as the FIRST benefit of being able to write at the IDS: One avoids all the weddings and funerals!!

to milk the goats. Several groups had goats but only a little milking was being done. I was told that there was a young man who took care of the goats and sold the milk for 200 Tshs. a litre and brought milk to the child. Goats have milk 3–4 months after giving birth. However, three goats had died because grass they had eaten was poisonous.¹

Some of the women had earlier been members in a UWT group, but had now formed an informal group. They said "everyone belongs to groups, in our neighbourhood there are two other groups, even the school students start savings groups from the third grade on. If 60 people put in 50 Tshs. they get 3000 at one time. Three women put in 500 Tshs. each week. They can decide what they want to do with the money."

The *Tupendane* group intended to start a tea house, *mgahawa*, when they began. Each member put a 100 Tshs. note into the common bag. They would continue to do so every week until they had enough. In the meanwhile, they helped each other on social occasions. "When we hear one of us has death at her home, we go to help her. We collect money to buy the burial cloth and we help with cooking food. We work until everything is over. The one who was helped returns 50 Tshs. to each of us when she has the money" (collections around funerals can be sizeable, so there is often a lot to return).

When women work for each other, a monetary payment or a gift can be paid. Small amounts of money which cannot be counted as payment for work are called *hela ya sabuni*, soap money, meaning that the people do not come in order to be paid, but deserve to be rewarded for their assistance. Similarly, when women take turns in doing jobs in the group which require whole days, they are paid daily *hela ya sabuni*. I interpret this as an attempt to preserve the mutual help aspect in neighbourly activities, the informality of it.

Another group had a loan of 3,5 million Tshs. for a milling machine and women were working to pay back the loan. They helped to grind flour for many hours at a time, even for the whole day. They got "soap money", 800 Tshs. for a turn of four days, 200 Tshs. a day. The group had so far returned 760,000 Tshs. and had an account of

1. It is not possible to tell the long stories here, but people have not traditionally kept cattle or even small livestock. RIPS has a large small stock programme and Mnazi Mmoja was at the same time having a seminar for the goatkeepers, many of whom had had goats on loan as groups. Deaths, seasonality of income from goatmilk, and group ownership mean that it is only a small supporting aspect in the total strategy of livelihood. Information from the discussions at the Mnazi Mmoja seminar in May 1995.

22,000 Tshs. in the bank. The women also emphasized the seasonality of activities and funds available. They collected money during and after the harvest season. During other seasons they had to run some business and do trade, because "otherwise we could not manage". Yet another group of 5-10 women went to the forest eight to ten kilometres away to collect wood and tasty wild roots, *ming'oko*, which they made into food and sold or used in their homes.

In a Mnacho group, women gave as the criterion for who formed a group, "Only those who agree to work can share in the group". Regular work was the critical common characteristic, yet occasional absence from fieldwork was tolerated and specific reasons for not attending were carefully noted. Times of absence are not counted, the legitimacy of the excuse is crucial. Women select those whom they know do not come for a cheap ride. Reciprocity is the basic principle which also keeps the sharing tradition going. I have called it "social banking". Sharing reduces poverty, but it may also leave outside the very poorest, who still need special attention. For such, a newly organized youth group had on their own started an emergency fund and the idea was spreading.

Community development workers have motivated women to obtain rotating mini-loans by forming small groups. In Mnacho villages, women initially joined in groups of five members and ten groups formed a cluster of groups. After one year's experience, the women wanted to join two groups together and have ten instead of five members in each group. They gave as the reason that they could not get enough work done in a group of five, frequently one or two were absent because of illness, social events and incidental engagements. In order to keep the fieldwork going and give a hand to those who needed special help, they had to have more women to take the place of those who were absent from the fieldwork. Out of ten, only four groups initially got loans of 40,000 Tshs. which they used for growing onions. For some parts they hired a tractor, for other parts they hired workers to extend the area which they could cultivate themselves.¹ They shared in the work but each had her own plot within the larger field. Several groups had fields close to each other, which facilitated social interaction while the women were working. The land belonged to one of the group members and the conditions on which the land was used had not been clarified when the project

1. One must remember that they also had their own fields to cultivate.

started. The owner trusted the others to take it into consideration when the profits were divided. She ended up getting one sack of onions out of the six harvested for her personal sale. Women harvested together, they made decisions together as to when to sell and what to do with the money. They stored the onions before selling them in order to get a better price. After the crop of onions they planted maize. After harvesting the maize they were ready to pay the same sum they had loaned to another group, which then started to work with vigour. One group had failed to plant maize and had come out just even, with no profit margin. They were given a year of grace for paying to the next group.

Women expand by having several projects within their group and helping another group to get started. They can cultivate, have a goat project *mkopa mbuzi lipa mbuzi*, borrow a goat, pay for a goat. There are over one thousand goat groups in the two regions; not all are women's groups. A women's group may have a *mgahawa*, teahouse, or a bee-keeping project. Following the example of a group in Mnima several new groups were starting to keep stingless "bees". The women beekeepers' group in Mnima made the decision to give honey to the infant feeding station on the days when the mothers brought their children for extra provisions.

For women, ownership within a group is important. They consider it important to work in groups, even when to an outsider it often seems to produce relatively little in monetary value. They state as the explicit reason that the group gives them security, as a case in point, a husband cannot come and take a goat to sell it or feast on it. The husband's self-asserted habit of robbing the wife of her earnings has resulted in women having to conceal property or invest in group assets, whether in goats, fields and crops, or in *mchezo* or *upato* rotating savings group. For women, the question of who takes the money from the crops is the major issue of control of resources. A woman, whose security is not only threatened by drought and other natural calamities but also by rude male behaviour based on inconsiderate gender discrimination, has to find shrewd ways of managing everyday economics. A person who can never be sure whether she can dispose of the harvest from her own labour cannot possibly put all her eggs in one basket and then be left to lick her fingers when everything is gone. Even a male farmer cannot trust just one major crop nor can a salaried worker be sure of receiving payment regularly on a certain

day from steady employment. This means that even stable men and better providers cannot always be trusted for support.

For all these and other similar reasons, women have to build their livelihood on a variety of sources of food and income. Having a support group is the woman's way of banking, both socially and materially. Whether the group is a rotating credit group, a farming or goat group or whether the women grind flour, trade or have little hotels and tea houses, the conditions have to be flexible. The criterion of success cannot be growth of business, nor even the length of life of such a group. The activity often fills a temporary need. The group also lacks hard rules about whose turn it is to receive money or contribution now. The one who needs help, gets it when she needs it, others wait for their turn. The credit group does not only give credit, they also help each other in illness and celebration. The group has to form itself so that it can ensure mutual trust. A group or several such groups are the women's way of accumulating assets, however meagre they seem to be in purely economic terms.

Illustrative life stories

A number of individual life stories illustrate the imbalance in gender relations and women's ways of operating in Mtwara and Lindi regions.

Mwanashulu

Mwanashulu was a barely literate fisherwoman who supported her family through shore netting and cultivating. She was a group leader of some twenty fisherwomen who did the netting with her. Together they struggled to hold on to their entitlement to the shores on which "Women have always fished," as they said. *Bahari ni yetu*, "This sea is ours," they declared to intruding men from outside who came with big nets and scraped the bottom where the women's fingerlings bred and swam. Other men ruined the reefs by dynamiting. This made the daily income of women even more uncertain than it had been before. Like other fisherfolk, everyone participating in fishing also had her share of the daily catch for the family meal. The women kept the money from what they sold in a bank and made common decisions as to its use. "It is our only capital," said *Mwanashulu* who proposed that they should start a tea house where they could also sell the tomatoes and spinach they cultivated.

Part of the family income came from cultivation. *Mwanashulu's* husband did not consider work as his duty; he did not even know where his

wife's field was. "He only plays the bao game", she said. "Our men are lazy. We women even cut the forest into fields ourselves (work which traditionally has always been men's duty) and cultivate until six at night."

Mwanashulu has given birth to 13 children and finally wanted to have herself sterilized after the last child was born. Her husband opposed the idea and made it clear to the doctor. In spite of the husband's refusal, the doctor agreed to do the sterilization. It took 13 deliveries and several attempts to use contraceptives before Mwanashulu dared to stand against her husband's will and mental power. It was perhaps no surprise that her decision did not break the marriage. After all, the husband depended on his wife's income!

Mercy

Mercy was divorced. She had cultivated, her husband had helped, but when the income from the harvest was to be divided, *Mercy* had this to say: "In control and decisions on the use of the money, we women have no share. If we speak up and suggest saving part for the family's food we get beaten. We cannot advise our husbands. We harvested up to 40 sacks. I saw none of it, it went to other women." *Mercy's* husband had taken the money and married another woman. *Mercy*, as a Christian, could not tolerate this. She got divorced, took responsibility for the children and worked twice as hard to feed and educate them. She was a community worker who went out of her way to work out better ways of managing for women.

Women recognized that the new wives also often came from among themselves. They advised one another that they should not discriminate against the woman who comes as a new wife. "She should have her house and we should take her into our group. Let us do our things together and work in groups."

Mariamamu

Another illiterate woman farmer, *Mariamamu*, was a strong leader of her group of cultivating women. Women, who were used to cultivating together and assisting one another, consolidated their group when they heard that they could receive a small loan from a rotating fund. The group had increased their field area and made good profits by careful management of the funds which were kept in the village safe and which *Mariamamu* herself carefully supervised daily. *Mariamamu's* advice to other women as to how the change of attitudes could come about was directed to young mothers. "If you want men to change, mothers have to start training their male children very early, when they still are learning to walk within the mother's feet. There the male and female children alike can learn all the chores regardless of their gender. Once the boys start following their

fathers out of the mother's reach, it is already too late. They learn there the men's ways." Women had the reputation of being traditionalists, when in fact men were the ones who—with the excuse of tradition and culture—controlled women's efforts to change and educate their children.

Mwanajina

Mwanajina, now a resourceful business woman engaged in the wood trade, beyond the reach of most of the other women, was contending to be the Member of Parliament for Lindi town. She told of the difficulties she had faced as a woman, in comparison to most men, on her way to running a successful business. Mwanajina had started in government service as a secretary in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism and in a school for Fisheries Development. She wanted to get ahead in her career and was sent for further training. She was determined to struggle for her right to work in accordance with her ability and education. Yet her husband would not tolerate that she wanted to keep on climbing to higher positions. He hid her certificates from her so that she could not apply for higher posts, but Mwanajina went to the ministry and got new copies. The marriage ended in divorce.

While working in the Fisheries Department, Mwanajina had used all her free time for sewing and embroidering. She went to shops and got tenders for making tablesets and children's clothes. She packaged them in nice little boxes, and her handiwork sold well. One day as part of her work Mwanajina travelled to a conference in Mwanza. There she discovered that women were carrying on a lucrative trade with fish. She had 10,000 Tshs. of capital she had earned by sewing. She bought her first three sacks of dried fish, took them to Dar es Salaam and sold them for a profit at the market. She decided to go again and now invested in ten sacks of fish. For the following trip she had already made enough money to be able to buy 50 sacks of fish and had signed a contract with a chicken feed company for regular delivery. By that time, she had left her job and started her own business which she soon also extended to Mtwara and Lindi towns. Nile perch was a lucrative business in the southern regions where local fishing did not satisfy the need. To transport Nile perch, *sangara*, by train from Mwanza to Dar es Salaam, by lorry to the port, by ship to Lindi and Mtwara, and by lorry to the local markets seems like a forbidding exercise, but Mwanajina managed it. She then switched to bringing potatoes and onions from inland Mbeya to the coastal markets.

The road to increasing success was not paved smoothly. Most of the time, a woman doing business had to physically accompany the goods, in order not to be cheated. This wore down Mwanajina's health. She became pregnant and delivered twins. Her own health was not good enough to continue the heavy work. She had to give up her already flourishing busi-

ness and use her capital for taking care of the children and managing the family situation. The capital she had set aside was used up in two years, then she had to look for a way of getting new capital. She had already gained some reputation as a shrewd business woman. In her own words, "People knew me, they gave me an advance when I asked them. This is the way, people give an advance to one another."

It took time to build up the business again, but Mwanajina had already experienced that she could make an independent living as a woman. She now started in the wood trade. She had to travel to the bushland herself to supervise the cutting, sawing and transport of the wood. She hired loggers from another region for three month stints, "No longer, they learn to cheat you if they stay longer." To manage that she had to build a mutual care network and to organize the family care in her absence. In time, the family also became an asset. Without support groups, neither the business nor the family could have been taken care of.

There are hundreds of small groups in southern Tanzania who have started keeping goats together on an initial "borrow a goat, pay for a goat" loan basis. Many groups expand later to other forms of enterprise when they succeed in building up more capital: they cultivate *bambara* nuts, dig fishponds, or start teahouses. Women expand their economic activities by assisting other women to start their groups and their projects instead of building their own *empira*. Women in such groups state clearly that their reason for group ownership is to secure their own income which the husband cannot get hold of. Goats owned by a group cannot be butchered for a feast or given in payment for a husband's loan. But they can be considered as a bank from which a member of the group can borrow or be given a grant.

In one of the seminars, men and women staged a role play which revealed how natural it was for men to take the role of a husband and for his son to consider it shameful to work around the home; the home was a woman's domain and the woman had been married to be the servant there. This also meant that boys were taught not to do "women's chores" around the house, which extended to any "women's jobs".

Agnes

Some strong women like *Agnes* had refused to cook the evening meal for her husband until he came to the field to cultivate. She also gave each child, boys and girls, their share of work and allowed no excuses.

Fatuma

Fatuma had discovered another way of getting her husband home before he got lost in the bars. She did not allow the children to eat until their father came home and the family ate together. Children went to sleep and were woken up to eat when the husband arrived late at night. The husband was shamed into coming home in time.¹

Blandina

Blandina had agreed not to continue her education when the man she was destined to marry forbade her from going to secondary school. But the limit to obeying her husband came when, after they had had two children, he tried to bring another wife into the house. For the same reason many others divorced.

Responsible women

The examples presented above illustrate women in varying life situations. The large number, 30–40 per cent, of single-headed households is a direct result of women's rebellion against the subjugation into which they have been forced. The picture often given, that the single-headed households are the poorest, is not always correct in the rural parts of Tanzania. If women have access to land or other resources they have more control over their produce and income when they are not subject to the indiscriminate power of men. In assessing who is poor, the measure is in the eye of the viewer. Men are likely to consider any woman poor who is living without a man in the household. The woman might also call herself poor in that situation because of the excess work she has to do, but it would seldom be different even if there was a man in the house. She feels she needs a man for the sake of outside society which downgrades her otherwise; she herself often talks about the man being an extra burden rather than help.

More and more of the family care and responsibility has been transferred to women which means that cash payments are demanded from them for school fees, for school equipment, uniforms, hospital fees and medicine. Women take care of these needs, because they want their children to study, or take them when they are ill to either traditional *waganga* or an organized medical facility. Any woman who

1. In north-western Tanzania, the husband had in fact the right to demand that the family should not eat the evening meal before he came home, which meant that at times the family could go hungry throughout the night (personal information by M. Kamugisha).

does not have an external source of money has had to start earning an income. The very purpose of having to earn income is directed to others: to feed the family, to send the children to school, to pay transport fees, to import necessities from places further away, to buy clothes for the children, etc. This means that women have a clear idea why they earn income. Women do not say that improving entrepreneurship is the fulfilment of their goals. Instead they talk about their many tasks which relate to physical, social and economic reproduction and regeneration of the various ways in which they perpetuate life. It makes a difference WHY people do what they do.

Women's economics include serving others. Women take service for granted. They associate with one another and form numerous more or less formal groups in order to be able to do their work and serve, and to have a social life while they do so.

Much needs to be done to find out on which conditions the very poorest get into groups, since sharing always means contributions from all. It is likely that the poorest women come in only as labourers and not as having a share in the money.¹ This is one of the open issues which we have to penetrate deeper. One need is for groups to establish special funds, *mifuko*, to deal with emergencies in the neighbourhood. The AIDS problem has given birth to many groups caring for orphans and has created a new sense of responsibility, often initiated by the death of some close relative. Whether this care extends to other than the acute needs caused by AIDS ought to be studied.

It is an exaggeration to maintain that all women work in and through groups, or that all women consider service to others as their self-evident task. Women fail like men do. But all the discussions with women show that for the majority of them business does not primarily mean becoming rich and excelling more than others. Local societies simply would not operate if they were not based on social banking and whole economies instead of on individualistic profit and competition at the expense of others. Competition has its limits and preferences in concrete situations show the priority of the order of things.

1. Earlier research of mine in Moshi district revealed that the poorest were left out, "One can help them once or twice, but one can share work only with those who can give service in return". This meant that a mother with five malnourished children could not put in her share of work and dropped out completely (Swantz, 1985).

LESSONS FOR THE DONOR COMMUNITY

I first examined the weaknesses in the prevailing way of measuring development. I then described in brief the way in which the RIPS programme has used participatory action research and PRA methods in regional programmes, particularly in women's programmes. I then went on to analyse the changes that have taken place in the social situation in the two regions under study and I related this especially to the women's conflicting situation. Finally I described some life stories which substantiate some of the claims and illustrate women's strategies.

This paper includes statements which have no bearing on the discussion of the donor driven development efforts. I realize that the major question for donor organizations is how PRA can be institutionalized in such a way that it can be made use of as part of administration or development planning on a larger scale. However, it is important to realize that the emphasis on participation which prevails today in the donor community is in conflict with the economic thrust which is pursued at the same time. The contradictory trends reflect a wider global drift between global and local, macro and micro-economics, which affect the political processes at ground level and repudiate the local successes. However, even in conflicting situations, PRA can create political awareness which gives the local forces in general and women in particular some political clout. If this awareness is allowed to grow and political activity on the local level is not experienced as a danger, then people's participation in their own development and women's strategies for sustaining livelihood can grow into larger innovative programmes.

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Changing land tenure systems in the contemporary matrilineal social system: The gendered dimension

Bertha Koda

ABSTRACT

Faced with the great importance attached to the agrarian sector in Tanzania, one would have believed that issues of concern over land tenure are gender-neutral. However, available data points to the contrary. Women and men tend to be affected differently by land tenurial matters. While the root-cause of this gender imbalance is essentially the traditional/cultural norms (ideologies and practices), influences from both foreign religions (Islam and Christianity) and the concepts of so called "modern governance" and "modern economy" have persistently ensured the prevalence of gender imbalances, with women being the more discriminated. This chapter attempts to explore socio-economic and political dimensions of land tenure systems from a feminist point of view. The south-east part of Tanzania, with particular reference to the Mtwara region, is selected to assist in contextualizing a matrilineal social system.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of land in sub-Saharan African countries is hard to exaggerate. In most countries on this continent, land provides almost all the essentials of life. In Tanzania, for instance, land has remained a major means of production since time immemorial. More than 85 per cent of Tanzanians earn their living from the land, the majority of whom are peasant women. Accessibility to and control over land has thus remained a political, economic and gender issue, which is inti-

mately embodied within the cultural rules of various groups' inclusion (described at a general level through the terms of matriarchy and patriarchy). The land issue is guided by the land tenure systems which tend to be both volatile and subject to geographic, demographic, climatic, political and economic factors.

Culturally, all Tanzanian women have had usufruct rights to land in various ways including inheritance, gifts and allocation through males (uncles, brothers, fathers, husbands), borrowing and allocation from village leaders. In rare cases, land given to spouses by either the bridegroom or the bride's family was considered to be joint property.

In Tanzania, dramatic changes in land tenure systems especially with respect to land accessibility, land transfers, land ownership and control have been witnessed during the last few decades. Such changes have affected both inter- and intra-household gender relations. It is widely argued that both colonial and post-colonial land tenure changes initiated by the ruling class for whatever motives (economic growth, efficiency or equity) have drastically eroded women's land rights and the concomitant benefits. The process of privatization and commoditization of land emanating from the profound restructuring of both the local and the global economy has stimulated parallel and gender-specific tenurial challenges with specific class and gender dimensions. Undoubtedly, it entails new forms of land alienation and land conflict, relations of inequality, and the subordination and exploitation of the poor rural masses.

This chapter therefore attempts to answer two basic questions:

1. How both individual and collective actions shape and restructure land tenure systems, as people actively respond to the economic challenges of their everyday lives under specific cultural context.
2. How men and women employ differential strategies to protect/maintain their tenure rights against the top-down/government regulations.

The article is divided into six parts, including an introduction which is a brief on the cultural realities of land tenure. Part two highlights agrarian, gender and land tenure issues at a national level, using the historical-dialectical approach, while part three describes the actual regional context within which the major discussion is pegged. Both the impact of local culture and foreign religions are highlighted in this section. Section four discusses the impact of villagization on land

tenure and farming systems in the Mtwara region, while section five explores current land conflicts emanating from the coexistence of different land tenure laws/ideologies. The impact of the 1992 Land Act is discussed at length in this section. The last part of the chapter concludes the discussion by looking at a number of local initiatives taken as a response to the confusing situation explored in previous sections and summing up the plight of women.

THE NATIONAL SCENE

Gender and agriculture in a nutshell

Tanzania is a less developed, agrarian country with dependence of the rural masses on the production of both export crops such as coffee, tea, tobacco and cashew nuts, and subsistence crops such as maize, millet, cassava, beans and peas. Demographically, the population of Tanzania is comprised of about 28 million people, 51 per cent of whom are women. The rural population is about 86.7 per cent, the majority being women. The 1988 population census testifies to the predominance of rural women as farmers (55.7 per cent of the total number of 8,247,000 farmers). There has also been an increase of female actors in both rural fishing and livestock keeping (45 per cent of total actors for the two sub-sectors in rural areas). In addition, the gender division of labour is witnessed in all the activities in both sectors where manual labour is female-dominated. Women are also marginalized in landed property relations, despite their key role as custodians of both household and national food security. This is partly demonstrated by the distinctive gender disparity in terms of the size of land holdings. For the years 1986/87 and 1990/91 for instance, the average planted area of rural holdings for women was 0.59 ha and 0.53 ha respectively, while the average for male farmers was 0.89 ha and 0.73 ha respectively. The relatively large reduction in the size of farms for both females and males is a result of changes in land tenure systems as dictated by the top-down decisions/initiatives of the ruling class, population increase and cultural norms such as inheritance policies. All these issues will be discussed more extensively in this paper at a later stage.

Land tenure in the pre-colonial era

Issues of land accessibility, ownership rights, and protection from both partial encroachment and total alienation differ from one culture to another. During the pre-colonial era, variations were minimal. Throughout Tanzania there were three basic forms of land-access and transfers, guided by the two ideologies of patriarchy and matriarchy. In all cases, however, clan leaders (chiefs) and elders were custodians of clan land. Indeed, such leaders controlled land and various aspects of its use either through rituals or direct control, but with varying degrees of authority. In several instances, for example, chiefs have been instrumental in reclaiming land from farmers who had left the land unused for a socially unacceptable extended period (Koponen, 1988: 271).

Traditionally, usufructuary rights were enjoyed by all clan members regardless of sex. The abundance of fertile land made it possible for clan members to clear the bush without restrictions, while non-clan members had to get permission from local leaders (chiefs and elders) to enjoy access to usufructuary rights. As Koponen (1988) correctly observes:

A household group could claim a sufficient plot of land under usufructuary rights guaranteed as long as it kept the land under cultivation.

In some places, a foreigner could even secure a piece of land on an annual basis with an offer of either beer or cattle to a former landholder without informing the chief. This behaviour of bypassing traditional leaders was, however, a rare phenomenon.

The second common form of land accessibility and indeed land transfer was through inheritance. Summarizing the guiding principle in inheritance rights, Koponen (1988) observes:

In inheritance the guiding principle was that land should remain within lineage or within whatever descent group was operative in this respect (p. 273).

Commenting on the gender disparity, Koponen joins other feminist critics and points out that:

Women, the ultimate cultivators, were allocated land as members of their original descent groups (matrilineal societies) or those of their husbands (patrilineal societies) (p. 273).

The third form of land access was through borrowing, usually on an annual or seasonal basis. Each culture had its own payment demands under such a system. Nevertheless, the tendency was for the borrower to pay in kind (beer, crops, animals, etc.).

Changes in land tenure

Current changes in land tenure systems are not a new phenomenon. Indeed, noticeable changes were noted in some villages as early as the 1870s. The coming of foreigners such as the Arabs and the Europeans who introduced both permanent crops (like mangos and cashew nuts) and foreign religions (Islam and Christianity) greatly influenced land tenure systems. In addition, the colonial and neo-colonial systems of state administration together with subsequent initiatives such as the land tenure changes of the 1920s, the resettlement programmes of the 1940s, and the villagization policy of the late 1960s and early 1970s, had a drastic impact on land tenure. It was during the 1920s, for instance, that the system of free-hold title-deeds was introduced into the country without necessarily nullifying customary land rights (deemed rights of occupancy). The 1940s witnessed the introduction of settlement schemes established on alienated land where the future tenurial arrangements were very unclear. Similar schemes were introduced after independence (1961) during the development approach which promoted new rural agricultural settlements. The land tenure system in such settlements was just as ambiguous as the previous one instituted in preceding settlements.

The period after the Arusha Declaration is known for its unique land tenure system under the villagization process, which is the subject of discussion in the next section of this paper. Suffice it to mention that the villagization process facilitated the coexistence of three types of rural communities, with different legal implications, i.e.

- (i) Traditional villages registered as "development" villages.
- (ii) Relocated villages/families (scattered homesteads/villagized communities).
- (iii) Pooled land which was then redistributed equally between adult villagers (concentrated land holdings/villagized communities/*ujamaa* villages).

Subsequent legal changes worth discussing include the Rural Lands (Planning and Utilization) Act of 1973, which among other things gave powers to the Minister of Lands to repeal any "granted right of occupancy", and the minister responsible for regional administration to terminate customary land tenure rights in specified areas, whereupon the appropriate District Council would have the power to re-allocate the said land as deemed necessary. There is no doubt that the said act violates both the principle of local empowerment as well as the previous legal rights provided for by the customary laws.

While the position of the rights of individual villagers still remained unclear, clarification of villages' land-rights was provided for by the Villages and Ujamaa Villages (Registration, Designation and Administration) Act (No. 21 of 1975), which made villages legal entities with a mandate to sue and be sued. Yet the general confusion over land tenure still remained unresolved. Instead, an additional institution responsible for land tenure issues was instituted. It was made clear, therefore, that the executive, judiciary, the ruling political party and now the "village council" were empowered as responsible organs to address land tenurial issues but they were not devoid of overlapping powers and jurisdictions. Considerable abuse of such powers in land allocation was also evidenced.

Other influential initiatives include the National Agricultural Policy of 1983, with its emphasis on cash crop production and the increased emphasis on land privatization. With the introduction of cash crops, land acquired a new exchange value and hence became a popular commodity. During the 1980s, therefore, large tracts of land were allocated to outsiders while government encroachment on village land was common. This period was characterized by government attempts to use state power to acquire and re-grant customary land (Coldham, 1995). During the same period, the Local Government (District Authorities) Act No. 7 of 1982 was passed, partly to replace the 1975 legislation, hence reducing the village government powers over land tenure and transferring such powers to the District Authorities (District Land Officers, District Councils, etc.). The programme on "village titling", which formed a major component of the land tenure changes was introduced at the same time. While this initiative aimed at providing security of tenure for village land, the process, which in actual fact involved surveying and demarcating boundaries

and issuing of certificates of occupancy to village councils, has been strongly criticized. As Coldham contends:

The process has been slow, expensive, and often characterized by incompetence, malpractice and a failure to involve the villagers themselves (p. 231).

In addition, the programme failed to address the fate of the pre-existing land rights (of individuals) in those areas where title-deeds were later given to village councils (public organs).

It was not surprising, therefore, that the 1980s were characterized by numerous complaints over existing land tenure systems and increasing claims for the return of land alienated during previous resettlement schemes, including the villagization process. The Bill of Rights as incorporated in the constitution of Tanzania in 1984 was used as political support for the said claims, hence the persistent dilemma facing the government over land tenure. In 1986, new regulations were passed bearing on the 1973 Act on the Rural Lands (Planning and Utilization) as a way of arresting the situation. Nevertheless, the inadequacy of such regulations was greatly felt in 1987, when it was realized that the situation could not be contained without additional legislation. An important follow-up measure was the issuing of the Government Notice No. 88 of 1987 which was aimed at repealing customary land rights only in those districts notorious for serious land disputes (where numerous cases were awaiting court decisions).

As noted throughout this discussion, government reaction to people's grievances over land tenure has assumed the form of very undemocratic *ad hoc* measures which consistently disregarded both basic human rights principles and future land tenure systems. This is evidenced by the short life-span and ineffectiveness in the implementation of such measures. The establishment of the Shivji Commission on Land Issues in 1991 and the resultant report submitted to the government in 1992 (whose well-argued recommendations were never seriously acknowledged by the government) and the subsequent enactment of the Regulation of Land Tenure (Established Villages) Act No. 22 of 1992, a few days after the submission of the said report are just a few testimonies to the inadequacy of such *ad hoc* measures of solving conflicts over land tenure.

The practice of holding land titles introduced by the colonial government cemented the process of land privatization with concomitant

changes in inheritance systems. However much private land ownership was appreciated by the government, the process of individual land registration and titling remained very slow. Nevertheless, all these initiatives brought about changes both in settlement patterns and property relations, while the household was retained as the smallest unit of production and reproduction. To a great extent the concept and spirit of communalism remained unpopular during the 1980s, despite the pervasiveness of the policies of *ujamaa* and self-reliance of the 1960s and early 1970s.

Indeed, the dynamic changes on land tenure to date are a continuation of inherent changes in both the political and economic spheres of life. With the growing scarcity of fertile land, coupled with the increased interest in highly valued landed property and the increasing government pressure for title-deeds, concerns over land tenure changes are shared by many. Describing the current changes in land tenure, Pekka Seppälä (1995) argues:

The land tenure pattern is currently going through a period of change. A slower part of the change process concerns inheritance ... but a more rapid change ... is resulting from the increasing alienation (i.e. sales and other permanent allocations) of land ... A lot of land allocation is taking place in dubious ways (p. 206).

More empirical data is needed however to concretize the contention described above.

LAND TENURE CHANGES AND THE GENDER DIMENSION: A CASE STUDY OF MTWARA REGION

Basic facts about the region

Mtwara region which forms one of the underdeveloped areas in Tanzania, has a total area 16,740 sq. km. Out of this body mass, three-quarters is unutilized arable land with low fertility. The fertile area around the Ruvuma River forms 5 per cent of the total land area. During the heyday of *ujamaa* (1975), only 17 per cent of the total land was under cultivation, 50 per cent of which was in Newala district. Administratively the region comprises four districts including Mtwara, Masasi, Newala and the newly created district of Tandahimba (instituted in July 1995). The region has a total of 490 villages and Newala district has the highest number (205) followed by Masasi

(196). Of the four districts, Newala district experiences more land problems than the others.

The current population of Mtwara region is estimated at 960,797, an increase of 8 per cent from the 1988 figures of 889,494 (1988 population census). The adult female population is 30.4 per cent while male adults comprise 27.3 per cent. The rest (42.3 per cent) are children. The abundant natural resources are not fully utilized because of the poor physical infrastructure that leads to both internal and interregional isolation. The climate is characterized by one long rainy season (November to May) followed by a long dry season with an annual average precipitation of between 800 and 900 mm. The mean temperature is 27.5°C. Mtwara region harbours a large number of matrilineal social groupings including the Makua, Makonde, Yao, Mwera and Mawia. Nevertheless, while both matrilineal and patrilineal kinship patterns coexist, male dominance appears to be very high.

Small-scale farming predominates with cashew nuts, and *simsim* as major cash crops and maize, rice and different types of peas as food crops. Cassava and cow-peas are both export and food crops. About 75 per cent of the regional income is derived from agriculture, livestock and natural resources (fishing, mining, timber and other forest products). Other income earning activities include wage labour, trading, remittances and craft. Only one-fourth of the cultivated land is devoted to large-scale farming. The small amount of commercial farming is partly a consequence of poor/underdeveloped infrastructure and marketing facilities.

An understanding of village economic dynamics brings one to the recognition of inter- and intra-village land and labour exchange relations, which were a common feature both before and after the introduction of the *ujamaa* policy. Hence 90 per cent of the economically active small-holder farmers have several farms in one or two villages usually in the upland (Kilimani) and in valleys (Bondeni). On average each household occupies between one and eight parcels of land (farms) whose size differs from household to household and village to village, as the case of Newala district testifies below.

Farming in the valleys is more profitable as the fertile alluvial soils make the area cultivable throughout the year. On the uplands, on the other hand, rainfed farming is carried out on poor soils and on a seasonal basis, hence the common practice of shifting cultivation and burning. This location of farms is also used to characterize villagers'

social groupings. The rich villagers are, for instance, distinguished from the poor ones by their ability to get access to alluvial valley lands. Elaborating on the relationship between land ownership and income levels, Seppälä continues that "The cultivation of rice (or groundnut, sugarcane or vegetables) in valleys also provides large returns if one is able to invest in labour" (p. 206).

However, with the increase in population, land is also becoming scarce and most farms are located at a great distance from residential areas. Intercropping is a major characteristic of the farming systems in villages, while modern farm inputs and implements are rarely used. The heavy dependence on manual labour is becoming increasingly problematic, given the sizable out-migration of the youth, who are hardly motivated to remain in rural areas. Nevertheless, the non-monetary exchange of labour, under the traditional *Mkumi* system, is a practice still available whenever labour demand is exceptionally high. It is important to mention that its pure form has been drastically diluted over the years, especially after the introduction of the money economy.

Pre-ujamaa era

The previous discussion has highlighted the land tenure systems during the pre-colonial era, when land was generally regarded as clan property, while cultivated land was considered to be under the control of individual farmers. Upon the death of the occupant, immediate relatives used to inherit the land. Usually the mother's land was passed over to her daughters as they tended to reside in the same village. The man's property went to his wife and children since the people in this part of Tanzania followed the matrilineal system. However, as Koponen (1988) correctly observes:

It is misleading to speak of land ownership in the sense of exclusive rights, individual or corporate, making land a commodity to be treated at the will of the "owner". Rather, access to land was regulated by a complicated "series of retreating and reversionary rights" from the final user through the descent group up to the leader of the society (p. 273).

It is noted elsewhere that clan leadership was shared among males and females, hence the presence of both *Mwene* (male) and *Apwia Mwene* or *Mamwene* (female) respectively. Nevertheless, male leadership still predominated, since female leaders (*Mamwene*) could only be

accepted in the absence of a suitable male 'contestant'. Women's leadership role in tenurial issues i.e. as custodians of clan land was therefore very limited.

The influence of Christianity and Islam

Religious ideologies strongly affected land tenure systems, especially with respect to inheritance rights. The impact of Islam on inheritance is quoted in almost every village in the Mtwara region. Under Islamic law, the inheritance rights over property (including land) are shared by both males and females including sons, daughters and wives although daughters get the smallest share. As for Christianity, its patriarchal ideology influences inheritance rights and daughters' rights are conspicuously marginalized. In most cases, however, villagers tend to follow their customary laws when dealing with inheritance issues even of landed property, where institutions such as the clan leaders, individual elders, households members, religious leaders and both central and local government leaders have vested interests. Most of these organs are, however, inclined towards patriarchy rather than matriarchy, hence the limited land rights enjoyed by women in the past in Mtwara region are increasingly being eroded.

THE IMPACT OF VILLAGIZATION ON LAND TENURE IN SOUTH-EAST TANZANIA

The policy of villagization emanates from the 1967 Arusha Declaration which aimed at creating a socialist and self-reliant Tanzania. The major part of the policy concentrated on establishing rural settlements that were intended to become viable economic, social and political entities.

Villagization was systematically and more dynamically implemented in the regions of Mtwara and Lindi than in other regions, apart from Dodoma. Critics of villagization conceive the move as a top-down development approach. It is no coincidence that the move involved more villagers from the southern parts of Tanzania. In the first place, the regions in the south were sparsely populated with scattered settlements. Most villagers used to practice shifting cultivation. Secondly, large numbers of people used to reside and farm in the valleys, and hence were beset by the problem of frequent floods. The

third reason is the security factor. It should be remembered that Mozambique, which borders on the Mtwara region, was still fighting the Portuguese for political independence in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Being a border region, Mtwara was drastically affected by the *influx of refugees from Mozambique, many of whom shared the same cultural norms as the people near the Mtwara border (Makonde people)*. It was therefore considered a wise measure to establish permanent and adequately politicized settlements at the border with strong powers to address security issues.

The mobile nature of the people of the Mtwara region is amicably described by Wembah-Rashid (1983), who noted that resettlement for such people was a common phenomenon. He claims that "During the past century the villagers or their ancestors have moved their residences and settlements several times" (p. 182).

Wembah-Rashid tries to link the phenomena of villagization policy with centuries old resettlement practices and discusses the limited success of villagization by pointing out that most villagers took the policy for granted rather than considering it to be a new progressive measure aimed at achieving both socio-economic and political changes. The villagization programme was seen as just another one of those resettlements traditionally initiated by the people. This carefree interpretation of the policy robbed it of the intended seriousness (Wembah-Rashid, 1983).

While there are similarities between the two phenomena, remarkable differences are also evident. Borrowing from both Wembah-Rashid's study on the people of Nakarara in Masasi district and similar studies in Newala district, motives for resettlement during villagization are said to have differed from person to person. While some shifted to new settlements because everybody else in their family/lineage agreed to move, others did so to break away either from the seemingly adult-dominated established lineage or other subordinating authority typically experienced in the old residential set-ups. Yet others optimistically looked forward to opening new business ventures. Quoting one respondent in his study, Wembah-Rashid substantiates this point:

One thing which encouraged me to come here was that my wife was having problems with her brothers and sisters at Kapisera. Moving into the village was a kind of relief from those frustrations, we found new friends and agreeable relatives (p. 122).

It should be pointed out that while women are expected to have more rights in a matriarchy than in a patriarchy, the former system is not devoid of undemocratic tendencies, as the villagers' sentiments cited above reveal. As noted elsewhere, some villagers, especially those who were forced to resettle in new villages while leaving behind their farms, permanent crops and durable houses (i.e. their lifelong savings), had very disappointing experiences. Yet a few were lucky because their old farms were not taken by newcomers, hence they could reclaim them, as some are currently doing. The experience of those who never moved to new villages is also mixed. There are those whose land was appropriated by the village government for residential purposes and social services (school, dispensary, church/mosque, etc.) and communal farming. It should be recalled that the *ujamaa* policy and subsequent measures like the Villages and *Ujamaa* Village Act of 1975 had given the village government power to control all land available in the village. Incidentally, the supremacy of the previously instituted laws over land tenure including customary land tenure was seriously challenged. The villagization policy was, however, gender-sensitive in that every adult, regardless of sex, was eligible for land-use rights either for housing construction or for farming. Women were, therefore, given the chance to have land in their own right in the new settlements. This move was very popular among female heads of household. Yet the fate of former occupants' landed property was still left unresolved. Hence, as Wembah-Rashid (1983) correctly observes:

Villagers continued to own permanent crops in their old villages up to 1980 but maintained bilateral understanding with individuals who built houses near their crop trees, in some cases, some villagers *sold* their property to new residents who either cut down the trees to put up buildings or continued harvesting the crop (p. 139).

The ambiguity of the land tenure instituted by the 1975 Village Act left loopholes for most villagers to continue using both customary and religious laws on land issues, hence their continued ownership of several farms in and outside their official residential village. However, travelling the long distances to some of these farms was too tedious a job, resulting in most farmers failing to invest in such farms even those with cashew nut trees. It is common, therefore, to see large tracts of untended cashew nut farms in many villages in the Mtwara region.

Land tenure systems in "villagized" areas

There is no doubt that the villagized settlement pattern greatly distorted the previous farming systems. For some villagers, the fertile land which used to sustain their needs was left behind while the farms in residential areas were turned into plots for housing and other social services. Furthermore, women and men who used to enjoy landed property ownership rights had to forsake their land-use rights with no guarantee of replacement or compensation under the newly instituted village management system.

Ideally, *ujamaa* villages (villagized communities) were supposed to be rural communities where people live together, work together and enjoy the benefits/fruits of their labour on equal terms. By implication, therefore, such communities were supposed to have a particular system of farming where the major means of production were communally owned. There was very little space for privatization in such "socialist" communities. Surprisingly, most of the new (villagized) settlements organized between 1967 and 1975 were commonly referred to as *ujamaa* villages, even if they lacked the necessary qualifications. Indeed, the traditional rulers (Mwene and Mamwene) continued to be members of villagized communities and even commanded some respect from their clan members. Their recognized rights were, however, generally confined to religious and ritualistic roles. Those who wished to regain their previously granted status as community leaders, had to go through the electoral system, which was a characteristic of the new mode of choosing leadership. The emergence of a new calibre of leadership was undoubtedly evident but still maintained the characteristic of gender imbalances. As Wembah-Rashid (1983) vividly puts it, the new village communities were made up of people who could be distinguished from their fathers and mothers. He thus asserts:

They were foregoing their own ethnic identity with criteria different from those of their fathers and mothers ... they are a distinct group of 'deviants' from clan and lineage parochialism ... of greater inter-lineage, inter-clan, inter-religious and multi-ethnolinguistic tolerance and accommodation (p. 137).

Thus there is no doubt that the new settlements (villagized communities) with corresponding leadership patterns allowed an evolution of their own modes of farming and land ownership systems. Hence,

four types of farm management were evident, i. e individual farms, state farms, communal farms and block farms.

(a) *Individual farms*

These were acquired through purchase, inheritance or allocation by the village government. By then, there were a multitude of institutions dealing with village land. These were comprised of individual heads of households and clan leaders, village councils, ward development committees, district land officers, land surveyors and the courts, each with specific responsibilities but not devoid of conflicting interests. The sizes of individual farms depended on the socio-economic status of the owners. With the increasing practice of land purchase for instance, some villagers have been able to amass large tracts of land in several villages. The prevalence of rural social groupings was dynamically facilitated by the commoditization of land with the rich group/cluster having more and larger farms than the other groupings, although both groups would have farms both within and outside their official residential villages. It should also be noted that an increasing number of people are becoming landless and poverty-stricken, a phenomenon which was never entertained in the early days of *ujamaa* policy when each household was allocated at least two acres for subsistence crops. Nevertheless, land accumulation and commoditization breeds land conflicts. In several villages, population increase also aggravated the problem of landlessness and class conflicts over landed property. Discussions about the gender disparity on this issue would be topical, but the information available is not adequately gender disaggregated, hence raising such arguments would be premature. It is a truism that while a very small number of women own private land, both sexes face land conflicts ranging from fights over farm demarcation to complete alienation/robbing. Two cases cited in a study on land tenure in Maputi and Kitangari villages in Newala district in 1995 involved women victims of such malpractices.

An equally important aspect of land tenure is the issue of holding title-deeds. Previous discussions have highlighted the difficulty in understanding the issues of privatization of land in Mtwara region amidst the predominance of customary land ownership rights. Most people with individually cared-for farms are not even aware of the need to have title-deeds. This general ignorance is no blessing, since a

few legally literate people are buying land very cheaply from villagers and obtaining title-deeds before the villagers are conscious of the inherent legal implications. A good number of villages also lack title-deeds, hence their land is unprotected against illegal encroachment.

The Newala district case is good testimony, where only 10 villages have title-deeds while 124 more villages have only recently sent their requests for title-deeds to the relevant authority. It is disappointing that the 70 villages which have already paid for title-deeds are complaining over delays in issuing title-deeds. As for individuals, ten had already secured their title-deeds while 48 others are still waiting for a response from the relevant authorities. Indeed, this is just a minority group. Yet, there are complaints that the time lapse between application for title-deeds and the actual granting of the certificates is too long, rendering the whole process very discouraging. It is also argued that the amount of money needed for the registration process is beyond the means of many villagers, although the biggest snag in the whole exercise is said to be the general lack of literacy on landed property rights.

(b) Block farms

Since the early days of villagization, block farming was encouraged side by side with individual farming. The block farming system borrowed a lot in terms of principles/ ideology from the old system of *mkumi*. Both systems cherished the spirit of working together, but on individual farms. The major difference between the two systems was in style. While in the *mkumi* system, clan members, friends and neighbours willingly helped each other during seasons of peak labour demand and food and drinks were served after work, block farming was a more or less compulsory system introduced in the villages (villagized communities) where both poor and rich people were obliged to work side by side under the supervision of an extension worker. Block farms were also considered to be training grounds where good crop husbandry was to be observed. Despite the positive elements of block farming, however, gender relations were negatively affected in that women ended up being regular farmers at the block farms while their husbands often found reasons to be absent. The system required at least one member of the household to be present to avoid punishment by village leaders. The success of this system there-

fore owes much to the women who obediently kept to the rules and regulations for block farming, often to protect their husbands.

Block farming gained prominence in the Mtwara region in the 1980s, when all three former districts were faced by food shortages. Initiatives such as "*Ondoa Njaa Masasi, ONJAMA*" of the Masasi districts and similar initiatives in other districts utilized the block farming system for easy planning, monitoring and evaluation. Much of the land used for block farming was distributed by the village government, hence the size of the farms was determined by the availability of land in a given village. A few block farms are still being operated in some villages, but are now referred to as *Mkumi* farms.

(c) *Ujamaa/Communal farms*

During the initial stages of the villagization process, communal (*ujamaa*) farming was greatly encouraged. During the heyday of *ujamaa*, the larger share of the villagers' income was derived from this source in some villages. The overall share of communal farming in the national economy was, however, very minimal, both in terms of the size of farms per village and the amount of labour allocated for this type of farming. In the years 1972/73 for instance, the average size of the communal farms in the Mtwara, Masasi and Newala districts was 2.5, 4.9 and 3.4 ha respectively. In 1975, *ujamaa* farming occupied 2.3 per cent (14 sq.km) of the total cultivated land in the Masasi district. As for labour inputs, an average of two days per week was allocated for communal farming in most villages. This mode of farming continued until the 1980s but with less prominence. In 1984 for instance, the share of communal (*ujamaa*) farms was about 5 per cent of the total agricultural land under cultivation in Mtwara region.

Communal farms were aimed at achieving three basic objectives:

- (i) Promotion of the system of public/communal ownership of the means of production (socialist ownership principles) which was devoid of both class and gender imbalances;
- (ii) Creation of avenues where farmers could easily be reached for training on good crop methods and animal husbandry;
- (iii) Generation of a communal income which was fairly distributed both for villagers' social amenities and household welfare.

Such farms were supposed to lead to better performance and also to generate more income for villagers' social welfare benefits. The estab-

lishment of the Village Development Fund, sometimes referred to as *Mfumaki*, in Mtwara was a common feature in many villages from which equipment like tractors, lorries, milling machines, etc. were purchased for the improvement of farming systems, income and social status. However, as the days passed, some unscrupulous village leaders misappropriated such funds extensively for their own personal gain or just mismanaged the funds, causing big losses. Slowly the villagers became demoralized and this led to the eventual fading away of this *ujamaa* (communal) system of farming.

It is widely believed that the system of communal farming was more favoured by women, since the system attempted to challenge the patriarchal economic system, in terms of property ownership and control, the distribution of the workload and the proceeds of labour. Under this system, one was supposed to be rewarded according to labour input. It was very encouraging that, for once, women could control their own income derived from their own production, rather than remaining dependent while working on the male dominated family farms. It is no wonder that the majority of the active participants in communal farming were women. Unfortunately, the popularity of this mode of farming has faded away and been replaced by private farming systems.

(d) *Cooperative farming*

With the fading away of communal farming, most women had problems about getting access to land in their own right. The only remaining reliable avenue where they could work together and control their income independently from men was cooperative farming. In some villages, women had to request land from the village government for cooperative ventures. The land allocated was formerly usually used for communal farming. Such land was not necessarily productive, nor were the tenurial rights clearly stipulated. Elsewhere, such land was usually reclaimed by the former occupier, who was believed to be the legal owner. There are also cases of encroachment on such land by individuals who considered themselves share-holders. In villages where women still possess cooperative farms, it has not been easy to get permission from the village government for the acquisition of title-deeds, which are becoming increasingly important for legal matters and as collateral for bank credits. Moreover, the increasing scarcity of fertile land in most villages drastically reduces women's and youth's

opportunities for cooperative farming. For those groups with land already in their hands, protection of such land from encroachment either by village leaders or other groups needing land is becoming increasingly difficult, especially where there are no title-deeds. The prevalence of this diversity in land tenure systems partly explains why so many land conflicts are being witnessed in Tanzania, as discussed below.

CURRENT LAND CONFLICTS

Land conflicts were prevalent even before the coming of foreigners, but with the abundance of land, such conflicts were few and easily resolved by both clan leaders and household heads.

Currently, land conflicts are on the increase and include the total alienation or partial slicing-off of somebody's land, non-agreed demarcation of farms, etc. The greater share of these conflicts is a result of the villagization process of the late 1960s and early 1970s. As Shivji (1992) correctly puts it:

The villagization (process) of the 1973-74 period ... paid little regard to the existing land tenure systems and the culture and custom in which they are rooted ... and lacked clarity on post-villagization land tenure systems (p. 131-132).

The price being paid for this gross mistake is the persistent land conflicts occurring regularly in villagized communities (settlements), a common feature of most parts of Tanzania today. Land conflicts assume various forms, which can be grouped into three categories:

- (i) Conflicts based on customs and expressed in the form of violation of customary land tenure e.g. selling clan land without seeking agreement of other clan members or giving daughters inheritance rights to clan land without sons' agreement.
- (ii) Conflicts brought about by the inadequacy of the legal system e.g. the ones brought about by the villagization policy which marginalized pertinent (customary) land tenure rights such as those highlighted above.
- (iii) Conflicts brought about/aggravated by inadequacy of the functions of the government machinery e.g. the slow pace of demarcating village boundaries, delayed issuing of title-deeds, compen-

sation for conflictual land and delays in making court decisions on conflictual land.

There is also the problem of increasing landlessness among the poor peasants in most parts of Tanzania. This problem is partly aggravated by the 1983 Agricultural Policy, which openly invited commercial, large scale farming (farming entrepreneurship). By the same token, land-holding titling was encouraged for both large and small farms, to ensure security of tenure, as a necessary encouragement for increased agricultural production. Critics of the 1983 Agriculture Policy point to the fact that it was more of a capitalist oriented policy with significant compromises to capitalism (Maganya, 1990). Although not much is reported on clashes between large and small land-holders, it is no secret that rich peasants have turned most of the poor peasants and their household members into seasonal labourers. The conflict takes the form of poor labour relations, magnifying the seriousness of the problem of landlessness. Conflicts between elders and the youth as well as between men and women often occur and are aggravated by the patriarchal sharing of power over land. Reactions by the youth are varied, although out-migration from villages is a common response. As for women, the struggle for land ownership has been widespread, but it is only marginally studied and reported. Clashes between crop farmers and livestock keepers are also common, but village governments have often managed to reconcile these conflicts of interests, usually applying the fine system which was also common under the traditional systems.

The largest conflict, which is believed to have necessitated the enactment of the 1992 Land Act, is that of mounting pressure from farmers who reclaim the clan lands or trees where they used to reside and farm before villagization. To a great extent, the people are challenging the legal basis of the original acquisition by the now villagized communities of the contested land. Contributing to the discussion on the root-causes of land conflicts, participants at a recent seminar on land held in Singida contend thus:

Many problems and conflicts emanate from land scarcity aggravated by Operation *Vijiji* (Villagization process) ... and the fact that many villagers were moved out of their clan land while new people have moved in, developed the area and are now claiming ownership rights (*Majira Newspaper*, 1 August 1995, p. 2).

In most parts affected by villagization there are many such cases. With the increasing land scarcity and high population increase, coupled with an unprecedented degradation of land, farmers are becoming more conscious of the rights over landed property that they lost. Incidentally, villagers in both *ujamaa* and other villagized communities believed that they had retained the right of ownership of their old clan land, though it may have been allocated to other people in the villagization process.

In addressing such conflicts, the law courts have been used, but up to now have failed to provide long lasting solutions. In one incident, for instance, the Chief Justice was quoted as trying to justify the basis of land tenure in villagized communities by arguing thus:

Since Tanzania believed in *Ujamaa*, then the interests of many people in land cases should override those of some few individuals (James R.W., 1975:4).

Critics of Tanzania's statutory provisions for settling land disputes contend that the legal machinery has lost much of its credibility. The multiple and overlapping authorities including land officers, party officials, customary land tribunals and the courts, have failed to cater for the claimants' interests. As Coldham (1995) points out, "delays, uncertainty and lack of finality in dispute resolution, arbitrariness in followed procedures and various incidences of corruption and favouritism form a major characteristic of the system".

Nevertheless, the enactment of the 1992 Land Tenure Act came at a time when mounting pressure on the prevailing legal machinery was regarded as proof of the inadequacy of the available land conflict resolution machinery. Hence the Act was expected to be the remedy, although in the end it created more problems, as witnessed today.

THE NEW LAND LAW

(Established Villages) Act No. 22 of 1992

In order to understand the intricacies of this new Land Law, there is need to contextualize it by revisiting the colonial history of the 1920s. Of particular reference is the Land Law of 1923, Chap 113 which recognized customary land tenure as legally binding. To the best of our understanding there was no revision of this law, even the Villages and

Ujamaa Village Act of 1975 did not repeal this law, hence the farmers are still using both the religious and customary laws in land tenurial matters. The sudden enactment of the 1992 Law came as a big surprise to both the ordinary people and their representatives, neither of whom were ever consulted about their views. As quoted by the Newala Working Group on Land Tenure, the controversial clause reads:

Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, all rights to occupy or to use land in accordance with any person in any village land prior to operation villagization are hereby extinguished.

As noted elsewhere, this Act not only abolishes the deemed right of occupancy (customary land rights) in villagized communities, but also prohibits free access to courts of law (Section 5a and 6). Section 3 (2) of the Act (No. 22/92) further clarifies that deemed rights of occupancy extinguished under Section 3 (1) *shall not affect*

- (a) any right to occupy or to use any village land which was acquired by any person during or subsequent to Operation *Vijiji*, in any village established as a result of the Operation, or
- (b) any right to use or to occupy any land in accordance with any custom or rule of customary law existing in any village which was not established as a result of Operation *Vijiji*.

The law further prohibits the taking of both actual and potential proceedings in relation to any right extinguished by Section 5 (1) and 5 (1) (b). Transfers of such proceedings to seemingly pseudo-legal institutions (tribunals) is however provided for, by the Act.

The legality of the said Act is consistently being challenged through the conflicting interpretations of lawyers and community members at large. While some lawyers defend the Act by saying that it is based on sound constitutional backing, others consider the Act to be a violation of various provisions of the Constitution. Judge Kisanga's observation at the Civil Appeal No. 32 of 1992 at the Court of Appeal of Tanzania (unreported) for instance offered a very strong justification for nullifying the 1992 Act, as he contended:

I do not have the least doubt that Sections 3 and 4 of Act No. 22 of 1992 violate Articles 13 (1) (2) and 30 (1) of the Constitution.

The main argument was that the Act denies affected citizens the right to possess the deemed rights of occupancy and hence it should be

declared unconstitutional. This argument was further concretized by Judge Munuo, E.N. of the High Court at the Arusha Centre on 21 October, 1993, when judgement was passed:

The Court finds that Sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Act No. 22/92 violate some provisions of the constitution, thereby contravening Article 64 (5) of the constitution. The unconstitutional Act No. 22 of 1992 is thereby declared null and void and accordingly struck down.

Indeed, prior to the enactment of this law, the Shivji Commission had submitted to the government very objective recommendations aimed at resolving the increasing conflict of interests over land occupied by villagized communities. In a nut-shell, the Commission recommended a decentralized and democratic system of both land administration and procedures for the settlement of land disputes. Nevertheless, the government did not heed such advice. Instead, the new act was passed in Parliament after a heated debate and in the absence of the views of those whose interests were at stake, i.e. the peasants. The top-down nature of this law is again demonstrated by the fact that most villagers and leaders at grassroots level are not even aware of its existence, although it touches the central means of their survival, i. e. their major means of production.

As previously mentioned, the Shivji Land Commission of 1992 aimed at assisting the government in drawing up a viable legal framework to help address land issues. The unexplained puzzle is why the government so quickly passed the law on land tenure, without fair regard to the recommendations proposed in the Shivji Report.

People in the southern regions, particularly in the Newala district, where some studies on land tenure have been conducted, have expressed mixed feelings with regard to this law. There are those who resettled on other people's land, (villagized communities) e.g. in Chihanga village, who are most impressed by this law and have even advised responsible institutions to speed up dissemination of its contents using the mass media. In the same district, however, there are those who fear that "war" among villagers/farmers will erupt if this law is carried to its logical conclusion. Incidentally, in both cases, villagers complained that the bill leading to this law was never discussed with the villagers and the debate was never even mentioned by their members of parliament.

As for women, it is believed that they are always bypassed when important issues on property relations are discussed at a public level.

Observations by Z. Bader in 1979, on the Zanzibar land reforms after the 1964 revolution, and other researchers all point to the fact that "women never participated in decisions leading to land reform" (Meena, 1994). Elsewhere, the act is not known, hence both village leaders and villagers are still ignorant of this law. Many villagers are also unaware of title-deeds (*hati*), even those who own landed property. The few who are aware of both this law and the recommendations of the Shivji Report of 1992 are still doubtful about the credibility of the organs entrusted with the role of land distribution, as pointed out in a recent newspaper article written by Shangwe Thani. Reporting on a seminar on land held in Tanzania recently, the author writes:

Participants at a seminar on Land have requested the government to establish a strong organ to monitor the land distribution as proposed by the President's Commission on Land (*Majira Newspaper*, 1st August 1995).

Thus the credibility of the Shivji report of 1992 is widely acknowledged, although its recommendations have not adequately covered the gender dimension. On land administration for instance, the commission proposes that village lands be vested in villagers' assemblies (to give villagers a greater say) and that national land be vested in an independent Board of Land Commissions under the National Lands Commission which would be answerable to Parliament. At district level, the proposal is to establish a number of directorates which will liaise with elected District Land Committees. The Shivji Commission also advocates the establishment of a structure of "Land Courts", which involve the elders. Nevertheless, such recommendations in the Shivji report of 1992 are said to have lacked adequate input on the gender dimension.

CONCLUSIONS

The gravity of land conflicts in the Mtwara region and elsewhere in Tanzania is more real than is generally expressed by the mass media. The informal, unreported and extensively appreciated strategies in resolving land conflicts are numerous, but grossly marginalized by government machinery. The enactment of the 1992 Land Act was a major formal initiative to address the same problem at a national

level, but it did not seek the consensus of the people, hence the mixed feelings over the said law and the difficulty in its implementation.

Initiatives at a regional level are also worth noting. The case of Mtwara region, where the regional office has taken up this confusing but challenging situation to see how grassroots people can adequately be involved in addressing current land tenure issues, is just one example. The creation of the Land Tenure Working Group within the Rural Integrated Project Support (RIPS) Land Tenure Pilot Project is just one strategy. The group, comprised of officers from the departments of Lands, Planning and Community Development, aims at involving farmers in critical analyses of the present situation as regards land tenure practices, and attitudes and conflicts, with the objective of making villagers more knowledgeable on land rights and alternatives for resolving land conflicts and ensuring better care of communally shared natural resources. Indeed, there is a strong impetus for participatory studies and plans on how best villagers and government machinery can collaborate to solve land tenure issues. For the people of the Mtwara region, however, there is an added push to learn more about such issues, given the fact that the villagization process was more dynamic here than elsewhere in Tanzania, hence the prevalence of numerous land conflicts in villagized communities and the increasing erosion of women's landed tenurial rights.

Increased knowledge on land tenure issues in Mtwara region (and elsewhere in Tanzania) is also useful at this transitional period, when land privatization is being dynamically pushed ahead by both political and economic factors. Indeed, the concept of "private ownership" of land is essentially contrary to customary land tenure, which is new to most people of the Mtwara region, who are used to owning permanent trees separately from the land (which was presumed to be clan property). This transition from the clan system of land ownership to private/individual ownership needs to be guided very carefully, lest the majority of farmers (the actual custodians of land) are reduced to landless beggars and exploited employees of rich farmers as is the case in many agrarian countries in Asia and elsewhere in Africa.

Women and youth will definitely suffer more under the privatization process, given their already marginalized economic position. They are neither well-positioned to buy their own land nor can they competitively bargain for better wages if they are reduced to the status of a rural proletariat. Initiatives for the critical analysis of prevail-

ing land tenure systems, such as the RIPS Pilot Project on Land Tenure, thus need to be acknowledged, supported and emulated elsewhere in Tanzania. However, the process should include both studying and empowering grassroots women and men to make a greater impact and effectively influence the design and implementation of viable land tenure policies. In addition, efforts to do research on and publicize women's voices, initiatives, successes and struggles on land and tree tenure issues should be accorded special recognition and support, to guarantee women their rightful position as custodians of land and other natural resources. Moreover, legal literacy on land tenure is an area of added importance that can make a useful input in the empowering process.

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The south-east economic backwater and the urban floating *Wamachinga*

E.P. Mihanjo and N.N. Luanda

ABSTRACT

The Tanzanian associates southern Tanzania intimately with the *Wamachinga*. The term denotes the young male traders who have conquered certain markets in Dar es Salaam. While the *Wamachinga* issue has been politically and emotionally debated, the actual situation of these male traders is often overlooked. In this chapter, the authors provide the first critical evaluation behind the *Wamachinga* phenomenon.

The paper places the issue in relation to the underdevelopment of an overpopulated area, namely the Makonde plateau in Mtwara region which is the area of origin of many traders. The authors present "push" factors which force male youths from their home areas to the towns. They discuss the availability of resources such as land and cashew trees to youths who are entering adulthood. They also discuss the prospects and appeal of agriculture as compared with trading. It appears that the *Wamachinga* issue is a heightened version of the friction existing between the young and the elderly.

INTRODUCTION

Tanzania is currently facing a youthful rural-urban migration problem. Most of the youths move to Dar es Salaam to seek wage employment. This has been brought about by the depressed agricultural conditions in the countryside. The south-east part of Tanzania, specifically Mtwara region, has been badly affected by the migration of youths to Dar es Salaam. Most of these youths are unable to find employment in Dar es Salaam and have been forced to engage in hawking as a means of surviving in the urban setting. This has culmi-

nated in the rise of a large youth group which operates as itinerant traders in Dar es Salaam and is called "*machinga*". This chapter analyses an evaluation of the *machinga* in Tanzania. Its objective is to delineate the connections between migration and the situation in the countryside, specifically the socio-economic situation of south-east Tanzania.

THE "*MACHINGA*": A PROBLEMATIZATION

Machinga is a word that refers to a social group of hawkers or itinerant traders who operate in most urban centres in Tanzania. This group emerged in the early 1990s primarily in the capital city, Dar es Salaam, before spreading to other urban centres. Hitherto, the *machinga* of Dar es Salaam come mostly from south-east Tanzania. However, a number of factors such as business potential in Congo Street attracted more youths, thus the term *machinga* at present includes youths from all over Tanzania. The increase in these traders in Congo Street created a problem, not only for retail traders but also for the city council, and it demanded political attention from the State. Moreover, the build-up of hawkers developed into such a political force in the wake of multi-party elections, that efforts to remove them from this main street became difficult (*Uhuru*, 30.9.1993; *Daily News*, 25.8.1993; *Uhuru*, 25.8.1993; *Majira*, 9.3.1994). Nevertheless, the *machinga* spread from the central business street to other parts of Dar es Salaam, sometimes out of business necessity, at other times because of police and city council harassment, that later led to their removal from Congo Street and the city's main trading centre, Kariakoo. Thus the *machinga* are at present spread out in most of the streets of Tanzanian regional and district towns, hawking various items. Some of them are residents of the towns, while others come from a different district.

The concern of this chapter is, however, with the initial process of the *machinga* who began hawking in Dar es Salaam and migrated from south-east Tanzania. It examines the relations between state decisions and rural impoverishment. Specifically, to what extent have villagization, agricultural decline and liberalization policies contributed both to the breakdown of social ties and the migration of youths from south-east Tanzania.

Theoretical framework

The subject of migration has been analysed in three approaches namely, the push-pull theory, the quantitative theory and the dependency approach. All three acknowledge that migration to urban areas is basically caused by economic reasons or factors.

The push-pull theory states that migrants are forced to leave rural areas because of economic hardship and are pulled by the attraction of urban life. It postulates sociological and economic incentives (Hutton, 1973:90-91; Elkan, 1960; Bairoch, 1973:75-260). While the economic necessity of migration is taken into account, social and psychological factors, relative aspirations, individual motivation, initiative, opportunity to escape from obligations and conflicts in home areas, bright lights and other forms of urban attractions, which represent the magnetism of the city, (Hutton, 1973:103; Bairoch, 1973:62) flavour the analyses based on the push-pull theory.

The quantitative approach, developed by economists, aims at defining the conditions for full employment and is a derivative of a dual economy model. The approach assumes a direct connection between migration and spatial income differentials, it states that continued rural-urban migration in Africa presents a rational economic decision despite the high levels of urban unemployment. The rural-urban earning differential is sufficient to induce excessive migration. Invoking the notion of Ricardian diminishing returns, Sabot says: "... in 1970, the difference between non-agricultural wage employment and agricultural self-employment was approximately three times what it had been in 1958. The widening difference between agricultural self-employment and urban wage employment is consistent with a view to the income increase in urban migration as determined primarily by economic factors" (Sabot, 1979:60-63; see also Elkan, 1960:35; Bairoch, 1973:25; Berry, 1983:247).

Rural-urban migration is explained as a complex web of interacting elements concerned not only with why people migrate but also with all the implications and ramifications of the process. Migration, according to this approach, results from a series of adjustments between rural control sub-systems based on kinship, overpopulation and environmental deterioration and one connected to residential and occupational incentives. The stimulus to migrate varies according to dynamic factors of skill differentiation and status advancement. This approach is silent on the globalization of capitalist relations of pro-

duction, which operate to underdevelop third world countries. Imperialized countries have become ruralized through the "destruction of manufacturing activities which were intended to create a base for the production of raw materials and markets for manufactured goods" (Temu and Swai, 1981:165).

Marxian dependency analysis on the process of rural-urban migration invokes the economic factors and the related extra-economic motivations grounded within the worldwide division of labour, which consigns the periphery to primary production and relegates its cities to the task of organising the drainage of commodities and surplus from agriculture and mining. Marxists assert the economic rationality of the urban migrant. The cultural variables and motivations for the actors' choice and decisions are completely predetermined by the overall strategy determining the allocation of factors, i.e. the organization of the economic exploitation of rural areas. Migration results from rationalization of a situation basically defined by factors beyond the migrants' control (Amin and Forde, 1974; Meillasoux, 1968). The thrust of the underdevelopment/dependence approach is to emphasize the exploitation, resource transfer and impoverishment of rural areas. Migrants are not only lured to cities by fanciful and largely erroneous ideas about urban opportunities and urban life. There are multiple cultural facets of urban-rural interrelationships that are connected to rural poverty. The urban-rural networks of interdependence emphasize the attachment of migrants to other parts of the countryside. Rural-urban migration depends on the ecology, the national economy and the international market. Significantly, the countryside is the locus of reproduction for capitalist production in the city. The continued migration to urban areas is a response to the dependence induced in rural Africa by the penetration of capitalism. Dependence created cash needs without rural development. Capitalism does not revolutionize the relations of production in Africa, rather, it articulates them with pre-capitalist modes of production, sapping their autonomy without taking over the burden of supporting women, children and non-working men (Cooper, 1983:16).

This study subscribes to the underdevelopment/dependency model. The deepening monetarization of simple commodity production and exchange systems in the countryside, in fragile and depressed ecological agricultural conditions, has made it increasingly difficult for producers to live off the soil. We proceed below to

describe the depressed socio-economic conditions, perpetrated by capitalism in Mtwara, to illuminate the process of rural-urban migration.

MIGRATION FROM MTWARA REGION

The rural socio-economic background in Mtwara Region

The south-eastern social formation is a recent creation. The main ethnic groups are the Makonde, Makua, Mwera and Yao, which are further split into smaller ethnic identities (Liebenow, 1971:96–97). The Makonde are the largest and dominant ethnic group in the Mtwara region. They constitute 90 per cent of the population in Newala and 86 per cent of the population in Mtwara district. The Makonde movement from Ndonge in Mozambique to the Makonde plateau was part of the eighteenth and nineteenth century turmoil in East Africa which created their ethnic identity (Liebenow, 1971:20–30; Tew, 1950). The coastal Makonde settled at Maraba Hill, Lindi region between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century (Liebenow, 1971:20–30). However, the major movements took place from the mid-nineteenth century and were induced by the slave trade and the Ngoni invasion (Liebenow, 1971:15; Tew, 1950:26).

Finally, the colonial powers initiated both politically motivated and labour migration, the latter though was relatively small (Tanganyika Medical Department, *Annual Report*, 1990:16–17). Though Mtwara did not feature prominently in labour migration, the Makonde undertook labour migration to sisal estates in Tanga, Morogoro and elsewhere in Tanganyika. Moreover, the British made no effort to develop this part of Tanganyika, save for the Makonde water development scheme, groundnut schemes and a few sisal estates in the Lindi and Mtwara regions. The British colonial administrators often referred to the Makonde area of south-eastern Tanganyika as a “Cinderella region of a Cinderella territory”.

The poor post-colonial state saw efforts at villagization in the Mtwara region in the 1970s as the best alternative to solve the question of rural poverty. Five cashew nut processing factories were established in Mtwara region, two of them in Newala district. These policies tied the southerners deeply into international capitalist system. Consequently, dependence on a monocultural export economy inten-

sified the rural poverty which it was meant to alleviate. Villagization, land shortages and cashew nut diseases brought a systematic collapse of the rural economy. Cashew nut production has declined over the years from early 1970 to 1990, as indicated in Table 1.

Soil exhaustion, poor husbandry methods and marketing problems contributed to this problem. Ultimately, a general agricultural decline entrenched itself, leading to poor incomes among the Makonde. The alternative for the majority of the youths was therefore to escape rural poverty by finding enterprising activities in urban centres. The second phase of the government policies that brought a liberalization euphoria coincided with the *machinga* migration to Dar es Salaam. However, the political and economic realities of peripheral capitalism struck again, as incomes of resident business people in the city of Dar es Salaam were threatened when the *machinga* and their petty businesses overflowed into all areas of the city. Thus the *machinga* became a threat in urban multi-party politics. Ultimately, rural and urban poverty has shaped the *machinga* into a floating population in Dar es Salaam.

Table 1. *Production of cashew nuts*

| Year | National | Mtwara | % | Newala |
|---------|----------|--------|----|--------|
| 1973/74 | 145,080 | 60,376 | 41 | 34,947 |
| 1974/75 | 118,947 | 51,446 | 41 | 24,314 |
| 1975/76 | 83,738 | 35,194 | 40 | 18,421 |
| 1976/77 | 97,645 | 37,763 | 38 | 20,834 |
| 1977/78 | 68,383 | 34,274 | 50 | 19,843 |
| 1978/79 | 57,068 | 22,457 | 38 | 10,226 |
| 1979/80 | 41,518 | 14,928 | 38 | 6,458 |
| 1980/81 | 60,947 | 29,043 | 48 | 14,753 |
| 1985/86 | 18,801 | 8,452 | | |
| 1986/87 | 15,605 | 6,414 | | |
| 1987/88 | 23,774 | 12,422 | | |
| 1988/89 | 18,593 | 10,982 | | |
| 1990/91 | 17,059 | 8,547 | | |

Source: Cashew Nut Authority.

At this juncture, it was reasoned, an investigation of the *machinga* rural and urban condition would provide a historical framework for the pattern of transformation. In this context, a study on the *machinga* in Dar es Salaam in May 1995 collected life histories from thirty-one

Machingas from south-east Tanzania.¹ The aim was to establish the place of origin of the youthful migrants. In addition, it ought to be easier to trace the historical and social basis for the migrations if the rural villages of origin were known and studied. The life histories revealed that 23 came from Mtwara region and 8 from Lindi region. In Mtwara region, Newala and Mtwara rural districts provided 12 and 7 migrants respectively and only 4 came from Masasi district. Most of the migrant youths came from Mahuta and Nanyamba villages, which provided 7 and 4 youths respectively out of the 28 Machinga from the Mtwara region. It was concluded that these villages were important centres for youths' rural-urban migration and that a study of the socio-economic and historical transformations in these villages would provide reasons for the youths' migration. Mahuta village was selected for this purpose.

Youth migration from Mahuta village

At present, Mahuta refers mainly to a ward or division rather than the village. Mahuta village in its historical sense is situated 20 kilometres from Newala town. It was divided during the 1974-75 villagization drive into four villages, namely Chikongola, Mahuta Mjini, Mahuta Bondeni and Mkulungu (*Ripoti ya Matumizi na umilikaji wa ardhi vijiji vya Mahuta Mjini na Mahuta Bondeni*, 3-6.1.95:4). In the 1978 census, the population of Mahuta in the Chikongola urban ward was 6,668, consisting of 3,195 males and 3,473 females; and that in the Bondeni urban ward was 5,672, 2,740 males and 2,932 females (URT, *Population Census*, 1978). In the 1988 census, the population of the Mahuta mixed ward was 3,264, 1,521 males and 1,743 females (URT, *Population Census*, 1988). The population of the urban area was 7,910, 3,567 males and 4,343 females (URT, *Population Census*, 1988). In early 1995, it was established that Mahuta Mjini Village had a total of 512 households, a total population of 2,594 that included 1,256 females and 1,338 males (*Ripoti ...*, 3-6.1.95:8). There were 538 households at Mahuta Bondeni in 1995 with a total population of 2,010, 1,168 females and 842 males (*Ripoti...*, 3-6.1.95:4).

The most dominant crops are cashew nuts, cassava, groundnuts, maize, millet and rice. Between 80 to 90 per cent of the agricultural

1. The thirty one life histories studied here were only of *machinga* from the Lindi and Mtwara regions.

farms are not in the village, although the majority of the people are dependent on agriculture and petty business (*Ripoti...*, 3-6.1.95:6-7). Only about 20 per cent of the population is described as relatively well off, 30 per cent as middle class and 50 per cent constitute the poor who have small plots of less than three acres that are not well tended (*Ripoti ...*, 3-6.1.95:6-7, 10-11). The poor families also have problems of food and money, which means that they live an extremely insecure life.

Generally, the situation of Mahuta reveals historical and socio-economic conditions that account for the migration of the youths. Prior to villagization it seems that Mahuta village was simply a small village with a rural trading centre that enabled the people of Mahuta and other surrounding areas to procure and sell goods. Most of the cultivation was done around the village and households had plots for cash crops, cashew nuts and food crops especially cassava. In the wake of the introduction of cashew nuts in the area during the colonial era came the initial property relations, because cashew was a permanent crop that required ownership of both land and trees. As land was available, problems of land shortages did not emerge, at least up to the villagization programme (*Ripoti ...*, 3-6.1.95:13-16). After villagization, pressure on land around Mahuta not only developed as the population grew and the area developed into an urban centre, but land conflicts also emerged. This led to expansion to outlying areas and to rich people owning more, while the presence of cashew nut trees constituted a cause of conflict among people. Land shortage became a problem in Mahuta, because the youths found themselves unable to obtain cultivatable fertile land. A number of people have migrated from Mahuta to other districts, specifically Masasi and Tunduru. The total 1978 population of the Chikongola urban ward and the Bondeni urban ward was about 12,340 people. In 1988, the Mahuta mixed ward, which combined rural and urban areas, had a population of 11,174, suggestive of the migration of the people from this area. These migrations are reflected by the males' movement outside the area and is reflected in the ratio of males to females, which has declined during the intercensal period in both Nanyamba and Mahuta. In the 1978 census, in the Nanyamba rural ward the ratio was 93 while that of Nanyamba village was 96. In 1988 it had dropped to 91 for Nanyamba, which was transformed into a mixed ward instead of a rural one. Furthermore, Nanyamba village had disappeared and

its population was presented as an urban area with a ratio of 88 males to 100 females. One important feature of the area is the development of a town or urban centre, which implies that Nanyamba has been transformed from rural relations into exchange and commercial life. In the case of Mahuta, the same tendency of overall out migration is true: in the Chikongola and Bondeni urban wards, the ratio in 1978 was 92 and 93.2 respectively, while in 1988 it had also dropped to 87 in the Mahuta mixed ward and to 82 in the Mahuta urban area.

Moreover, these changes, which intensified monetization and urbanite civilization on the Makonde plateau, seem to have led to a breakdown in social ties. The Makonde historically are a matrilineal community, with a child following the matrilineal uncles, including place of residence and matters of land. When people were put into official villages, cashew nuts were consolidated both as a permanent cash crop and as private property, and land shortages consolidated exchange and the property relations of the matrilineal system could no longer sustain the challenges. The patrilineal and independent family structures that are emerging could guarantee family autonomy and property ownership. The migrating youths are, therefore, those who cannot be supported by the patrilineal system, mainly because the fathers had several children in the polygamous system. At the same time, the mothers are now relatively autonomous, because the brothers are more concerned with matters of their families' property rather than with the collapsing matrilineal clan structures.

The consolidation of exchange relations seems to have meant, from the late 1980s, that during this period the impoverishment of the Makonde seems to have developed faster forcing its youths to migrate by the early 1990s. This was facilitated by the liberalization policy that was developed in the late 1980s, at the same time the youths' alternative trade across the Ruvuma river into Mozambique which made a number of Makonde rich immediately after Mozambique's independence, collapsed due to intense MNR activity in Mozambique. By the 1990s the Makonde youths found it increasingly difficult to tolerate the rural poverty that engulfed them. The option open to the majority of them was to migrate into urban centres such as Dar es Salaam to conduct petty trade that could enable them to obtain meagre incomes that would either enable them to survive or allow savings that could be used later to open a business enterprise at home. For some of the youths, the option was to engage in speculative mining activities at

Mpepo gold mining in Mbinga district, the Muhuwesi mine in Tunduru or at the so called 'Gado' mine to the north west of Mozambique. Yet there were also a number of youths who opted for forming bandit groups that roamed the urban centres of south-east Tanzania such as the "tukale wapi" (where are we going to eat) group in Mtwara town.

By 1993, the Machinga overran Congo Street, at that time the street had about 3,000 youths aged 15–25 year conducting petty trade (*Tanganyika Leo*, 3–8.10.93).

CONCLUSIONS

The *machinga* reflect an important historical relationship of rural–urban poverty. They reveal complex socio-political and economic transformations. A study on the histories of the *machinga* would be extremely useful in illuminating these complex situations both in Mtwara region and in Dar es Salaam. This chapter is simply an attempt to initiate a critical reflection and an investigation into the *machinga* question.

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The informal sector in Lindi district

Pekka Seppälä

ABSTRACT

Southern Tanzania is often described as a purely agricultural area. In this chapter, the author aims to show that the rural villages have a wide variety of different kinds of non-agricultural products and sources of income. He argues that most of the rural households are engaged in some kind of extractive activities, crafts, trading or services.

Utilising these income sources requires local knowledge. Local knowledge is usually depicted in terms of esoteric knowledge of nature. The author shows that the concept is also relevant in relation to the business world. More precisely, the economic activities which are competitive in southern Tanzania require a detailed knowledge of the local culture. This not only means knowing the customers' tastes, but also the most efficient ways of reaching customers in tiny and volatile markets.

INTRODUCTION*

The southern regions of Tanzania are generally seen as areas where entrepreneurial activities are few. Yet this area supplies many of the informal sector traders in Dar es Salaam. These people, nicknamed *Wamachinga*, are said to rule the Kariokoo market area. How is it possible for an area which supplies all these microentrepreneurs to lack a similar orientation within its own borders? Surely there is a basis for entrepreneurial skill and enterprise in the home district?

This paper evaluates the informal sector in rural Lindi district. The paper is organized in a straightforward manner. First, I discuss the

* The text includes material from Pekka Seppälä, 1996, "The Politics of Economic Diversification; Reconceptualising the Informal Sector in South East Tanzania", *Development and Change*, 27, 3, July.

definition and size of the informal sector. Second, I identify the variety of activities undertaken in one village. Third, I connect the informal sector with cultural parameters in the village context. I show differentiation between informal sector activities and argue that differentiation is enhanced by the dynamic circulation of resources between individual informal sector activities and between the informal sector, agriculture and the formal sector. Finally, I generalize the empirical results to the level of development discourse.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INFORMAL SECTOR

The size of the informal sector

The informal sector is first of all defined in the negative sense: it is something which is outside the formal sector and agriculture. Despite the negative definition, the concept has proved difficult to replace. It clearly denotes an amorphous but important part of the economy.

The size of the informal sector depends on its definition. The following discussion shows how variation is created by changing the definition. The most comprehensive study of the Tanzanian informal sector was conducted by the Planning Commission and the Bureau of Statistics in 1991 and was recently published. It defined the informal sector as those enterprises employing five people or less and operating outside the public sector and rural agriculture. The study estimated that 29 per cent of rural households were engaged in the informal sector. Many informal sector activities were seasonal and only one-third of them ran throughout the year. Almost everybody operated alone instead of working through partnerships, but some operators had employees, half of whom were paid while the remainder were unpaid family members. The average value added per month (Tshs. 4,200) was above the minimum wage level (URT, 1991). This informal sector study was carefully planned but the results deviated strikingly from those of Kjell Havnevik (1993:167), who estimated that 64 per cent of the economically active population in Rufiji district was engaged in non-agricultural productive activities. This percentage is higher even though trade and several services are excluded from the analysis. The difference between these two results arises mainly from differing definitions of the informal sector and it highlights large-scale rural participation in *marginal* economic activities—activities which

fall outside the scope of the national survey. Havnevik includes, for example, the female skills of mat-making, embroidery and the male skill of salt production in his figures. These are skills which involve a large number of people but which are only partly within the limits of the cash economy.

I follow the definition of the Informal Sector Study. However, I have used more detailed methods to locate monetized but marginal activities. Thus my results reveal higher involvement in informal sector activities. In my study, a clear majority of rural households had some informal sector activities. It is an exceptional household that practises no informal sector activity.

Another method of evaluating the importance of the informal sector is the assessment of it in the national value added. The national study estimated that 32 per cent of the national GDP is generated through the informal sector. (Tanzania, 1991:1-13). Unfortunately, the study does not include breakdown by region. My own studies have relied largely on quantitative analysis with nominal (instead of ordinal) measurements, which rules out results in the form of relative amounts of income.

The variety of the informal sector activities

When examples of the dynamic informal sector are presented, Lindi region is seldom used as a case region. The regional leadership of SIDO (small industry development organization) has analysed existing small-scale industries in Lindi region. This analysis paints a rather pessimistic picture of the potential of rural small-scale industries and identifies major obstacles to future growth of these industrial activities. There are problems with surface, sea and air transport as well as with telecommunications in the region. The education level is below the national level and the income level is low. The study argues that "relating the realities above to the three economic parameters of savings, investments/reinvestments and purchasing power/effective demand, we can easily conclude that to a large extent small-scale industrial development in Lindi Region is greatly impaired" (Mkumbo and Kiyenze, 1993:7). While this result holds true in a general comparative sense, it fails to acknowledge the large volume of crafts and trading which exists at the level *below* the normal SIDO target group. Below the few small-scale enterprises there is a flourishing network of microenterprises.

I call these microenterprises income-generating activities (IGAs). It should be emphasized that these income-generating activities require devotion and hard work but this does not mean that the logic of their operation can be equated with profit-oriented capitalist enterprise. The income-generating activities are often a supplementary source of income and the reasons for entering and abandoning an activity are numerous. A skilled practitioner can move into another activity without worrying about "professional" qualifications. A seasonal activity may or may not be resumed the next season. A change in household composition may preclude an income-generating activity. Rural income-generating activities seldom function like progressive enterprises with strict commercial aims. Consequently, business studies which identify this or that single means of production as a scarce resource are misleading because of their narrowly interventionist developmentalism. Recent policy appraisals have moved away from narrow interventionism and recommendations for direct intervention are replaced by recommendations to promote a conducive environment (Dawson et al., 1991; ILO/UNDP, 1992).

The variety of informal sector income sources is great. It is easy to identify over fifty different activities in a village. A comparative study of four villages showed that the variety of the activities is roughly similar throughout Lindi region. The larger villages have some specialized tasks like radio repairs but smaller villages can also have their own specialities (see Table 1).

Income-generating activities cover four different types of activity: natural resource extraction, crafts, services and trading. The fifty income-generating activities are distributed fairly equally between these four sectors. Extractive activities mean the collection and marketing of natural resources. These are mainly forest products. Crafts include processing tasks which can be carried out in the village and which involve heavy physical labour. Services are those trades which can be carried out in the village without major physical effort. The last category of trading involves buying and selling without major processing. Many activities can be classified into several categories and/or their production includes backward linkages into other categories. That is why sectoral classification should not be given much emphasis but should be understood as a technical distinction useful in selected contexts only.

Table 1. Comparison of the income-generating activities in four villages

1. Kilimahewa (central village); 2. Mnazimmoja (large village/township)
3. Rutamba (central village like Kilimahewa); 4. Utende (small village)

| Income-generating activity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Income-generating activity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Hunting | * | * | * | * | | | | | |
| Gathering | * | o | o | * | Tembo beer club | * | * | * | * |
| Fishing | * | * | * | - | Selling grain beer | * | * | * | * |
| Selling firewood | * | * | - | * | Selling local softdrinks | * | * | * | * |
| Making charcoal | * | * | * | * | Selling doughnuts, etc. | * | * | * | * |
| Selling building poles | * | * | - | * | Selling root snacks | * | * | * | * |
| Pit-sawing | * | * | * | * | Selling cooked food | * | * | * | * |
| Making bricks | * | * | - | - | | | | | |
| Grass for thatching | * | - | - | - | Selling cigarettes | * | * | * | * |
| Leaves, fences/roof | * | * | * | * | Selling local tobacco | * | * | * | * |
| Coconut plants | o | * | - | * | Selling fruits | * | * | * | * |
| Making ropes | * | - | * | * | Selling coconuts | * | * | * | * |
| Making local beds | * | o | o | o | Selling kerosene | * | * | o | * |
| Carpentry | * | * | * | * | Tearoom | * | * | * | - |
| Masonry | * | o | * | * | Kiosk/shop | * | * | * | * |
| Building houses | * | * | * | * | Money lending | - | * | - | - |
| Tinsmith | * | * | - | - | Hoarding food crops | * | * | * | * |
| Pottery | * | * | * | * | Trading vegetables | * | * | * | * |
| Making mats | * | * | * | * | Trading fruits | * | * | o | * |
| Blacksmith | * | * | * | * | Trading dried fish | * | * | * | * |
| Making carvings | - | * | - | * | Trading used clothes | * | * | * | * |
| Making canoes | - | - | * | - | Trading coconuts | * | * | o | * |
| | | | | | Trading cashew | * | o | o | * |
| Tailoring | * | * | * | * | Trading dried fish | - | * | * | * |
| Cutting hair | * | * | * | * | Trading fresh fish | - | * | * | * |
| Repairing bicycles | * | * | * | * | Trading coconut beer | * | * | o | * |
| Radio/clock mechanic | - | * | * | - | | | | | |
| Car mechanic | - | * | - | - | | | | | |
| Repairing shoes | * | * | * | - | Carrier | * | * | * | * |
| Ironing clothes | * | * | * | | Push-cart operator | - | * | - | - |
| Traditional doctor | * | * | * | * | Making latrines | * | * | - | - |
| Circumcision expert | * | * | * | * | | | | | |
| Midwife | * | * | | * | Relig. teacher/admin. | * | * | * | * |
| Musician | * | * | * | * | | | | | |

* = practised

- = not practised

o = no information

The practitioners of income-generating activities

The variety of the income-generating activities is very great in Kilimahewa but most activities are the speciality of a few villagers. Very few activities are practised by more than fifty persons. These are activities like mat-making which are practised by women and which are only partly monetized. The remainder are practised by smaller numbers of people. Thus the analysis of income-generating activities needs to focus on women's activities if the whole scope of activities is to be captured.

Usually, rural surveys in Tanzania show beer-brewing as the activity with the highest number of practitioners. In Kilimahewa, the number of people engaged in the beer business is exceptionally low. One explanation is that Islamic culture does not encourage beer drinking. Another explanation is that many households have continuous access to their own coconut beer and seasonal access to cashew liquor. Yet another (but rather weak) explanation is that village by-laws prohibit the use of scarce grain for beer making.

The low current numbers of practitioners may hide a large turnover of people. Although current figures are low, it is common for several other people to have practised the trade at an earlier time and then abandoned it. The village contains several craftsmen who have practised their skills in town but who do not bother to continue in the village. Similarly, many women were active in income-generating activities when their childcare and household situations were more favourable, and they are prepared to re-enter these income-generating activities when their situation again allows this.

Gender analysis of income-generating activities shows that men have a larger variety of tasks than women. Men dominate several extractive activities, crafts and certain services. Women are the sole practitioners in only a few activities: collecting grass for thatching, pottery and mat-making, midwifery and initiation of girls, and some food-related services and trading. In several other activities, both men and women take part. These include, for example, gathering, fishing, collecting leaves, traditional healing, music, community administration, selling grain beer, running a tearoom, hoarding food crops and trading fruit. In general, analyses of the sexual division of labour tends to be based on stereotypical profiles and the importance of the strict sexual division of labour should not be exaggerated. It is clear that women take up men's tasks, and vice versa, when those tasks are

profitable or when the woman has learned the man's trade elsewhere. In several "male" tasks women enter as auxiliary labour or undertake specific work, but do not run the business.

Income-generating activities can also be classified by the wealth of the practitioners. Poor people dominate extractive activities. These activities are easily accessible and demand virtually no investment. Crafts and services are practised by poor and middle income groups. Trading shows the biggest variation. There are many categories of trading, like cigarettes, fruits, forest products, which can be easily entered. Trading in coconuts and merchandise requires larger amounts of capital and provides larger profits. Consequently, the rich are especially interested in these trades. Cashew is interesting in that it includes both large and small traders, often linked in a hierarchical trading network, but sometimes competing with each other.

When it comes to time allocation, most income-generating activities are marginal or complementary activities. They are carried out when agricultural work is slack or when there is some evidence of demand. Crafts are usually priority work for men but the work is done to order and it is difficult to get orders. Thus crafts stand out as marginal in terms of time allocation.

Labour arrangements vary heavily from trade to trade. The major problem besetting all forms of cooperation is the lack of trust in financial affairs. Every so often, people tell of how they started a project with a friend, who then disappeared with the money. The same lack of trust also affects the quality of work. Workers are expected to be unreliable and to require constant supervision. This also holds true for family members. For this reason, shopkeepers often use children as their assistants because children are more dependent and more amenable to control.

Informal sector operators do not enter into partnerships except for specific and exceptional purposes. Partnerships exist among men for fishing, playing music, carpentry and blacksmithing. Men also pool resources to hire vehicles when trading in coconuts. Women perform several activities in groups but without a division of labour. For selling grain beer and doughnuts, women do form proper partnerships.

Earlier, women also had formal women's groups. The *Umoja ya Wanawake wa Tanzania (UWT)* was formerly active in promoting gardening, pottery, grain-milling and sewing groups. These groups have practically disappeared because the organization of the UWT is

currently weak. Women also had several rotating savings groups in the village. These, however, died when the village economy was destroyed in a flood in 1990. Currently, new women's groups have been formed to solicit money from the special loan scheme targeted at women's groups.

Several income-generating activities include employer-labour arrangements. These arrangements take three forms. The first and the most formal is share payment. A barmaid and a coconut climber are often permanently employed using share payments. Second and more common, is piecework (*kibarua*). Piecework is calculated on the basis of a fixed unit price (e.g., one shilling for shelling one coconut) or fixed daily pay. Those engaged in making bricks and building houses employ casual labour for the duration of the contract while those trading in bulky coconuts and cashew employ occasional carriers. The third type of labour arrangement is the use of domestic labour on a permanent basis, usually against small payments and gifts.

I asked the villagers to estimate the change in the number of people involved in each activity within a timeframe of one year. The results show that the growth activities are building work, traditional services and trading. There are also indications that these sectors are growing throughout Tanzania.

Most income-generating activities are part-time or seasonal as can be seen from Table 2. Many crafts are practised during the dry season when there is less agricultural work. Trading is also particularly active during these months.

INFORMAL SECTOR AS PART OF VILLAGE CULTURE

Income-generating activities are very diverse and include some activities that people regard more as hobbies or pastimes, while others involve serious work. Some require many resources and skills while others are practised by everybody. Still, it is evident that trades are engaged in by only a limited number of people. This can be partly explained as a functional division of labour (i.e., the demand for goods/services can be met by the small number of existing operatives) but there are also complex socio-cultural rules. Not just anybody can take up a particular trade even if he or she knows the techniques and has the necessary resources. Moreover, selection is not defined merely by the age and sex of a person: there are more nuanced cultural distinctions which influence the selection process.

Table 2. The calendar of labour input into income-generating activities

| INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITY | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| <i>Extractive activities</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hunting | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * | | | | | ** | ** |
| Gathering | * | * | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * |
| Fishing | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Selling firewood | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * |
| Making charcoal | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Selling building poles | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Pit-sawing | | | | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Making bricks | | | | | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Grass for thatching | | | | | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Leaves, fences/roof | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** |
| <i>Crafts</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Making ropes | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * | * |
| Making local beds | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Carpentry | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Masonry | ** | ** | * | * | | | | | | * | ** | ** |
| Building houses | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Building latrines | * | * | * | | | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Pottery | * | * | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Making mats | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Tinsmith | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Blacksmith | | | | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| <i>Services</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tailoring R | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | * | * | ** |
| Cutting hair | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * | * |
| Repairing bicycles | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * |
| Repairing shoes | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * |
| Ironing clothes R | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Spirit exhortation | | | | | | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Traditional doctor | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Circumcision expert | | | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * |
| Midwife | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Musician | * | * | | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Community administrator | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * |
| Relig. teacher/administrator | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| <i>Trading/services</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tembo beer club | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * | * |
| Selling grain beer | | | | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | | |
| Selling local softdrinks | | | | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | | |
| Selling doughnuts etc. | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** |
| Selling root snacks | | | | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Selling cooked food | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |

| INCOME-GENERATING ACTIVITY | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-------------------------------|----|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| <i>Trading/services</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Selling cigarettes | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Selling local tobacco | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * |
| Selling fruits | | | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Selling coconuts R | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * | * | * |
| Selling kerosene | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Tearoom | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Kiosk | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * |
| Shop | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * |
| Hoarding food crops | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trading vegetables | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Trading fruits | * | | | | | | | | | | ** | ** |
| Trading dried fish | ** | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Trading used clothes | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Trading coconuts | * | * | * | * | * | * | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | * |
| Trading cashew | * | * | | | | | | | ** | ** | ** | ** |

The asterisks refer to the relative amount of time needed for each activity. Because of the qualitative research method, it is not possible to compare the time needed for, say, trading cashew and trading coconut, by counting the number of asterisks.

R stands for Ramadan which does not have a fixed date. The marked activities become more popular during Ramadan.

The question can be formulated as follows: what are the cultural requirements for a person to enter a certain trade successfully? What kind of people are motivated to take up a trade? The answer differs from one trade to the next. Each trade has a certain image and only certain persons would want to identify themselves with a particular activity. The extreme case is the traditional doctors who handle the sea spirits. They play with dangerous forces and use their skills to deal with social conflict. These doctors are feared because of their powers and, consequently, they must themselves live with this image. Even so, some people consciously select this career path. What is seen as attractive to some people is seen as repellent by others.

Next I set out to study the relationship between culture and income-generating activities in Kilimahewa. First it is necessary to describe the village setting briefly.

Kilimahewa village

Kilimahewa has a complex structure both in terms of cultural and economic parameters. Culturally, Kilimahewa is part of the coastal

culture, but also part of the inland culture. *Upepo wa Lindi* refers to the tradition of coconut cultivation which is often associated with a leisurely lifestyle and with coastal Swahili cultural traditions. Coconut cultivation has traditionally been the domain of respected old Muslim men who also hold the village institutions in their hands. However, the village is far enough inland to have cashew fields in the uplands. Cashew was a flourishing cash crop in the mid-1970s. Its price has recently increased again, creating optimism in the village. This has encouraged a commercial orientation among wealthier peasants and supported new trading circuits.

Kilimahewa can hardly be called a representative village any more than can any other village in this region, which contains ten agroecological zones, several ethnic groups and major religions in a multitude of specific locations and environments. Perhaps Kilimahewa is better endowed than average because of its good road connections and relatively large size—features which make it a trading centre for two hinterland villages. On the other hand, Kilimahewa is also a village which was completely destroyed by floods in 1990. The village was rebuilt one kilometre to the west with government emergency aid. The flood and subsequent rebuilding made survival rather than extravagant consumption the top priority for the people. Now the village has recovered, but the traumatic experience—second only to the 1974 villagization—has left its mark on the social structures.

Village politics can be observed against this background of frustration and neglect. Frustrations are strongly expressed about the mismanagement of earlier village projects, the passivity of the current village administration and the confusion caused by multi-party politics. The village view is that the government has neglected the village, except for a short period after the flood (cf., Mmuya, 1994). In this situation, the village has become a locus for more localized, sectional politics which draw their strength from religious or social bases but which have limited or no organizational means to direct political sentiment into formal politics. Nevertheless, these cultural currents do feed on wider patronage networks and, when combined with economic activities, form a complex set of conflicting aspirations in Kilimahewa.

Village factionalism: cultural capital at work

Parochial values have a firm grip on the people of Kilimahewa.¹ These values reflect the fact that the villagers depend on each other for survival. But parochialism does not exist as a shared community spirit. Rather, the village can be divided into different resource bases which form partly separate and partly overlapping social hierarchies. The resource bases can be conceptualized as different kinds of *cultural capital* which have their own value but which also, in varying degrees, can be converted into economic capital.² The question is whether the socio-economic divisions allocate people to certain types of economic activities.

There are several cultural divisions in Kilimahewa. Firstly, the village is multi-ethnic. It houses Mwera, Makonde, Makua, Yao and Ndonde people. These ethnic groups are linked by marriage bonds and joking relationships. They are generally speaking, equal with one another. However, ethnicity is often associated with another criterion: the length of stay in the village. Thus, households are ranked according to the degree that they are established in the village. It is prestigious to be a member of a kin group that has resided in the location for several decades and consolidated its hold through numerical expansion. By comparison, a smaller faction of recent immigrants has less to say in communal affairs. One group deserves mention as a marginal group in the village. This is a certain sub-section of the Makonde group. The members of this sub-section are largely immigrants from Mozambique. Most of them moved to Tanzania in the 1970s. They were mainly political refugees who, after the refugee camps were dissolved, decided to stay in Tanzania. The Makonde speak their own dialect and have many cultural practices which the Tanzanians view as primitive. The legal status of these immigrants and their cultural traits have increased their marginalization.

Secondly, the village is divided on religious lines. The majority of villagers are Muslim but there is a considerable Christian minority. We should also acknowledge the role of spirit possession. Spirits attack villagers continually and the bond between villagers and spirits is lasting. The rituals and expertise needed to manage and appease the

1. I have presented the analysis of village factionalism in Seppälä (1996).

2. I use the concept of cultural capital in the way that Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 171-83) uses symbolic capital. However, I address more directly the plurality of types of cultural capital.

spirits resemble many Islamic practices, and a degree of overlap exists in people's beliefs. In addition, the various ethnic groups have their own rituals of ancestral appeasement. Although these forms are dying out, they have relevance in lifecycle crises.

Thirdly, the villagers can be divided into traditionalists, modernists, and backsliders. The traditionalists are the hardcore parochial people, while the modernists are usually educated traders and youths who have been in the towns and tasted different lifestyles. The division into traditionalists and modernists is, however, very mechanistic. It is necessary to add the category of backsliders: people who have experienced townlife and wage employment but who, when back in the village, have more or less consciously adopted a more traditional outlook. This is partly explained by increasing age, having dependants and accumulating responsibilities. It is also partly a rational answer to the opportunities and economic dynamics of the village; selfishness and the display of wealth are morally condemned and adherence to these values militates against participation in communal affairs.

Given the number of cultural distinctions, factionalism takes complicated forms in Kilimahewa. The multiplicity of cultural frameworks gives individuals a certain freedom of choice. Choice is not so much made in terms of whether a person is a member of a certain cultural faction as the emphasis that that person gives to this or that distinction. A person can, for example, emphasize religious attachment as a form of belonging.

The forms of cultural capital divide the community into diverse social sections. Historically, the hegemonic group was the elderly Islamic men who controlled social institutions and the kin/gift economy in the old village. They owned the main source of income, the coconut trees, and they scolded their hardworking dependants in these terms: "Which was here first, you or the coconut tree?" Now the village has been relocated away from the valley lands, from the shade of coconut trees, and these elders are challenged by rich traders. What is important to note is the competition between the cultural capital and economic capital. Mainstream cultural capital is no longer a precondition for securing labour, help or customers. The traditional-political elite of Islamic elders has lost its means to be a controlling gatekeeper for economic activities. It is no wonder that this group readily resorts to witchcraft accusations against the rich traders. The

traders are accused of using "medicine" to attract customers and mute ghosts (i.e., bodies of people stolen at the moment of death) as workers.

The cultural capitals form competing power bases which reach beyond the village. It is interesting to observe that the three villagers who have risen above the others and become town-based accumulators have had different patrons. One has accumulated wealth through close cooperation with an Indian trader; the second through cooperation with a missionary-businessman; and the third through a large tobacco factory. By contrast, no villager has become very rich through party or Islamic connections.

Poor people engage in income-generating activities which underscore their (traditional or modern) identity distinct from the mainstream power bloc. The activities carried out in the forest and on the periphery of the village free them from patronising rules. Meetings organized by elders with hegemonic tendencies, whether they are political meetings or other rallies, have met with a lukewarm response so often that the leaders are simply giving up. The poor withdraw to their own cultural spheres, namely the Christian religion, spirit possession or beer clubs. Youth culture is a direct attack on the existing economic order.

The use of cultural capital for economic enrichment

The study of village culture shows that the village is segmented into cultural spheres which are partly separate and partly overlapping. Some cultural spheres have hegemonic tendencies while others have a clearly inferior social base. This leads to the hypothesis that some cultural spheres are key avenues for economic enrichment while others have only marginal importance.

Analysis shows that the relationship between cultural and economic capitals works in many ways, however. In this section, I distinguish three different aspects of the relationship between cultural sphere and economic enrichment in the informal sector.

First, each cultural sphere provides direct means of enrichment for only a very few people. These are usually either ritual experts or renowned leaders. They have access to a critical resource which can potentially save or create life. The Muslim *Mwalims*, especially those who know Islamic astrology and medication, can earn a good income

from their knowledge. Similarly, local doctors who can tame harmful spirits are profit-making consultants in the service sector. The village leaders may make good incomes from land allocations and village projects. Other leaders operate on a rather minor scale by selling their special knowledge in the informal sector. This applies to community demand for the knowledge of educated persons, Christian leaders, traditional elders and youth leaders.

Second, each cultural sphere provides a potential market segment corresponding to the segmentations of the cultural spheres. Thus Muslims could employ a Muslim carpenter and Christians a Christian carpenter. However, this form of economic segmentation is not very strong. Kilimahewa is a multi-ethnic village, where people are used to cooperating with others from different backgrounds.

Third, cultural knowledge also works within business know-how. Cultural knowledge gives a critical edge against formal sector competitors. The operator needs to know the buying habits and preferences of the average villager and compare these with the supply systems of formal sector operators in order to find a special market niche.

Investment in the cultural sphere is an insecure source of economic enrichment. It may take more than it gives. Nevertheless, in an economy characterized by high risk and unexpected change, investment in cultural capital provides a sense of continuity and security.

I argue that cultural knowledge is still one of the critical resources available to an informal sector operator. Cultural knowledge plays a crucial role, not only in the nuanced intra-village segments, but by providing general knowledge which is superior to that possessed by formal sector operators. But knowledge is not enough—it needs to be put to use at the right time and in the right way. This requires some competence in strategic management of the resources at hand. This theme is discussed in the following section.

DIVERSIFICATION: THE WAY TO ACCUMULATION

I argue that it is not adequate to study a single income-generating activity as if it were a separate enterprise. It is important to understand that income-generating activities are often combined and that such combinations are a means of enhanced accumulation. The combination of different activities is called diversification. Diversification

is described in some other studies as “multiple modes of livelihood” or “straddling”.

There are two ways the different activities can be combined, namely simultaneously and serially. A farmer can simultaneously be a carpenter and own houses in town. A Muslim leader can also be engaged in spirit possession and politics. The very idea of diversification means combining different activities so they support each other. This is what I call simultaneous diversification.

The other, equally valid, form of diversification is serial diversification. This means that one activity is abandoned in order to engage in another activity. The resources are liquidated and invested in new things. Serial diversification, combined with a clever use of political or economic conjunctures is the key to accumulation in “Bongoland”.¹

In this section, I criticize recent and earlier microeconomic studies of entrepreneurship. Then I present a different, more complex version of entrepreneurial life. I look at it from the vantage point of diversification strategy. From the actor’s perspective, entrepreneurship can be viewed as a performance—a continuous adjustment to new challenges and opportunities. Finally, I illustrate simultaneous and serial diversification through several case studies. In the case studies, I incorporate the cultural element in the analysis.

The wrong frame: enterprise development

Informal sector activities have often been studied by using the methods and criteria of enterprise theory. An enterprise is a unit of production which combines skilled and unskilled labour, tools and raw materials and then produces goods. Its efficiency can be measured in terms of the utilization of factors of production per product produced. Normally, factors of production are studied by means of a questionnaire in which an entrepreneur is asked to describe the use of each factor. The synchronic comparative data are then used to specify what specific factor of production is lacking in the studied sector/area/social group.²

1. Bongo means brains. “Bongoland” describes the need to use brains in order to survive in Dar es Salaam. Similar cleverness is equally important to accumulation in rural settings.

2. The survey studies can be heavily criticized for their methodology. Often, people are asked to measure indicators they do not understand (i.e., they do not frame the issue in a similar way) or have never observed and measured systematically, or if they have

At first, the frame of production factor analysis looks fairly clear. However, it includes certain *a priori* propositions. One such proposition is that entrepreneurs aim at maximising profit. This is definitely a valid criticism (and applies in the North as well as the South) but, being based on motivation, may lead to teleological, circular and fruitless argument. There are still more subtle criticisms of factor analysis. Briefly, enterprises cannot be placed on a single evolutionary line. They cannot be ranked from large and technologically complex production units to small and technologically simple production units. In some cases, a factory is an optimal production unit. In other cases craft production can be the optimal production unit. And this may apply to the same town and the same sector!

The explanation lies in "flexible specialization" or "market segmentation". Both concepts can be used to explain that informal sector enterprises are not "failures" lacking this or that factor of production. They suggest how informal sector production can continue in a hostile environment, using odd resources in a very peculiar way—how production factors can be used very efficiently in a combination which may not at first look like good business practice.

The right frame: combining a household-level diversification strategy with flexible specialization in specific markets

The alternative framework is the analysis of a specific market situation in a concrete way. Rather than speaking of abstract market mechanisms, we locate definite actors in a specific situation. The strength of the informal sector producer is his situatedness. This confers many comparative advantages.

First, the informal sector entrepreneur is situated in a specific location. This is certainly a competitive advantage in a rural environment with undeveloped transport facilities. Second, the entrepreneur can

done so, are not willing to explain their observations to outsiders. When the statistics are then analysed, almost any factor can be identified as a "critical deficiency" or bottleneck. The result depends all too often on the education of the scientist, or his terms of employment, or prevailing fashion. Currently, credit is the fashion and it needs to be given to entrepreneurs, whether by the spoonful or potful. Another fad is "conducive environment", which means that we leave the entrepreneur in peace, stop taxation and licensing, and let him/her then emerge as a true capitalist. Both credit and conducive environment do not emerge from the analysis but from the changed starting point. The new starting point is that entrepreneurial development can be promoted without regard to the differentiation of the population.

focus operations on the right season or the right moment. For example, locally produced food and drinks are readily sold at village festivals at night. A capitalist catering enterprise could not do this. Third, entrepreneurs can sell small amounts to a small market. There are many items which larger producers would not even dream of taking to rural areas because of the smallness of the market. Fourth, a rural informal sector entrepreneur can make items to order for a customer. Fifth, the entrepreneur can provide terms of payment and ways of dealing which match the customer's cultural frame. Sixth, the entrepreneur can provide goods and services in a way which reduces the customer's transaction costs. The goods may be poorer in quality, more expensive and less favoured. Once, however, the customer counts the transaction costs of travelling to town, haggling with an unknown shopkeeper (with the possibility that the item is 'out of stock') and then returning, he or she may well decide to buy the local item.

The only way to study situatedness is to dive into it. There is no shortcut to understanding the relative market situation, market segmentation and all that they entail. I shall dive into this reality in the case studies.

I argue that the most practical unit of analysis of diversification is household rather than enterprise. The argument explains the competitiveness of informal sector enterprises in a situation where the utilization of factors of production appears, to an enterprise theorist, unbalanced or inadequate. I argue that the enterprise is the wrong unit and the wrong preconceived frame for analysing production.

Rural informal sector activities are usually part of a diversification strategy whereby a household or person engages in several activities simultaneously. Usually one activity is farming food crops. The other activities can consume a little or a lot of time. The crucial aspect is that whenever the informal sector activity faces low demand, the person concerned can lay down tools and do something else equally productive. Given that investments in capital goods are minimal, the strategy does not mean underutilization of labour—from the household's or person's own perspective. The cessation may be a failure from the perspective of an imaginary enterprise, but as a counter-argument we can say that the enterprise has simply ceased to exist for a while. Thus, the failure exists only if we suppose that the rural entrepreneur is a specialized professional engaged exclusively in one activity and

that he is too careless, unentrepreneurial, undynamic, lazy, ill-equipped, debt-ridden, burdened with cousins, etc., to succeed.

Diversification strategy is a perspective on the economic behaviour of a total functional unit. Often this unit is a household, even when it is not united or democratic, simply because there are still so many binding transactions between household members. The lack of unity within a household simply means that a household is likely to be less successful as a unit for the diversification strategy.

Diversification strategy means analysing *the combination of different income sources over a period of time*. This definition implies several things. First, the strategy can only be studied through temporal analysis. The temporal dimension is not only an external analytical framework but also a target for strategic behaviour: good strategy includes good timing, tempo and sequence. Second, the analysis needs to locate the ways different activities complement each other. For example, seasonal activities performed in different seasons mean increased efficiency in the use of labour. Third, the analysis needs to locate the ways different critical resources are circulated between activities, to ensure their efficient management.

Diversification: enterprise as performance

In Lindi district, the single most important business issue is when the rains come. If the rains come at a good time, provide enough water, and end on time, the business environment is likely to be good. This includes demand factors, money circulation, the trading structure and the backward and forward linkages. If a positivistic enterprise analysis were to concentrate on the incentives of business environment, it should look carefully at the rains.

To go deeper than an externalist and positivist overview, we need to look at an enterprise as it is carried out. There we can locate reactive strategies (i.e., reactions to external changes) and active strategies (i.e., genuinely strategic actions). These need to be placed in focus. It is a reactive strategy to cease operations when the rains are too intense. It is an active strategy to build stocks for sale once the harvest is in.

How are enterprises run? Informal sector enterprises in Kilimhewa seldom keep more than a cursory note of the payments made. They do not have elaborate book-keeping and stock-control procedures. Instead, the enterprise is intertwined with other commit-

ments, whether related to business or family affairs. Moneywise, running an enterprise is a performance.

The availability of credit can make a big difference in running an enterprise. However, most entrepreneurs report that they have received credit only infrequently, either from a friend or relative, and normally in amounts of less than Tshs. 10,000. If credit is given for a business venture, it is usually repaid very quickly. If it is given, as occasionally happens, to offset a temporary misfortune, it can be paid back over time. Local credit systems are interest-free among friends but exploitative in a patronage context. Bank credit is a mystery practised by townspeople as a new means of enrichment. For a villager, a more important issue than credit is savings. It is difficult to handle money affairs confidentially to prevent other people from making warranted or unwarranted claims on it. It is difficult to hide money, given the close physical proximity of villagers. Banks are completely useless institutions for villagers. At the same time, inflation is so high that keeping cash is simply irrational.

A related characteristic of entrepreneurship is a lack of trust in financial affairs. Distrust is widespread and well-founded. Social rules and sanctions are very weak in business affairs. Courts, village meetings and village section meetings are ineffectual in all cases except for a theft where there is material evidence.

A consequence of distrust is that enterprises are run as one-man-shows. Cooperation in the form of labour swapping, information exchanges, temporary alliances, etc., does occur, but cooperation requiring joint funding is deeply mistrusted.

The above description hints at only some features of informal sector operations. It depicts a single household struggling with a continuous flow of management decisions, and reacting to different demands which only partly relate to the business activity. The following case studies show how the flow of decisions may be turned to advantage by means of strategic behaviour or, when combined with bad luck, may lead to misery.

CASE STUDIES

Case 1: The exemplary straddling path*The prosperous trader Rashidi Tambala Kigongo*

Rashidi is a prospering young shopkeeper who has managed to accumulate sizeable landed property. He has changed his orientation as his means have increased. Rashidi is a thirty-two-year-old man with two wives. The first, divorced, wife left him with one child. The current older wife has three small children while the second wife has just given birth to her first child. He is also known to have fathered the child of a village administrator. Besides this "core family", Rashidi supports his father in Mnazimmoja and two uncles and an unmarried sister in Kilimahewa.

Rashidi started his career by cultivating groundnuts in particular. Then he traded beans and maize from Songea. In 1988, he traded at the Mtwara market in cooperation with a friend. This ended when Rashidi came home to attend a funeral and the friend ran away with the money. Rashidi also had a camera which he used to photograph various people. This yielded good profits but the camera broke and Rashidi had to abandon this business.

Rashidi opened his first shop in the old village in 1990. Unfortunately, the building was destroyed in the floods. He then built a new house for his family and a new shop from which he has been trading merchandise obtained from Dar es Salaam. He has also become popular among the Indian traders in Lindi. Currently, he can even obtain some credit from there. He has a special arrangement to get kerosene by the barrel. This is cheaper than the normal trade by debe (twenty litres) and Rashidi is able to attract many customers with his cheap kerosene. He is also the sole trader in a large variety of bicycle spares, tools and other hardware, which circulate very slowly and thus require major investment in stock. The hardware plays a minor role in the shop's turnover but the items certainly attract men to the place.

One major source of income is trading in cashew nuts. Rashidi buys cashew nuts directly at the backdoor of the shop and through petty traders who have a loose contract with him. Rashidi can take advantage of these petty traders because they do not have the capital to buy up all the supplies that they have access to. Thus, the petty traders sell to Rashidi and obtain capital for the next round of cashew

nut purchases. Apparently, some petty traders sell stolen nuts but that is not Rashidi's concern.

Rashidi has managed to buy several pieces of land with the proceeds from his trading activities. These are: 1.5 acres of valley land; four acres of land bought in 1988 for Tshs. 15,000; one acre of coconut and cashew in 1989 for Tshs. 12,000; three acres of coconut bought for Tshs. 53,000 in 1992; two acres of cashew nut trees bought for Tshs. 9,000 in 1992; and two plots in Luwale.

It is clear that Rashidi has no time whatsoever to engage in agricultural work. He has hired four watchmen for his fields, and he makes extensive use of labourers to work the land. The crops he grows are suited to this kind of labour arrangement. Rashidi acknowledges that the value of land has escalated during recent years and that land values are an important factor in his economic strategy.

The pattern of diversification

Rashidi has engaged in serial as well as simultaneous diversification but he has invested very little in cultural capital. In this respect, he represents the new class of young money-minded businessmen.

Without question, Rashidi has entered upon the accumulation path by means of diversifying and straddling his activities. His speciality is perhaps being at the right place before others. Thus he entered the cashew trade and photography very early and made good profits. He then invested in shopkeeping and managed to keep a competitive lead on other shopkeepers—his shop is always full of people.

Rashidi had earlier lived in several places but his current prosperity requires a firm commitment to the area he knows so well. His pattern of accumulation is clearly geared towards trading growth and large investment in agriculture. A local man, he is unlikely to establish shops in other locations. He still operates with the logic of the petty trader, holding every string in his own hands. Notoriously modest, he keeps a low profile instead of investing in cultural capital. This means separateness which makes him vulnerable to envy and contempt, as is evident from the following case of theft:

Rashidi had a theft after an argument with a young male customer called Juma. Juma bought maize on credit. The following morning, Juma returned to the shop to buy other items. Rashidi wanted to reduce the debt before further sales. Juma told him that he had got the money from a friend who had asked him to buy these items. This

explanation was not accepted by Rashidi who went on to reduce the debt. After seeing the smallness of the remaining balance, Juma slapped Rashidi. Rashidi went directly to inform the village authorities and Juma was locked in the office. However, Juma was banging on the door of the office so much that the people were afraid he would destroy it. The door was opened and Juma ran away. He then ran to Rashidi's shop, pushed aside the shop assistant and stole a large amount of money. Later, Rashidi played down the whole incident. It was evident, however, that as a rich man he did not enjoy the support of other people. Other similar incidents revealed that Rashidi had to tolerate many kinds of offensive behaviour and abusive language.

Case 2: Misfortunes and vulnerability

The case of the Zainabu Chimuko

Zainabu is a forty-two-year-old lady who has three grown-up children (one in the village and two living in the towns) and three small children living with her. Zainabu has experienced several misfortunes. Three of her children have died. She has divorced her first husband and her second husband died after a long illness. For the last ten years she has remained unmarried but she has had several boyfriends. They have fathered two of her smallest children.

Her second husband was engaged in fish trading. They also had a *tembo* (coconut beer) club in the village. Affairs went so well that they were able to buy two coconut fields. After three years, they invested their incomes in a second-hand Land Rover. This vehicle was bought in 1981, a period when all consumables and especially luxury items like car spares were practically impossible to obtain. The vehicle's expenses were high and finally they had to sell it in 1984. Their business ventures were halted by the husband's sickness and the property had to be sold. The last business venture, the beer club, was closed in 1987. After his death, Zainabu has lived in poverty. The only thing that remains from her previous success is iron sheets for her house.

Zainabu has a plot of one acre which she received from the village government. She also has a tiny coconut field in the valley. Zainabu claims to harvest only four bags of cassava, half a bag of maize and a few pigeon peas. The value of these crops is only Tshs. 5,000. She has also received a similar amount from the sale of groundnuts.

Zainabu still has some interest in income-generating activities. She has helped a local trader to buy cashew nuts worth Tshs. 12,000. In return for her help, she received a remuneration of Tshs. 2,000. She knows how to make baskets and mats but has not had the necessary materials. In addition, she has joined a small group of women to get a loan targeted at women's groups to start a kiosk. The group is based on friendship and the women are not kin or neighbours. So far, the group has not progressed beyond the planning stage.

The eldest son of Zainabu has engaged in trading but is not doing well. A year earlier he managed to send Zainabu Tshs. 1,000 as a gift. Since then, he has not been able to assist. Her eldest daughter has given her four tins of rice after Zainabu helped her in her fields. The second daughter is engaged in prostitution in the town. She has managed to send her one *khanga* cloth, two bars of washing soap and a pair of sandals. The only other gift she has received is some millet from her "younger mother". Two loans worth Tshs. 1,500 and 500 she has received from a neighbour and a "younger father". She has managed to pay back only the first loan.

The collapse of diversification

Zainabu has lived through a number of misfortunes which have profoundly damaged her resource base and scarred her self-respect. She is currently a poor woman with a resigned attitude.

The state of Zainabu's affairs can also be seen as a manifestation of the lack of diversification. The family structure (as a single mother with small children) makes it difficult for her to engage in trading—a skill which she had earlier learned well. At the same time, poverty makes it impossible to engage in anything requiring investment and delayed returns. Zainabu can perform occasional day labour but the earnings are needed for buying food. Her major source of income is a small plot. Her vulnerable dependence on spasmodic agriculture, distant children and some kind friends is bound to lead to further misfortune.

DISCUSSION: THE EFFECTS OF THE INFORMAL SECTOR ON DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**The economic importance of the informal sector**

The Tanzanian economy has experienced a long-term crisis which has been only partially resolved. The crisis has recently been interpreted as a crisis of the official economy (Sarris and van den Brink, 1993:57). By comparison, economic activities which are more remote from state control have survived and even prospered. This development has inspired lively discussion on the dynamics of the informal sector in Tanzania (Bryceson, 1990 and 1993; Havnevik, 1993; Maliyamkono and Bagachwa, 1990; Tripp, 1990; Booth et. al., 1993). It has been argued that the informal sector pulls the economy forward when the public sector is crumbling. On the other hand, the informal sector is said to be an inefficient part of the private sector, unable to effect technological or organizational changes.

In these discussions, the dynamics in rural areas have been overlooked, or when they have been addressed, the heterogeneity of the rural informal sector has hardly been understood. In a rural setting the informal sector needs to be reconceptualized in such a way that subsidiary activities (i.e., temporary and only partially monetarized activities) are incorporated in the analysis. I would argue that the cumulative effect of household-level diversification amounts to an advanced village-level division of labour with various unintended effects. At that level, we can ask what effects the developed division of labour has in the wider circle of rural accumulation and rural politics.

Diversification is a development path in which the dependent local peasant economy manages to keep part of the agricultural surplus within its own sphere instead of pouring it into the towns. It has a positive impact on rural-urban income distribution. Within the village, it has a negative effect on income distribution. I have emphasized that participation in an income-generating activity is conditioned by the household composition, its cultural capital, agricultural resources and its participation in the formal sector, which together constitute a livelihood strategy. Broadly speaking, wealthy, middle and poor households have different income-generating activities within reach. The rich, participate in long distance trade which allows

for further accumulation without major risk.¹ The poor participate in the extraction of natural resources, crafts and petty trading, and are subject to seasonal fluctuations. However, a village contains a number of social hierarchies which are partly overlapping and partly separate. These types of cultural capital further direct people towards different activities.

The two selected case-studies show variation in income received from non-agricultural sources. My estimate is that the average income from the monetarized non-agricultural non-wage sector does not exceed 20 per cent of total income in the village. In addition, many local crafts, services and trades depend directly or indirectly on agricultural production. The agricultural calendar heavily affects both supply and demand for most income-generating activities. This does not mean that talk of the lively non-agricultural village economy is populist exaggeration. Although the monetary value added may be small, village production is extensive in terms of the bundle of use values. Village production is so diverse that a conservative household does not have to buy items from town other than clothes, soap, kerosene, medicine and matches.

In all the listed income-generating activities, payment is usually made with money. Barter is very rare in normal transactions. However, even when money is used, this monetization does not necessarily equal commoditization in the Marxist sense of the word; the crucial difference is the producer's relationship to the productive process and the consumer within a social totality. We have to ask whether the producer aims to satisfy concrete needs even through acts of exchange, or has the calculation of labour value become a determining issue? (Sahlins, 1972:83 and 195.) In many income-generating activities, the skilled person controls the means of production and the labour process is intermingled with other activities, making the labour-time calculation far from uniform.

One should also note that many items trigger secondary transactions from which the monetary value is omitted. This fact is more clearly visible when the full scale of exchange flows is placed alongside the monetarized trade. Gifts, donations, loans and theft are

1. Cf., Donge (1992), Amani and Maro (1992) and Bryceson (1993) on comparative studies on different chains of traders in crop marketing. The long-distance traders are clearly becoming a more specialized group and no longer need to rely on the (mis)use of state resources for their activities.

largely conducted in the same items as trade. The distributional effect of the lively village economy is much more positive if one takes account of the full sphere of secondary exchanges as a supplement to market access to goods. The village institutions include circles of pooling and redistribution. Those who have invested their time in cultural capital, stand as spearheads when these flows are reallocated in the village. The elderly Muslim patriarchs still need these circuits to retain their position. Secondary exchanges mainly diminish generational and gender-based wealth differences.

I have now shown that village economy has its own productive rationale. The inward-oriented village economy has elements of cultural parochialism and economic risk-aversion. Nevertheless, these factors do not fully explain livelihood strategies. The village economy has also an outward-motivated element of political resistance to underdevelopment and external dependency. This will be discussed in the final section.

The effects of the extensive informal sector on the state-villager relationship

In this paper, I have contextualized the diverse income-generating activities in socio-cultural terms, highlighting their heterogeneity. I have asked whether they actually represent different economic logics rather than a single drive towards commercialization. One possible source of alternative logic is the political resistance to influential state and market agents (cf. Scott, 1985). Lindi district is peripheral, and poor. According to the masterly analysis of the late Gus Liebenow (1971), one major reason for underdevelopment in south-east Tanzania is the cultural heritage of passive resistance to external intervention and the reliance on parochial values.

Local diversification has a definite effect on the political penetration of the state. It helps to keep central state interventions at a healthy distance. At least from the time of villagization onward, village-level state agents have facilitated this by applying double standards: relying on formal legitimation from above but implementing official policies in a passive manner.¹ During the period of liberaliza-

1. A good reference point is the village study conducted by Don Hassett (1985) after villagization in Lindi district. He reported a number of village projects and numerous

tion, the central state has relaxed its official policies and withdrawn from the most direct forms of political control of the peasants. I use two examples which highlight the limited hold of the central polity. These are crop marketing and village administration.

In south-east Tanzania, the state has pursued an export crop strategy based mainly on cashew, because cashew can be easily controlled and taxed. The prices paid to producers have been low. Since the mid-1970s, local response has been the neglect of cashew fields and state marketing channels and, instead, diversification both within and outside agriculture. Recently, the cooperative structures have collapsed¹ and private traders have taken over responsibility for the cashew trade. The years of liberalized cashew trade have been equally perplexing for peasants. The price level has increased substantially but has fluctuated during the collection season and according to the location of sales. Politicians still advocate the old system of floor prices, controlled trade and heavy taxes and they often manage to stir up ideas of free pricing and, even occasionally, the actual system itself. The peasant response has been cautious. Peasants distrust the necessary input supply provided by the large, mainly Indian, traders. Thus many peasants sell small amounts of cashew from untended fields at low prices to local middlemen, while more affluent peasants sell directly to external traders to get a higher price. The total amount produced is far below the potential production level.

The history of ill-planned administrative interventions in south-east Tanzania has also caused resistance. As Liebenow (1971:334) summarizes, "... administrative caprice, more than any other factor, has been responsible for the failure of the Makonde to respond more positively to modern institutions and values". Subsequent to this statement, villagization was implemented and the peasants experienced increased coercion. Currently, most villagers exhibit subtle resistance to state intervention in a number of ways. The points of contact with administrators are strictly controlled. A divisional officer visiting a village can fail to attract more than a handful of people to a

interventions in the sphere of peasant production and circulation—often with limited or adverse economic results.

1. The regional cooperative society has collapsed due to high debts. The structure of the primary cooperative societies has recently been modified. After the modification, only 1 per cent of households have paid membership fees in Kilimahewa. The primary cooperative society has no capital and it functions merely as a collection point for private traders.

meeting. Communal work parties to clear paths have been systematically avoided. Often, head-tax collectors are offered only excuses. Party-initiated projects do not enjoy legitimacy and the previously forced collections can now be evaded by claiming—in this multi-party era—that one is not a CCM member. However, the opposition political parties are seen as equally alien and unnecessary.

Diversification is not just resistance to town-based exploiters. It is equally a strategy for cultural expression and the formation of a separate identity. Kilimahewa is divided into competing social spheres, each with its cultural capital. Some of the capital is midway between the external market and state agencies and local values, and some of it is more defiant about state intervention. As Roitman (1990:694) argues, "because the ruling classes in Sub-Saharan societies do not apply their material and political power unidimensionally in order to benefit from any one form of surplus extraction, the resulting plurality of markets entails the constituents of a multitude of power bases". This argument holds true even at village level. Thus, diversification is not an exit strategy to household-level subsistence, but a creative strategy for a village-level political identity. In Kilimahewa, coconut ownership together with the Muslim faith, ethnicity, kin group and age have been the traditional sources of esteem. These are challenged by other forms of cultural capital like education, Christianity, spirit possession and a youth culture. Another challenge is the wealth of the mobile and opportunistic traders. In this situation, diversity of economic and cultural strategy curtails any single form of external dependency and underdevelopment.

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Part III

Perceptions of Culture and Local Knowledge

Mystical forces and social relations in Makonde oral literature

A.A. Nangumbi

ABSTRACT

Oral literature is a traditional method of transmitting information in non-literate cultures. Among the Makonde, the oral literature has also had definite social functions: it has provided ideas of the social order and societal conflict in a culturally acceptable manner.

The tales presented and analysed here are curious and almost frightening; they present surprising happenings in a large family setting. Persons are presented figuratively and some events are violent. For an outsider, these stories are difficult to interpret. However, after reading the author's analysis, the tales look fairly straightforward and accessible.

The tales touch repeatedly on the power of witchcraft. Since many people from northern Tanzania are afraid of southerners because of their alleged evil powers, the chapter hopefully contributes to relaxing some of their fears.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I am going to explore the oral literature as practised by the Wamakonde of southeast Tanzania. Oral literature is the genre of literature which is most open and communally authored. The Makonde use oral literature to further an understanding of their own social situation in a changing world. Thus oral literature is a mirror of the concrete problems that the people face. It unites the social relations and mystical forces that govern life into a coherent whole.

I dwell at some length on the mystical forces among the Wamakonde. This is important because many outsiders, whether Tanzanians or foreigners, hold the view that the Wamakonde are

notorious witches. This impression exists to the extent that officers transferred to work in the area fail to come and take up the positions. This kind of behaviour is, however, an expression of the belief in witchcraft existing among those outsiders themselves. A closer look at the cultural patterns shows that among the Makonde, mystical forces have many functions and cannot be simply regarded as destructive witchcraft.

The chapter is divided into the following sections. I start by giving a brief history of the Wamakonde, highlighting the functions of oral literature. Then I proceed to present two narratives as they are related. I also supply a sociological analysis of the narratives. In this process, I present examples which show the mystical forces at work within the world of Makonde life. In the conclusions I present my judgement of the utility of mystical forces.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE WAMAKONDE

The Wamakonde is an ethnic grouping which occupies three districts of southeast Tanzania: Newala, Mtwara and Lindi. They are also found in some parts of the Masasi district. They extend southwards into Mozambique, where they occupy the Mueda district. It is a fairly populous tribe, with an estimated population of about nine hundred thousand souls, speaking four dialects: *Cinnima*, *Kimatambwe*, *Kmaraba* and *Kimawia*. *Cinnima* is spoken in Kitangali, and the Chilangala and Litehu divisions in Newala district. It is also spoken in Nyangamara division in Lindi district as well as the Nanyamba division in Mtwara district. *Kimatambwe* is spoken in Newala, the Mahuta and Nmikupa divisions in Newala district as well as along the Mchauru river basin in the Newala and Masasi districts. *Kimaraba* is predominantly spoken by the Wamakonde who live along the coast, notably in Ziواني, Kitaya, Dihimba, Mtwara-Mikindani and Mayanga divisions in Mtwara district. It is also spoken in Sudi, Mingoyo, Mtama, Ng'apa and Mchinga divisions in Lindi district. *Kimawia* as a dialect is predominantly employed by the Mozambican Makondes.

There is a sharp contradiction between what the Makonde believe to be their origins and what historians say about it. The Wamakonde assert that their ancestors came to settle in their present homeland from the south. In this they are supported by Liebenow (1971:19) who sees them as migrants from the South, their northward "journey"

being engineered by Shaka's wars, which forced the Wangoni to move northwards, thus displacing the Wamakonde in the process. Historians, on the other hand, assert that the origin of the Wamakonde is in or around the *ndonde*, the undulating grassy plains stretching south of the Ruvuma river into Mozambique. From there, they moved to Ngomano, (Liebenow, 1971:21) where dispersion according to clan membership began. As they moved to the north, they carried with them "the remembered repertoire of legends, folktales, and proverbs, as (they) did with hoes, pieces of cloth and cooking pots" (Liebenow, 1971:21).

I consider the contradictions perceived herein regarding the historical background of the Makonde to be extremely important in understanding their subsequent practice of oral literature and its scholarly interpretation. As Finnegan (1984:48) asserts:

Literature is practised in a society. It is obvious that any analysis of African literature must take account of the social and historical context—and never more so than in the case of oral literature.

The Wamakonde are basically peasants practising some mixed farming. The only animal husbandry they seem to be aware of is goat-keeping. To them there are only two seasons: the wet and the dry season. These seasons are extremely important in determining which genre of oral literature is to be practised. For this reason, the wet season is well known for indoor oral literature, whereas the dry season is characterized by outdoor oral literature. Outdoor oral literature is the more prominent of the two and is usually performed by a group of story-tellers who move from one village to another, performing night-long story-telling activities to the accompaniment of drums and other musical instruments.

The function of oral literature among the Wamakonde

Before discussing the functions of oral literature among the Wamakonde, let me pay tribute to what Ngugi (1981:35) considers to be the function of literature as a whole:

Literature ... reflects the life of people. It reflects in word images, a people's creative consciousness of their struggle to mould nature through cooperative labour and in the process acting and changing themselves. It reflects in word images a people's consciousness of the tensions and conflicts arising out of their struggles to mould a meaning-

ful social environment founded on their combined actions on nature to wrest means of life: clothing, food and shelter.

Oral literature among the Wamakonde is an ancient art. It is as old as the tribe itself. It was born out of their struggle to mould nature to their advantage. Suffering and joy teamed up to give birth to their present oral literature. It was also an explanation of protest at being overburdened, at their tormentors and neighbours. Amidst suffering, joy and protest, there were born songs, proverbs, tale telling, dances, beliefs, games, speeches, etc.

Among them, oral literature is called upon to take an intensive part in the process of creating and recreating a society worth living in. It has to be partisan and take sides with individual Makonde in the process of being and becoming. In this struggle, Makonde oral literature sets itself to perform a number of tasks:

- (i) To embody in words and images, the tensions, conflicts and contradictions at the heart of the Makonde community's being and the process of becoming a community to which people wish to belong;
- (ii) To reflect how the Makonde community wrestles with its environment to produce the basic means of life: food, clothing and shelter;
- (iii) To create and recreate the Makonde community;
- (iv) To reflect certain aspects of the Makonde ways of living in such a manner that the reflection brings self-realization and soul-searching to the individual;
- (v) To be partisan in the nature and scope of the Makonde community;
- (vi) To act as a screw that can be readjusted in line with the accepted Makonde mode of behaviour;
- (vii) To shape and reshape the Makonde attitude to life, to the daily struggle with nature, the daily struggle within the community and the daily struggle with our individuality.

It is mainly through oral literature that we can understand the Wamakonde's mode of thinking and their pattern of life. Little wonder that they have cultivated the habit of introducing their children to the treasure of this literature by evening fires when the elderly members of the tribe find delight in inculcating in the young ones what they believe to be their mission as they grow up.

It is assumed in this chapter that society gives birth to oral literature and, once on its feet, that oral literature takes care of the ways and values of a society, showing it the direction to follow in socializing and moulding the individual members of that society. Fischer (1963) is of the same opinion, when he declares that oral literature, therefore, entertains, consoles, glorifies or even lessens the tensions in individuals, as called for by the situation. Tales told at funerals, for example, are all aimed at appealing to the individual from a psychological standpoint. For the truth is beyond the simple folktale told round a fireplace in the evening. At a funeral, a tale-telling gathering, and other tale-telling occasions, a world known to the story-teller exists and he communicates the good and bad of that world to his listeners in his attempt to mould desirable social behaviour using a social tool. Senghor (1956:28) notes:

Even fables teach us a lesson over and beyond the laughter and tears they provoke. They are one of the essentials of social equilibrium because of the dialects they express. Beneath the figures of the lion, the elephant, the hyena ... we read clearly and perceive our own social structures and our passions—the good as well as the bad.

In an attempt to fulfil the above functions, Makonde oral literature knows no limits of space or time. Its plot is neither temporary nor its characters extinct. The plot tends to be a replica of time and space with characters transcending the current times, but still finding originality within the limitations of the Makonde code of conduct. To accomplish this effectively, the oral artist has to use words and characters which are familiar to his audience. It follows from this argument that the Makonde oral literature is not art for art's sake, but is in a very real way a process of reflecting the Makonde consciousness.

MYSTICAL FORCES IN THE LIFE WORLD

The narratives related below include some forces and capacities which first appear as striking and beyond human capacity. They are examples of the mystical forces that exist in the Makonde culture. The functioning and power of these forces needs to be analysed in depth if we are to try to reach any understanding of the life worlds of the Wamakonde. It appears that these forces have several effects which are sometimes constructive and in other situations destructive. I approach this issue through analysing the concept of witchcraft

because these forces are often lumped together under that concept. Geoffrey Parrinder (1970:10) correctly asserts that the subject is widely misunderstood. Witchcraft is often taken to mean something evil and malevolent (Parrinder, 1976:15). It is my purpose to show how misinterpreted this phenomenon is. In my view it is erroneous to associate it only with evil.

I define witchcraft as a secret art of practising magic and its effectiveness depends to a large extent on the degree of secrecy under which the magic is performed. Malevolent witchcraft is the ability to inflict physical or mental damage to a person or property by occult means. Non-malevolent witchcraft is essentially aimed at alleviating or curing damage or suchlike caused by malevolent witchcraft, again by occult means. The former is practised by witches and the latter by witch-doctors. This means that they both use witchcraft: one to damage and the other to cure. In both cases, it is the magical world we are dealing with. This distinction is an important yardstick towards understanding what witchcraft is. Parrinder (1970:14) observes:

People have included witchcraft under the same heading as magic. But the two are essentially distinct and no progress can be made in understanding what witchcraft is about until the consideration of magic in the same category is abandoned.

If we take "occult" as the operative word, then we can explain it as two-way traffic. On the malevolent side, occult means the power "to mysteriously (non-naturally) injure other people" (Hallen and Sodipo, 1986:88). Similarly, on the "benevolent" scale, occult means mysteriously rendering malevolent witchcraft ineffective. It is not the purpose of this chapter to dwell on the distinction between the two. It rather ascertains the distinction, for this matter is both evil and undevelopmental as Hallen and Sodipo (1986:87) argue:

Among specialists in Western witchcraft phenomenon are those who defend the persecution of witches as a legitimate enterprise because witchcraft is, quite literally, true. It is an evil, spiritually directed heresy that poses a deliberate threat to any established social order.

To find out whether witchcraft is an objective possibility or not, one has to turn to Summers, Thomas and Parrinder in Hallen and Sodipo (1986:90). Summers has recourse to Satan, Thomas to an occult intimately involved with magic and Parrinder to a purely psychological ability. All agree in principle that witchcraft exists and is a destabilizing force in a social equilibrium. They also agree on the existence of a

popular stereotype of the malevolent witch as being anti-social, malicious, deliberate and secretive.

FIRST TALE: THE WEEDING BUTTOCKS

"Nanchihi"¹

"Nanchilau"²

There once lived a young man who was both handsome and hard-working. Being handsome, he wanted to marry a beautiful girl.

One day he told his father that he wanted to marry a woman who was both beautiful and hardworking. "Father," he said, "I want to marry, but throughout the village there is no girl who is as beautiful as I would like her to be. Besides the girls of this village are lazy. So I want to travel somewhere looking for a beautiful and hardworking woman." His father agreed and told his wife to prepare food for their son to eat on the way. After days of preparations the young man left.

On the way he met Hyena who asked him where he was going. The young man told him that he was in search of a woman who was both beautiful and hardworking. Hyena thought for a while and then said, "You will have to travel for ten days and ten nights. Then you will come to a country where everyone you meet will welcome you to his house, but do not accept until you have reached the baobab tree that stands in the middle of the village. There you will meet an old man who will ask you what you want and instead of telling him what you just told me, you simply sing this song:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Vanamahunde matata</i> | 'People of the sky' |
| <i>Kandamile nkongwe</i> | 'Marry me a woman' |
| <i>malangwe</i> | |

Do not say anything more and you will get the type of woman you are after."

The young man continued on his journey and on the tenth day he arrived at a village where everyone shouted "*ida ida ida*," meaning "welcome, welcome, welcome". The young man thanked them and continued to the baobab tree. Under the tree, sat an old man weaving a mat. He asked the young man where he had come from and what had brought him to that country. The young man sang the song:

1. Opening formula for the story teller.

2. Response of the audience to the opening formula.

Vana malumde matata
Kandimile welu
Malangwe
Vanamahunde matata
Kandamile nkongwe
Malangwe

At the mention of the word "*nkongwe*" meaning "woman", he found himself surrounded by countless beautiful women. He then made his choice and marriage followed.

Several days later, the young man took his wife home. Before leaving, his in-laws told him that no one should visit his wife while she worked in the fields. Even if they had a baby, he should not trouble himself looking for a girl to help her. "You can only watch her doing work when she is at home and never when she is working in the fields."

On his arrival home, his parents were very happy to see their son with a new wife. His sisters and brothers were also happy. The young man still remembered the warning of his in-laws. One day he called his parents, sisters, brothers and the members of his extended family and warned them against visiting his wife while she was working in the fields.

He then started clearing the forest and when the rains came, he planted. All this time, his wife visited him in the forest to give him water and afternoon food. At this time, the woman was carrying a baby. When the men's work was over, weeding started. His wife woke very early in the morning, heated the previous night's leftovers, ate some herself, kept some for her husband and took some to the fields for the baby. Before going, she reminded her husband not to visit her in the *shamba*.

At the *shamba*, the woman chose a good shed and laid down her baby. She then took her *jembe* and chopped her own head off. She laid it before the baby to sing lullabies when the baby cried. After that she sat down and, using her buttocks, started weeding. She worked non-stop and when the baby cried, the head started singing:

Tololo lolo anankonda,
Avoo,
Mwanda ngwenda kulima anankonda
Avoo,
Kuvalekite anykala anankonda

*Aooo,
Tololo lolo anankonda
Avoooooo!!*

Meaning: Keep quiet, little one
We have come to weed, little one
We inherited from ancestors, little one
Keep quiet, little one.

The baby would then stop crying and the woman continued weeding non-stop. In the afternoon, the head started singing again:

*Vanachikundu vanachikundu
Lidwoa liwhena vanachikundu kokoliko
Mwana kudoba vanachikundu kokoliko
Mawene kukaya vanchikundu kokoliko
Vanachikunduuuu!!*

Meaning: Buttocks, Buttocks
The sun is going down, Buttocks
The baby is hungry, Buttocks
Go home, Buttocks.

Hurriedly, the woman stopped weeding. She went back to the shade, took her head and placed it back on again. After that she took her baby, breast fed it and gave it food. Before leaving, she collected firewood, and picked cassava leaves for the evening greens. On arriving home, she took her water pot and went to draw water from the well. Before dusk she finished preparing the evening food.

The following morning she again went to the *shamba*, laid her baby in the shade and chopped her head off. She laid it beside the baby and, using her buttocks, she started weeding non-stop. In the afternoon, the head started singing:

*Vanachikundu vanachikundu
Lidwoa liwhena vanachikundu kokoliko
Mwana kudoba vanachikundu kokoliko
Mmwene kukaya vanchikundu kokoliko
Vanachikunduuuu!!*

After each day's work, her husband went to inspect that day's work. He always came back to tell his parents how hard-working his wife was, "She does more work in a day than five women combined. I don't know how she manages it."

Talk went round the village and people were forbidden to visit her when she was working. Akalimala ignored the warnings and wanted to see how his sister-in-law managed to weed so fast.

One morning, when everyone had gone to the fields, Akalimala followed his sister-in-law unseen. At the *shamba*, he found a good hiding-place to see how she weeded. As usual, the woman laid her baby under the shade, chopped her head off and placed it before the baby. She then started weeding using her buttocks. The head spotted Akalimala's hiding place and started singing:

Vanachikundu vanachikundu
Leka kulima vanachikundu kokoliko
Nnamulo akwene vanachikundu kokoliko
Vino/Nelo unawha vanchikundu kokoliko
Mwana kulaga vanchikundu kokoliko
Vanachikunduuuu.

Meaning: Buttocks, Buttocks
 Stop weeding, Buttocks
 Brother-in-law has seen you, Buttocks
 The baby will be motherless, Buttocks
 Buttocks, Buttocks, stop weeding, Buttocks
 Buttocks, Buttocks.

Quickly the woman stopped weeding and went to the shade, picked up her head and tried to place it on. It did not stick. She tried again, but the head dropped to the ground. She tried again and again, but the head did not stick. Eventually she fell down and died.

By this time, Akalimala had already gone home in a hurry. He never told anyone what happened to his sister-in-law. The husband was alarmed. It was not the habit of his wife to stay away from home so late. He decided to follow her and find out what was keeping her. On reaching the farm, he found the baby still crying and the head continued singing. He listened to the song, saw the body of his wife and understood. He picked the baby up and went home to inform his people.

After the burial, the young man took the baby to his in-laws. He told them what had happened and asked them to nurse the baby. His in-laws refused, "We told you that nobody was to visit her when she was at work in the fields. Your brother broke our customs and, therefore, you will have to nurse the baby yourself."

The young man returned and, with difficulties, nursed the baby.

How far is the tale a sociological model?

Since the story begins with marriage, I shall also begin my analysis with the concept of marriage among the Wamakonde.

A young man, handsome and hardworking, looks for a girl of similar qualities to marry. Of the two qualities, the ability to work hard is more important among the Wamakonde. It is the yardstick with which suitability for marriage is measured and hence is the basic quality one looks for when one wants to marry. This is because the tribe is agrarian and makes its living from the land. This explains why the young man's parents prepare him food to eat on the way, hoping that if the young man succeeds in getting a hard-working woman, the food will, in a way, be recovered. On the road, the young man meets Hyena.

Here I have made an assumption that Hyena belongs to a different village, but is equally concerned with the young man's marriage and that is why he advised him where and how to get a good woman. This assumption is based on Makonde cosmology, which assumes that what happens in one village is also the concern of the other villages that surround it. If one does not bear such an assumption in mind, one will fail to justify the existence of Hyena in the story. We also learn from the story that the whole village was happy. This is another cosmology of the Wamakonde which regards women as the property of the whole village since all the villagers belong to the matrilineal lineage. As such, approval or disapproval of the villagers is of considerable weight. On arriving in the village, the young man goes to meet the old man under the baobab tree following Hyena's prior instructions. This behaviour is characteristic of the Makonde code of conduct: a stranger to a village should be known by the elders of that village who can tell good from bad. In those days, it was not customary for a young man to propose marriage directly to a girl. It was the elders who arranged that. This, I assume, is the reason why the young man was told by Hyena to sing the song that did him so much good.

Another question worth consideration is: Why do the woman's parents refuse their son-in-law permission to visit his wife when she is working in the fields?

This suggests role-play. It is definite that there are roles that men and women are supposed to play. Although the young man is simply refused permission to visit his wife when she is working in the fields, I think the question goes deeper than this. Among the Wamakonde,

there are roles that are strictly for men and others for women. It has remained so since the tribe came into being and whoever tries to break the order is subject to punishment. Here, I shall cite initiation rites as an activity of role-play among the Wamakonde. Both males and females have initiation rites that are held independently of one another.

If males sneak their way into women's rites and are spotted by females, it is believed that the girl on whom the ritual was being performed at that time stands the risk of not conceiving in her lifetime. Similarly, if females sneak their way into circumcision rites and are spotted, the unfortunate boy on whom the ritual was being performed will either die or the wound on the penis will take an unusually long time to heal. This, I assume is the reason why, when Akalimala is spotted by the head, the only fate left to the woman is to die. In fact, there is a lot in common between the initiation rites and this story. Once an intruder has been spotted in initiation proceedings, the fact is made known to others through the medium of song hardly understood by the intruder so as to avoid scaring him or her before he or she is caught and pays a fine. Likewise, when the head spotted Akalimala, it sang to inform the woman that the secret was out. Presumably, therefore, Akalimala's running away was not due to the fact that he had understood what the head was saying, but rather because he was frightened at seeing a headless body weeding. Again, as in the initiation rites, the serious consequences for intruding are lessened by the paying of a fine. Since Akalimala did not pay the fine, his sister-in-law had to pay the penalty.

The tragic ending of the story has many moral lessons about Akalimala. He was a young boy who was forbidden to visit his sister-in-law when she was working in the fields. He ignored the warning and his sister-in-law died. This, I suppose, is aimed at showing that the boy is not the right type of person to take over his brother's household in the event of the latter's death, to take care of his late brother's children and property. If Akalimala caused the death of his sister-in-law and thus caused difficulties for the child, one cannot consider him to be a person likely to inherit his brother's children and property. Indeed, the fact that he ignored the warning, depicts him as an irresponsible child who does not listen to his elders, and as having the kind of manners most criticised by elders.

Again, one could consider why the in-laws refused to take care of the baby. I have tackled this problem from two angles. In the first place the Wamakonde were a matrilineal tribe. According to matrilineal customs, a child belongs to the mother. If a mother died before the child came of age, it was the duty of the members of the deceased's clan to take care of the child. In this story, the custom was not adhered to because of the nature of the circumstances leading to the death of the mother. Since the young man was warned by his in-laws and since the young man's brother ignored the warning, thus causing the death of his sister-in-law, the in-laws decided to punish the young man. The punishment inflicted on him by the in-laws gives us another angle of analysis. The Wamakonde expect each member of the tribe to follow and adhere to the code of conduct. Failure to do so is seen as failure on the part of one's parents or elders, in one's upbringing. When such a situation arises, one's parents or elders stand the chance of being punished and of having strong criticism levelled at them for having failed to bring the child up in accordance with the Makonde code of conduct.

The function of the songs

There is a clear relationship between the contents of the tale and the songs in it. In fact, the latter are part of the former. It is for this reason that I have decided to examine them separately.

The first song is taught to the young man by Hyena, who instructs him to sing it to the old man under the baobab tree. It happens that the song carried the intended message. The second song has three functions. In the first place it acted as a time-keeping device to inform the woman when to stop weeding. In the second place it informed the woman of the leaking of the secret and thirdly it informed the husband of what had taken place.

It is obvious that the two songs imparted information of some sort. Here, I have made the assumption that songs are considered to be media of impartial messages to members of Makonde society. They are economical with words and entertain the singer and those sung to. Marriage arrangements are usually characterized by lengthy discussions and the proceedings are usually tedious. It is interesting to note that the story does not cover the marriage in detail. Presumably,

therefore, the song has been used to shorten the story so as to deliver the message.

This again, is in line with Makonde cosmology. The use of song among them is as widespread as is the case with other ethnic groups. The song is, in itself, enough to socialize an individual by ridiculing what is worthy of ridicule and praising what is worthy of praise. If that is true, then it is also true that the song is a powerful instrument for carrying messages which is why it is part of the tale.

SECOND TALE: THE TALKING BAG

A man had two wives, N-jakasi¹ and N-jenga². N-jakasi, the senior wife was barren. Each woman had her own hut. Their husband was a talented stilt dancer and moved from one village to another, performing the dance.

One dry season, the man went to dance in a distant country. When he left, his junior wife N-jenga was heavily pregnant. The senior wife thought she had had enough of the humiliation and vowed to kill the expected baby. She did not show her intentions openly. She pretended to be kind to the junior wife and befriended her.

On the day of the delivery she helped the junior wife in the process who gave birth to male twins in the end. The senior wife became angrier and she immediately worked out a plan to kill the babies.

"You see," she told the junior wife, "these babies are not strong at all. They will die soon. The only thing to do is to throw them away." The junior wife agreed and the senior one went to her hut to collect a *lijamanda*.³ She put the twins in the *lijamanda*, while their mother wept bitterly. She then took the *lijamanda* to the forest where she threw it away.

One day a woman from a nearby village went into the forest looking for firewood. She came across the *lijamanda* and took it home.

On arriving home, she opened it and found the twins lying there. She nursed them and brought them up as her own children. The senior wife, N-jakasi, knew all this, but kept quiet hoping nobody would discover her misdeed.

1. Senior wife. A useless thing.

2. Junior wife. A useful thing.

3. A box-like object made of bamboo for keeping flour and grain.

After many years, the husband returned from the dancing trip. He had by now learnt new styles of dancing and he wanted to perform them in his village. The day came and spectators came from different villages to watch the performance. His senior wife went from group to group looking for the twins, who were now boys, to see if they had come to watch the performance. On finding them she said, "You are not allowed to watch the dance until you have brought me a talking bag (*nkoba untongola*)". The boys were very surprised at this demand and went home to tell their mother. Their mother prepared them enough food to carry with them on their journey in search of a talking bag.

After a ten day walk they came across a huge snake who asked them what they were looking for. "We are looking for a talking bag," replied the boys. The snake said, "My stomach is full. I have just eaten, but I have no water to drink. Carry me on your young shoulders to that river."

The boys carried the snake to the river. On arriving at the bank, the snake said, "Do you see that hut over there? In that hut there lives an old leper. Go to him and lick his entire body and then ask for the bag."

The boys did as instructed. They came to the hut and found the leper covered with dirt all over his body. After greeting him, they started to lick his body and then asked him for a talking bag. The leper gave them seven calabashes and said, "It's now one day's journey to the village of the talking bag. You will come to a village where houses are built in a circle and in them live people who shout at the top of their voices, but hardly make sense. In the centre stands a house. In that house there is an old man and inside the house is the 'talking bag'. Snatch it and run as quickly as you can. As they are sure to pursue you, break these calabashes one after another as they come near you."

The boys took the calabashes and continued on their journey. When they reached the village, they heard people shouting at the tops of their voices, hardly making sense. At the centre, there was a house with an old man plaiting a basket. On seeing the boys, the bag started talking from inside the house, "Welcome young men. You have walked on a long journey, welcome."

The old man who was plaiting the basket suffered from jiggers. He asked one of the boys to remove a jigger from his toe. As he was

doing that, the other boy asked for fire to light his tobacco. The old man told him to fetch it from inside the house.

When he came out, they started running at full speed. The old man was stupefied and could not tell what was amiss. He looked into the house and found the talking bag missing. With a sorrowful voice he announced to those who were shouting at the top of their voices "*Vanemba nkoba uwheha*", which means, "Boys, the bag is gone". All of a sudden, the chase started. The villagers pursued the boys and when they came near, the boys broke one calabash. The pursuers were attacked by very many safari ants and some of them died. Still, the chase went on and as they came near, the boys broke another calabash. All of a sudden the pursuers were stung by many bees. Some died. The chase went on and the boys broke another calabash. The whole area caught fire and some pursuers were killed. The chase went on. The boys broke another calabash and the area turned into an ocean. Some pursuers got drowned in the ocean, but the chase went on. All this time, the talking bag encouraged the boys, "Run on, run on". The boys broke another calabash and the whole area became dark. Some of the pursuers lost their way. Still the chase continued and the boys broke another calabash. The area became full of poisonous thorns and many pursuers died. Few survived to continue the chase. The boys broke the last calabash. The pursuers were surrounded by poisonous snakes. None survived this time.

At last the boys were safe and reached home, where the dance was still continuing. They went straight to the dance and as they approached the dancing grounds, the bag said, "Quiet, quiet! I have something to tell you." All the spectators were surprised at seeing a talking bag.

The bag went on, "These boys are twin brothers, sons of this stilt dancer born of his junior wife when he was on a dancing trip. The senior wife told the junior wife that the babies were not going to live long and arranged to throw them into the forest. An old woman found the babies and brought them up. When their father returned, the boys wanted to watch the dance, but the senior wife told them to bring her a talking bag before she would allow them to watch the dance. They came and fetched me from far away."

On hearing this, the husband ordered his senior wife to be hanged. He then took his children and lived happily ever after.

How far is the tale a sociological model?

My analysis begins with the dancer. Why does the story single out the stilt dancer? The point is not by any means a strong one, but has some relevance to the story.

Stilt dancing is very popular among the Wamakonde. Stilt dancers are always on the move, especially during the dry season. They move from one place to another, performing the dance. Thus they have very little time to attend to family matters. The barren wife knows this very well and wants to take advantage of it.

Before discussing the barren wife in detail, I would like to clarify the connotation of the two names used for the senior and junior wife that is, N-jakasi and N-jenga respectively. I feel such an exercise will throw light on the sociological contents of the story.

N-jakasi essentially means a useless thing. It is a name that originates from a certain type of large banana that is said to be less sweet. Since the woman in the story was said to be barren, she is, therefore, referred to as a useless thing—a social reject. On the other hand, N-jenga means a useful thing. The name originates from the type of banana most favoured by people because it is exceptionally sweet. Since she was a child-producing woman, the junior wife was seen to be socially valuable.

In order to carry my analysis in the direction I want, I begin with an assumption that being barren is a miserable situation. Society pours scorn on barren women and looks down on them. This, in turn, makes them anti-social and dangerous to others, which is what the senior wife later proves to be. She befriends the junior wife and arranges to kill the babies. In character, the barren woman has a lot in common with a witch.

Having failed in her earlier attempt to kill the children, she decides to send them on a "never-come back" journey, in search of a "talking bag". I assume that being wicked, she knew of the existence of the talking bag. I also assume that she knew the dangers that the children were likely to face in the search. She knew, for instance, that on the way there existed a snake who was sure to kill them. The children were lucky to come across the snake at a time when the serpent had just had its food. In this way, they escaped the first danger. I also assume that the woman knew of the existence of a river, which, if they tried to cross, they would certainly drown in. Although it is not mentioned how they crossed the river, I assume that having been helped

by the boys to get to the river to quench its thirst, the serpent repaid them by giving them instructions on how they could cross the river safely. It also gave them further instructions on how to get to the leper and how to treat him. I also assume that the barren woman knew how cruel the leper was. This assumption is based on the fact that the snake advises the boys to lick the body of the leper, knowing that if they did not, the leper would destroy them.

The assumption is further substantiated by the fact that the Wamakonde regard lepers as short-tempered people who can spell misfortune or death for others. This is supported in the story, because we see the leper giving the boys seven calabashes which would save them from their pursuers. The point I am advancing here is: if the leper knew how to save them, he certainly knew how to destroy them. It all depended on how the boys handled the leper. Had they mistreated him, it would certainly have ended in disaster. I also assume that the barren woman knew of the existence of the men who would certainly not allow the boys to take the talking bag unpunished. The point underlying all these assumptions is to justify the assertion that the barren woman was a witch and that her undeclared intentions were to destroy the boys.

Turning to the old man in the story, I assume that the jigger episode is brought in to show irresponsibility on the part of the old man. Being the caretaker of the bag, a responsibility he performed for and on behalf of the tribe, he was expected to show more sense of duty than he exhibited. The old man showed that he cared more for his personal pleasure by asking the boys to remove jiggers from his toes. It was this irresponsibility that cost the old man the talking bag. The Wamakonde have a saying that it is not always those who possess valuable things who value them. This is shown in the story by the people who were said to be shouting at the top of their voices. I assume that the story mentions these people to show how irresponsible they were. Having such a valuable bag around, they were supposed to be more vigilant. Instead, they were shouting so much that it took time for them to respond to the old man's cry about the bag being stolen.

The exposure of the barren woman's hostile intentions towards the boys is another interesting sociological dimension to the story. Throughout the tale, the woman had been planning to kill the children on her own and presumably it was a great secret, which was

only revealed by the bag at the end of the story. This, I think, is one way of saying that foul play will eventually be exposed, however secret it may be.

The barren woman's end is well-deserved. In normal life, wicked people are punished in much the same way as the woman was. The punishment is aimed at showing society's disapproval of her behaviour and serves as a lesson to others.

CONCLUSIONS

Oral literature is an excellent source of information, because it reveals the anxieties and frustrations that people face in their lives. An interpretation of oral literature requires an intimate knowledge of the culture studied. The figures and relations are not always presented directly, but indirectly through metaphorical expressions and symbolic forms. Moreover, social relations entail relations to mystical forces which are specific for each culture. While every culture, whether European or African, has recourse to spiritual forces, each culture also has its own pattern of uniting mystical, social and material parts of its life worlds.

The writer of this chapter is aware that despite the concerted efforts that have been made to ascertain the existence of mystical forms, the phenomenon is still greeted with a sceptical smile. This is so because the more one is initiated into the subject, the more "ignorant" one becomes. Parrinder (1970:10) admits that five years of intensive study on the subject plus twenty years of general interest in it when he was in Africa had done very little to improve his knowledge of the subject. He goes on to recommend, "Programmes of social engineering that will emphasize education (enlightenment), improved medical services and religious beliefs" as possible panacea. I am certain he would have suffered heart failure had he known that his "enlightened" cadre were themselves in the front row in the practice of witchcraft. Camara (1982:115) speaks of his teacher:

I had already drunk some of this liquid: my teacher had made me drink some when I was sitting my scholarship examinations. It is a magic potion that possesses many qualities: it is particularly good for developing the brain.

Parrinder's "enlightenment" is defeated here. All the same, I pay special tribute to scholars of his ilk for accepting in principle the existence of witchcraft.

I would add that the practice is evil and undevelopmental. It prevents individuals from being innovative and making the best use of their talents for the common good. For this reason, although the chapter does not harbour a divided opinion on the existence of witchcraft, neither does it condescend to the idea of attributing the success of industrious individuals to witchcraft. Thomas (1970:643) makes a beautiful observation on the subject:

In a primitive society, witch-beliefs of this kind can act as a severe check to technical progress by discouraging efficiency and innovation. A man who gets ahead in a tribal society is likely to awaken the suspicion of his neighbours. Among the Bemba of Northern Rhodesia, for example, it is said that to find a beehive with honey in the woods is good luck, to find two beehives is very good luck, to find three is witchcraft. In such an environment, witch-beliefs help to sustain a rough egalitarianism. They are a conservative force, acting as a check upon undue individual effort.

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Makonde carvings: Cultural and symbolic aspects

Tore Saetersdal

ABSTRACT

The author works as an archaeologist at the University of Bergen, Norway, within the field of material culture studies in contemporary societies. The research presented in this paper was done in 1993 among Mozambican and Tanzanian Makonde groups in Tanzania. The fieldwork was done in two main areas, Dar es Salaam and the Mtwara region. The main focus of study was the production and use of wooden objects and the shift in the content of the symbolic meaning depending on the context in which they are used. Shifts occur even though the material expression, the object, remains the same. Ritual objects, such as masks, formerly used in very restricted ritual contexts, like boys' initiation rites, are sold as souvenirs to tourists and presented as "primitive art" or "African antiques". The obvious change in the content of the symbolic meaning is investigated in the light of changes in central cultural values within Makonde society.

The wooden carvings known as "Makonde art" are valued as souvenirs by tourists visiting Tanzania. The author shows that some of the carving styles have a very short history, whereas others, like the famous Shetani-carvings, are inspired by the rich oral tradition of the Makonde people. It is claimed that the carvings are not only the product of "traditional" people in south-eastern Tanzania expressing their cognitive ideas through exotic forms, but that the art is also adjusted to the European perception of "African Tribal Art". The art is seen as a blending of African and Western culture, African craft and European aesthetics.

INTRODUCTION

I will in this paper discuss the problem of how wooden objects are produced for different purposes and how the meaning content of objects changes depending on the context. Makonde carvings are the most renowned aspect of Makonde culture. The wooden carvings are examples of "primitive art" and as such the most valued souvenirs for any tourist visiting Tanzania. The carvings enhance the mental association of southeast Tanzania as a location of traditional people who express themselves through obscure symbolic forms.

The paper is based on fieldwork among the Makonde over a five month period in 1993. Fieldwork was undertaken among Mozambican Makonde carvers in Boko Village north of Dar es Salaam, as well as among Mozambican and Newalan Makondes in Mtwara region, Newala and Masasi district, during which time I was based in Chigungwe Village, Mahuta Ward, Newala district.

This paper shows that what is called Makonde carving includes different established types of carvings. Some have a very short history and are actually a product of fairly recent commercial interests. Moreover, many carvers originate from Mozambique or live permanently in Dar es Salaam. Thus the links of carving production to the living Makonde culture are very limited indeed. Makonde art is a contemporary result of the meeting between Africana and European culture, an icon with the elements of African craft and European aesthetics.

The main aim of the fieldwork was to investigate the reproduction of a material culture in an ethnographic context, subsequently to be used in the interpretation of archaeological material. By studying objects in their social context and obtaining an understanding of their socio-cultural implications in contemporary societies, one may gain important knowledge about peoples' perception and their handling of objects. This may in turn provide analogies to past societies, helping us to interpret the archaeological remains left to us.

My investigations among the Makonde carvers were stimulated by an interest in contextuality, a concept that is being given increasing attention among archaeologists (Hodder, 1982, 1986; Trigger, 1989). When objects are moved from a ritual to an economic sphere, it can be assumed that this contextual change also has implications for people's perception of symbolic meaning content.

Another matter of interest to a study of material culture is the way in which the Makonde immigrants have, very successfully, established themselves as carvers and renowned artists in contemporary Tanzanian society (Korn, 1974; Stout, 1966; Diaz, 1966; Swantz, 1986). The producing of wooden art has become a small-scale industry among the Makonde people. It is remarkable in that it is a "domestic" industry. No large industrial plant or development scheme is necessary in order to accommodate a group of carvers. The industry depends on traditional handmade tools, access to the wood of the African Blackwood, and the tourist industry. It has also led to a steady flow of young male carvers to Dar es Salaam, and other carving centres in the north, from southeastern Tanzania and beyond Ruvuma.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAKONDE CARVING IN TANZANIA

Makonde carving is one of the major success stories in contemporary Tanzanian society. The fame of the artists has reached far outside the Tanzanian borders. In fact, it is probably much better known to foreign visitors than to the average Tanzanian. The art is actively promoted as part of the tourist industry by the Tanzanian Tourist Authorities. It is presented as "Traditional Makonde Carvings" done by the Makonde people originating from the Makonde Plateau and the Masasi district in southern Tanzania. My study shows that the true picture may be somewhat different.

All the carvers I encountered during fieldwork were either recent immigrants from Mozambique or born of immigrant parents. This was confirmed by that part of my fieldwork which was conducted among the Newalan Makondes on the Makonde Plateau. They all regarded the carved Mozambican figurines and masks with suspicion and generally had a very condescending attitude towards the Mozambican immigrants living in their midst. Young boys from Chigungwe (Newalan Makondes) who moved to Dar es Salaam, traditionally worked in Kongo Street in Kariakoo as street vendors, selling clothes (Liebenow, 1971).

The Mozambicans have filtered in across the southern border during recent decades, fleeing wars and famines, looking for work and sanctuary in Tanzania. The traditional employers have been the sisal estates. Boko was such an estate. As the world's demand for sisal gradually decreased, the Makondes were laid off, many of them

choosing to remain in Boko (Swantz, personal comment). Around Dar es Salaam they also settled in the Kunduchi ward and in the Msasani and Kibaha regions.

Most of them pursued traditional economic activities, like developing the land, while some found other kinds of labour, melting into the Swahili society. The rural suburban areas around the city were populated with people from a vast number of ethnic groups. Originally, the coastal area between Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo was a Zaramo area. On the shore some scattered fishing communities with a Swahili population were found (Swantz, 1986).

In a sense, they settled on the borderline between two different cultures: the European urban culture and the African culture of the suburban areas. The curio trade clearly operates on European capitalistic principles. The villages where most of the carvers live, are places where African culture predominates. Despite its location close to Dar es Salaam, one hardly ever sees any whites in Boko, except passing in Land Rovers belonging to aid workers or foreign companies in Dar es Salaam.

The Makondes had experienced interaction with Europeans before and knew that Europeans wanted to buy their carvings. The carvings produced for the Portuguese missionaries in Cabo Delgado rapidly became popular with the white population in Mozambique. The ones shipped to Europe were popular and provided the missions with longed for extra income.

The white population in Dar es Salaam has been growing steadily after independence and provided a market for the first carving groups that were formed. With tourism, the market increased and there was ever more employment to be found in the carving industry. The authorities also used the art politically. The figures depicting columns of humans, often performing daily chores, were said to symbolize African Socialism, as practised by President Nyerere. Carvers were sent around the world at government expense to show off the Socialist Art of Tanzania.

The economic niche of carving can be seen as the result of entrepreneurship, of both the first missionaries, who saw the potential of the carvings, and the individual carvers, who saw the possibility of creating a small-scale industry in their own back yards.

The transfer of ritual Makonde objects to the curio sphere may at first sight seem to be just another smart decision by "economic man".

I will, in the following, attempt to show that this cannot be seen as simply an economic consideration. To be able to fully grasp the significance, in Makonde culture, of some of these objects we have to look into several aspects of their symbolic meaning content. Knowledge of the objects' background in "traditional" Makonde society, may help to reveal some of the mechanisms at work when new objects, with a basis in Makonde ritual life, are presented on the curio market.

The Makonde carver in contemporary Tanzanian society

In Boko area, Dar es Salaam, carving groups are organized according to family groups. The composition of such a group is not too rigid. A member is free to join another group, or even to work somewhere else for a time. Normally such absences do not last very long. One may also obtain help from members of other groups if the need should arise at times of stress. All the work is performed in the vicinity of the home. The carvers of a specific family group often live next door to each other and work just outside the houses.

Each group is led by its oldest member, as are negotiations with dealers and middlemen. The sharing of products and money is not rigorously enforced. Many members also sell carvings privately and keep the money themselves. It is more like a work-fellowship, that provides a place to work in cooperation with others. One can work on individual orders, or on a collective order of such scale that it requires the help of all hands, like the order for 300 Mama-Tanzania heads which my hosts in Boko received when I was there. This necessitated the hiring of extra hands. These men are not skilled labour and the groups pay them for the hours which they work.

Women do not carve, although some groups use women to do the polishing and cleaning of the finished products. They are only used to work on typical souvenir pieces, like the Masai figures.

Some of the carvers work for institutions like the *Nyumba ya Sanaa* in Dar es Salaam or the Karibu Art Gallery in Kunduchi on the Dar es Salaam-Bagamoyo Road. Others are still independent carvers, working in one of the many carving shops in the "Makonde market" in Mwenge, or among the numerous carving communities throughout Tanzania.

Only a few of the carvers are what one might call artists, in the Western definition of the word, who produce new and original carvings. Most of the people among whom I lived in Boko, are better regarded as craftsmen producing handmade objects. Normally these will be objects ordered by dealers. Only in a few instances did I witness direct sale to visiting foreigners in Boko. In most cases, these were people related to foreign aid projects or missionaries who knew about the Boko carvers. Most of the selling was done directly to dealers owning shops in Dar es Salaam. A few so called "middle-men" came to the village during my stay to buy objects that were subsequently taken to other areas or even to other countries. Many of these objects were copies of masks and ritual objects, which were taken abroad and presented as African Antiques rather than as handicrafts.

This chapter is primarily concerned with the trade in such "African Antiques", with an emphasis on objects that were specially produced for ritual purposes. Many items are multi-purpose objects, like pots, spears, knives etc., that are used during rites as well as in everyday activities. These items are not considered to be as important as the ones produced solely for use in ritual activities, which are often destroyed afterwards. The wooden masks of the Makonde are such objects. During the initiation rites of young boys, they use masks to symbolize their maternal ancestors; special chairs on which the circumciser and his assistant sit when performing the circumcision, as well as ritual chairs on which the young boys sit when receiving instruction. The rites are performed in a secret place in the bush where the young initiates remain in seclusion for about three months. During this time, they are circumcised and given instruction on various aspects of adult life, practical matters as well as ideological matters (Harries, 1944; Liebenow, 1971).

There is, in my opinion, no doubt that the more widespread carving styles, like the *Ujamaa* and *Shetani* figures have little root in traditional Makonde material culture, even though the *Shetani* figure often depicts scenes from Makonde oral tradition. All these figures are a result of recent European cultural influence. The figures are being produced and aesthetically accommodated to please the European eye. This in no way affects the outstanding craftsmanship I witnessed among my hosts. The artistic beauty of many of the objects is indisputable.

During recent years, tourists have become increasingly interested in traditional objects. The production of the *Mapico Mask* and the chest mask for sale, has been a huge economic success. Tourists receive something more than just a souvenir. They receive an object which is guaranteed to be handmade, undoubtedly rooted in traditional Makonde society. Some tourists buy the items because of what they tell them about the country they are visiting and the people who live there. Others buy them for what they believe the objects will tell people back home about themselves, when displayed in their living room. I think that for most of us, it is a mixture of both these motives. These items contain the strange, secret, ritualistic particulars which tourists look for and have rapidly become a great success (Graburn, 1976; Layton, 1981; Steiner, 1994).

The trade in ritual objects

"Primitive art is highly socialized" (Firth, 1952:71; Layton, 1981:41). The art objects of a small-scale society are very often objects of everyday use. They have been decorated with symbols in which are embedded a cultural meaning. The object is communicative and at the same time decorative. In Western societies, we think of real art as something that is too expensive for the average citizen to own. Firth's contrast between the artists of the Western world and those of small-scale societies may be too dichotomous, allowing for too few variables in either society, but the contrast is useful in illustrating the present problem.

The carvings produced by the Makonde carvers are sold on the curio market, either in souvenir shops, or in similar shops that present their goods as African Art or African Antiques. The item that is brought home to America or Europe must convey a notion of otherness, thus presenting the owner with an image of a person who has travelled and encountered strange cultures (Graburn, 1976; Layton, 1981). At the same time, it must satisfy Western perceptions of aesthetics. In later years, there has also been an increased interest in genuineness; the object should satisfy a wish in the buyer for a genuine item. By genuine is often understood something that has been in everyday use. *Genuine* is often translated as *traditional*, which again translates as *old*. Modern tourists are looking for the genuine, tradi-

tional, old object, preferably something that has been used in some African ritual, which provokes the Western imagination.

The transfer of traditional Makonde material culture to the curio sphere is an interesting and successful attempt at introducing "traditional" tribal objects into a realm dominated by Western thought and perceptions of aesthetics. It may not satisfy the Western tastes of "art", as do the *Shetani* and *Ujamaa* figures, but it certainly satisfies Western customers in their search for the "Genuine" and the "Traditional".

In Boko, and elsewhere, masks that are to be used in ritual activities are produced in secrecy outside the village, away from the prying eyes of women and uninitiated boys. According to tradition, women who caught a glimpse of such a mask, even if it was by accident, would immediately be put to death.

A few years ago, the masks began to be sold as curios, apparently completely devoid of any symbolic meaning content that would put restrictions on their use. During my stay in Boko, such masks would be openly made by the carvers in full view of everyone. With great secrecy, the same carvers would produce a very similar looking mask for use in their own rituals. It would be produced in the bush outside the village and kept out of sight of the women and children.

The intriguing fact to an archaeologist is that these two objects are so similar in appearance. There might be small individual differences due to the carver, but in principal they are the same. However, when I confronted the carvers of Boko with this observation, they all denied the obvious. They did not think of the mask which was to be sold as a curio article as resembling the one that was to be used during the initiation rites in the bush. At long last they grudgingly agreed that the two masks *looked* alike, but insisted that they were still very different!

In Mtwara, and elsewhere in the southern region, the selling of ritual objects does not occur. The carvers in the south do not produce masks or chest-masks for sale. The carving groups are well organized and produce excellent work. However, their products are all typical curio carvings. The total lack of tourists in the area makes it necessary to rely on sales to the larger cities to the north, Dar es Salaam and Arusha. I encountered "Noel style" carvings from the Mtwara region both in Arusha and Nairobi.

In fact, I was greatly surprised when I saw the difference in the carving inventory. The Mtwara inventory bears evidence of the influ-

ence from the Catholic Church. Most of the new religious carvings sold in Tanzania stemmed from carving groups in the southern region, many of whom work for one of the catholic mission stations. *Ujamaa* and *Shetani* style figures were produced, as well as naturalistic animal figures, but not to a large degree. European influence was obvious in Masasi, where I was shown beautifully carved figures depicting the north European red deer!

At the same time, it is noteworthy that ritual objects, like *Mapico* Masks and chest masks, were not produced for sale to the public. Social control was too strong to enable carvers to produce these items for sale. The people with whom I talked reacted with shock when I told them how these masks were produced for sale in Dar es Salaam. In the villages, as in Chigungwe, normally one man did all the carving in his spare time. Nobody carved for a living. People would come to the recognized carver and order their masks when needed. The carver would venture out into the bush to find a suitable piece of wood and carve the masks in total secrecy.

When I first made contact with the carver in Chigungwe, he was visibly embarrassed because I tried to raise such subjects in public, sitting in front of his home. The usual crowd soon gathered to listen to our conversation. Luckily, I was later able to confer with him more privately on several occasions. He was deeply concerned about the level of knowledge I had achieved in Dar es Salaam on the initiation rites and the use of masks and chairs. He confirmed that it would be unthinkable that a woman should see the masks prior to the "coming home" ceremony of the boys. He was also shocked when he learned about the production and selling of masks in Dar es Salaam.

Resources

The raw material used for making the objects is African Blackwood (*Dalbergia Melanoxylon*), or *Mpingo* in Swahili, which is a rather small (7–20 m high) tree. It is mainly found in Tanzania and Mozambique. It is a scarce resource, which is disappearing at an alarming rate. Some protected locations are still to be found in the centre of Tanzania (Bagamoyo and Morogoro) but few remain. These are diminishing by the day, as the trees are used for the production of charcoal as well as carvings. The situation is a little better in the south, but according to a

recent report by Finnish botanists, the woods are disappearing rapidly (Puhakka, 1991).

The *Mpingo's* heartwood is beautifully black and very hard, excellent for carving and making tools. It is also exported for the manufacturing of wind-instruments (clarinets, oboes etc.). The main threat to this resource is, however, the extensive use of the tree for charcoal production, a major threat to all woodlands in sub-Saharan Africa. The hard wood provides very durable charcoal. The importance of the *Mpingo* resources has been recognized by the Tanzanian authorities. The tree is now protected by law and has been declared the national tree (Puhakka, 1991).

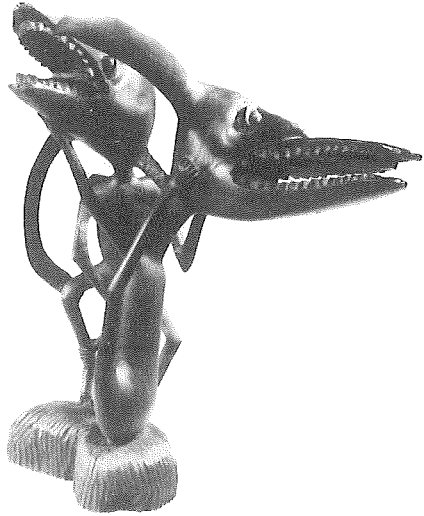
It seems to me that the continuation of, and increase in carving as a small-scale industry depends, at least to some degree, upon plans for protection and careful management of the remaining African Blackwood. It might be a good idea to involve the Makonde carvers in this work.

THE CARVING STYLES

Shetani

It is claimed that *Shetani* figures, more than any other carvings, are deeply rooted in traditional Makonde carving. They are wooden carvings depicting one, or sometimes several, devil-like figures. They are called "*Shetani*", meaning "little devil" in Swahili. Probably the word derives from the Arabic "*Shetan*" which means devil. None of my informants confirmed that this style of carving had roots in Makonde "traditional" society. On the contrary, several of them said the first *Shetani* was carved and presented in Dar es Salaam in the mid-1950s. Some also gave the name of the carver and the exact time and place for the production of the first *Shetani*. However, there is no doubt that several of the figures depict scenes from old Makonde folktales. These tales and myths have deep roots in Makonde culture and its very rich oral tradition.

Shetani style figures are normally made from African Blackwood. When that resource is scarce, they are carved in softwood which is later coloured black. Very often the natural shape and twistings of the wood are used in the design. The *Shetani* style is easily recognized by its devil-like features, beautiful in its grotesqueness. Some of the carv



Typical Shetani carving,
depicting spirit-like figures.
Artist: Unknown.
Photo: Anne-Marie Olsen,
Ethnographic Collection,
University of Bergen.

ings are small figurines, whereas others are huge “monuments”, several metres in height. *Shetanis* are carved in all the carving communities.

Some carvers are recognized as especially skilled *Shetani*-carvers and only produce this style of carving. They are known to be able to see the devilish figure in their mind and to produce replicas of their visions in wood. According to my informants: “Not everyone can see the *Shetani*”. Hence the carvers of this style have developed into *Shetani* experts and are considered to be the ultimate Makonde artists. The economic aspect is, no doubt, of importance as no other piece of carving is as expensive as a good *Shetani*.

Not everyone has the skill required to carve a good *Shetani*. Skilful *Shetani* carvers are head-hunted by the art centres of Dar es Salaam and Arusha and rapidly become known among the carvers. In Dar es Salaam, many of the good carvers of this style are found in Mwenge. In Masasi, excellent *Shetanis* are produced and sold to dealers from Dar es Salaam.

Ujamaa

Ujamaa is a tall carved figure, depicting columns of people standing on top of each other, often doing daily chores. Some of the carvings may be quite small, 20–30 cms in height, suitable to stand on a table, while others are several metres high with intricate scenes from Makonde folktales or daily village life.

The name means "family" in Swahili and in political language it means "unity". The origin of the style may be traced back to one source, a carver from Boko called Mzee Robert Yakobo. The art was quickly adopted by the Tanzanian policy makers of President Nyerere's *Ujamaa* (unity) politics in the 1960s–70s. As such it is a typical example of political usage of art. However, the figures came first, then the political usage of them and the name *Ujamaa* (Swantz, personal comment). The style was eagerly supported by the Tanzanian government and the carvers who "invented" the style almost became national heroes. They were sent around the world to art exhibitions etc. to present traditional Tanzanian art. Not *Makonde* or *Zaramo* or *Yao*, but *Tanzanian* art. Even though the figures are not indigenous to the Makonde people, the subject matter of the figures is undoubtedly African.

Again this is an example of African art being adjusted to please the European eye. African village scenes are presented within a framework of accepted European aesthetics and a source of inspiration may be the more monumental political art of eastern Europe.

Mawingu

Mawingu is Swahili for "clouds". The style is identifiable in that it depicts faceless people. It comes in two forms, either with people in columns, similar to the family tree, or with single persons, carved in African blackwood. The idea is that often, when looking at the sky and passing clouds, a cloud may take the shape of a person, but no face will be discernible.

It is rather difficult to ascertain the age of this style. Some sources claim it goes back 20–25 years in Dar es Salaam, although most of the carvers themselves claimed it to be no more than 10–15 years. It may be an attempt to go abstract, and the influence from Western art is in my opinion quite clear. Also there is the aspect of the work put into each carving. For a production line mode of producing curio articles, it is clearly easier to depict faceless people than figures with distinct facial expressions. It is being carved and sold all over eastern Africa. Seemingly it has become very popular as a curio article. Dealers tend to order the figures by the hundreds from the carvers. They are produced on a production line basis, each person having his particular responsibility in the process.

Familia

This style is recognizable in that it depicts people, often a carving of one person, doing daily chores known from village daily life. As such, it differs from the *Ujamaa* style in that the persons are carved alone and not in columns, one on top of the other. The carvings also depict people and features that have nothing to do with Makonde, such as Masai warriors. They may also include carvings of animals, single or several together. *Familia* style figures are mostly made of African blackwood, though I have seen carvers working in white softwood, later coloured black with colour made of herbs mixed with water.

The origins of this style may at first sight seem easy to detect, as the Makonde carvers are excellent copyists, and some of them are able to copy any carving from a photo. The same type of carving may be seen all over the world, especially in South East Asia where they are carved in African blackwood as souvenirs.



Familia-style. Carving depicting Makonde woman and child. Note the lip-plug which was worn by Makonde women.
Artist: Unknown.
Photo: Anne-Marie Olsen, Ethnographic Collection, University of Bergen.

There are, however, several indications that the Makonde traditionally carved some kind of "dolls" in their Mozambican villages. These may have been female figurines depicting female ancestors. Reports on this custom are found in several sources and probably date back several decades (Diaz, 1964; Korn, 1974; Livingstone, 1874; Shepperson, 1965; Stout, 1966; Weule, 1909). The carving of "doll-like" figures is not only confined to the Makonde. Several other Bantu tribes have similar figures, many of which the Makonde are now copying and presenting as Makonde carvings.

Historia

This is not a real carving style as such, but a name for a common trait of many carvings; the bark being left on one side of the carving. The carving may be of any style, even *Ujamaa*. If pieces of the bark are left on one side of the figure, it will be called *Ujamaa Historia*.

Noel

Probably the oldest "art" style produced by the Makondes. The style involves figures with a clearly religious content mostly inspired by the bible and the Roman Catholic Church. A normal Noel figure captures a scene from the Christmas story, as indeed the word "Noel" means Christmas in French. I have not been able to find an explanation for why the French word has been used to name the style, as the Portuguese word for Christmas is "Natal". However it might be connected to the nationality of the monks serving on the mission stations or the church order. The style was created through inspiration from the missionaries in Mozambique. They rapidly saw the commercial possibilities of the Makonde carvers in the local villages that surrounded them. The figures were sold both to the European communities in Mozambique and in Europe through different church societies.

The age of this tradition is easier to ascertain than that of many of the other styles, as the Portuguese opened a military road onto the Ndonge Plateau in Mueda district in Northern Mozambique in 1917. The first missionary arrived as late as 1922 (Diaz, 1964; Stout, 1966). There was contact with missionaries long before that. The Makondes also inhabit parts of the region of Cabo Delgado in Mozambique. The Catholic Church established mission stations along the Mozambican

coast as early as the 17th century. The settlement on the island of Mozambique just south of Cabo Delgado was established a few years after the settlement at Sofala, mainly because of its excellent harbour and abundant freshwater supply. The Jesuits were active in establishing the settlement and using it as a base camp for expeditions to the interior.

General souvenir objects

I use this group as a collective term for candle holders, mini-masks, keyholders, ashtrays, panels of figures depicting daily scenes, carved ear ornaments, carved arm rings, etc., etc. Most of them are carved in African blackwood. My opinion is that these items are not so strongly identified as Makonde, as they are more an expression of "Africanism".



Familia-style. Typical "tourist carving" of a Massai warrior.
Artist: Unknown.
Photo: Anne-Marie Olsen,
Ethnographic Collection,
University of Bergen.

Dealers do not try to present the objects to tourists as Makonde Art. They rather emphasize the "Africanism" of the object. The buyers I observed did not inquire about the dealer's ethnic relations, which they almost always did when buying a *Shetani* or a mask.

The above is a short presentation of items made purely as curio articles. They are all produced with a Western audience in mind, following Western aesthetic principles.

African antiques

In the following, I will present articles which are perceived as being under another heading: *African Antiques*. These are *curio* articles in the true sense of the word: "strange or unfamiliar object" (Oxford Dictionary). They are presented on the same market as the souvenir objects, by the same dealers. However, there is the difference that most of these items do have a usage in "traditional" Makonde society. They are not simply ideas carved in wood as the *Shetani* figures, but objects embedded with cultural knowledge and symbolic meaning content deeply rooted in Makonde culture.

There are several objects presented as "Antiques" on the East African curio market. An increasing part of this production are copies of West African masks offered for sale on the domestic and international curio markets or exported for sale. Below I will concentrate on ritual masks which have become increasingly popular with Western customers.

Chest Masks

The chest mask is typical of the objects presented as "antique" and "traditional" to visitors from abroad. The mask is perceived as "strange" and can easily be documented in traditional use, hence it satisfies the tourists' taste for a "genuine" item.

This type of mask is made of soft-wood, and blackened by herbs moistened in water. The mask is used during the boys' circumcision rite for instruction purposes. The mask is worn in front of the dancer's body and resembles the body of a pregnant girl, with breasts and a large stomach. Tattoos are displayed on the chest and abdomen. These body tattoos are similar to the ones on the face. They convey meaning content on many levels, including protective patterns to safeguard the bearer from evil spirits, as well as magical patterns to secure fertility

and safe births. At the coming-out ceremony, the mask is often worn by the *Mapico* dancer to make the dancer look funny and ridiculous.

It is not surrounded by all the taboos of the *Mapico Mask*, but is considered to be a ritual object by the people and visitors from Mozambique were shocked to see them sold to outsiders in Dar es Salaam.

The Mapico Mask

Maybe the most famous Makonde carving of all, is the striking *Mapico Mask*. It is a helmet mask, to be worn over the head. The wearer may see through openings for the eyes and there are also openings for the mouth. The mask depicts a carved face with the facial tattoos of the Mozambican Makondes. Many masks have a lip plug, which is today only worn by women. It symbolizes the matrilineal ancestor. The traditional use of the mask is strictly restricted to the boys' initiation rite. The rite marks the young boy's passage from being a child to becoming an adult and is extremely important in Makonde culture. It takes place in the bush, where the boys remain in seclusion for at least three months. During that time, they are circumcised, given facial tattoos and instruction on the secrets and responsibilities of being an adult Makonde (Diaz, 1964; Harries, 1944).

The *Mapico Mask* is produced from a special piece of wood cut with the sole purpose of carving the mask. An offering to the tree spirit is made, and ash from a fire made of the wood shavings of the trunk is smeared onto the carver's face before he proceeds to a secret spot in the bush to do the carving. It is hidden in a secret place only known to the carver and the father of the rites.

The presentation of the mask to the young initiates symbolizes their passing from childhood to adult status in life. It symbolizes the secrets of adulthood, the knowledge of the ancestors, the new status that is achieved through hardship and pain. The rite takes place after all the boys' circumcision scars are healed and hence they are on the way to becoming men, but have yet to complete the transformation.

The scene for the rite is very dramatic. It is dark, after midnight, and the drumming of many drums is heard from the open area in front of the circumcision hut. The flickering lights from two great fires make shadows dance across the surrounding bushes, emphasising the dramatic frame for the event. The drummers sit in the shadows beside the hut, a little out of the way, beating their drums without stopping.

In two lines, a couple of metres apart, the elders have taken their places, seated on the ground, facing each other. They all hold sticks. At one end, a person is sitting cross-legged with the *Mapico Mask* over his head, and a special garment tucked around him. He also holds a stick. The neophytes are all gathered together at the other end of the "corridor" made by the seated elders. The leader of the initiates, the Sungula (the Hare), is the first to try to get to the mask. The elders hit him with their sticks, really hard. The person with the mask also hits him as he approaches, and blood runs from his wounds. The point of this exercise is to reach the person with the mask, touch the mask and utter some words which my informants would not translate. Thereafter the boy sits down behind the masked person. Some of the boys are badly beaten, and have to make several attempts before they finally make it to the mask. I was told by informants of boys being severely beaten and injured for life during this rite. One of my informants in Boko had an ugly looking scar on his thigh that stemmed from the beating.

After this night, the masks are placed on top of the initiation hut until the time comes to march in procession back to the village, at which stage the masks are worn by the persons who dance the *Mapico* dance upon entering the village and throughout the subsequent feast. Usually these are some of the elders. The dancer wears the traditional *Mapico* costume, with metal bells around his ankles and wrists. A string of feathers is worn at the top of his head, fastened to the top of the mask. The dancer is a funny figure, meant to make people laugh, as is the mask, and its facial expression is cause of much debate. This may be a reason why the face does not resemble an African. The Makondes find the Europeans quite funny and strange creatures. It would be a logical caricature to make!

The same mask that represented such a dramatic and painful rite in the bush, a rite that gave the neophytes reason to fear and respect the mask, is now being laughed at. Treated with no respect at all and ridiculed by everyone, also the young men fresh out of the bush, the dancer is pushed from person to person as he performs his funny dance in the village square (Diaz, 1964; Harries, 1944).

The *Mapico Mask* intended to be sold as a curio article is an exact replica of the ones used in the rite described above, even though the carvers never agreed that it was the same object. They said, "Yes, it looks the same, but it isn't!" We have to turn to the production

sequence to spot the difference. Parts of the production context are omitted when the mask is produced for sale on the curio market. The offering of sawdust on the fire, the smearing of ash on the face, the secrecy during production; all these stages are omitted. They are considered such an important part of the *Mapico Mask*, that a mask made without these processes is considered to be another object altogether.

At the same time there are sound reasons, both cultural and economic, for transferring the mask from a ritual sphere of activities to a curio sphere.

Regional differences

When comparing the inventory of carvings in the Dar es Salaam area and the southern area, the difference is notable. This is not surprising, as the mechanisms that govern the carvers and the way new items are introduced differ in many ways.

In Dar es Salaam there are far more carvers than in any other place in Tanzania. The market is also larger, with a considerable degree of direct contact between foreign customers and the carvers, like at the Carvers' Market at Mwenge. This direct participation in a market which is run completely according to Western capitalist economic traditions, enables the carver to obtain first-hand knowledge of popular traits and competition. Many carvers participate in two markets, both the souvenir, or art, market and the market in "African Antiques". Both markets were dominated by objects made by Makonde carvers. Carvings, like *Shetani* and *Ujamaa*, together with the striking masks, are what have made the Makonde famous. Of Tanzania's 140 ethnic groups, maybe only the Masai have a name that is as widely known as the Makonde.

In the southern region, the carvers work with far more restrictions, both socially and economically. They participate in the making of carved souvenir and art articles only. The market in "African Antiques" does not exist. Most of the carvers are employed by the Church. Some carving groups have been formed in Mtwara and Masasi, but they have a considerable problem with access to the market. Most carvings are sold to middlemen from Dar es Salaam. They have no direct link to either the domestic or the international market. Very few potential customers come through the area, hence direct contact with customers is almost non-existent.

Social control in the southern region is far too tight to allow for the public display and production of *Mapico Masks* or any other type of ritual object. The cultural situation is fairly stable and there is no reason to include such items in the inventory. They are still embedded with symbolic meaning content shared by everyone. The role of the Makonde immigrants has been much the same over the years and no dramatic changes have occurred. Hence there is simply no need to renegotiate one's ethnic boundaries by introducing old symbols into new contexts.

Times are changing fast, however, also in the southern regions of Tanzania. The sale of traditional paraphernalia, like *Mapico* dancing habits, was already taking place in 1993. It was a public secret that such things could be bought for the right sum of money. In many villages ritual items were stolen; no doubt they were later sold in Dar es Salaam. Elders tried to protect the groups' ritual artefacts with strong protective medicine, but to an increasing degree, to no avail. A copy is good, but the real thing is even better!

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The sale of the *Mapico Mask* as a curio article may, at first sight, seem to be a completely economic transaction. However, I believe that by introducing the *Mapico Mask* into a market context, several objectives are met. It must be seen as an expression of cultural change, and economic achievement is only one aspect of this change. It is a successful strategy in a world where economic success is important and appreciated.

The content of culture is not a static concept. "Culture" is here defined as "The system of knowledge more or less shared by members of a society" (Keesing, 1981). Ethnicity may be one aspect of such knowledge, language may be another. Culture may seem to operate on different scales. In eastern Africa we talk about *African* culture, *Bantu* culture or *Makonde* culture. Within these broad encompassing categories, one may find more or less shared general value orientations and scales, on the basis of which one can arrive at ascriptions of people (Barth, 1969; Hylland-Eriksen, 1993). An example would be the Bantu-speaking people in a broad sense. Within the Bantu-speaking people, the people of the Ruvuma Basin may constitute such a cultural area (Haaland, 1977). This is supported by the linguistic data

on the southern part of Tanzania, which suggests a greater degree of similarity between the three sub-groups of Bantu languages in the area than in the groups to the north of Rufiji (Nurse, 1982).

One may narrow the shared cultural knowledge down to the scale of Makonde cultural knowledge, which is the knowledge that is considered to be crucial to Makonde self-esteem and is what separates the Makonde from other surrounding tribes. This knowledge is *communicated through the initiation rites* (Turner, 1967; Harries, 1944). Some of the knowledge communicated is on a lower scale, the *clan* scale. The scale may be narrowed even more, to the *family compound* and knowledge of one's personal ancestry. Knowledge on the different scales is valid, and active, though in different *social fields*. It is not certain that the full cultural knowledge shared by members of a specific clan is understood by all Makondes.

This cultural knowledge may be reflected in material culture as well, in signs and symbols communicating the different levels of cultural knowledge present in material cultural expressions. A facial tattoo pattern may communicate all the above levels, and consist of even more intricate symbolic messages. It depends on the cultural knowledge of the recipient. The tattoo pattern may tell the full ethnic story of a person. It tells of which tribe the person is a member, which clan and which family compound he stems from. Part of the pattern may be protective symbols, to safeguard the bearer from certain diseases and bad spirits, as well as from sorcery.

When the social environment changes, so do the strategies of ethnic boundary maintenance. Ethnic boundaries that were maintained by strategies understood by everyone are no longer valid. The groups' ethnicity must be re-negotiated in a changing social environment. Symbols that are familiar in a known social environment are no longer recognized as signifying anything specific. The recipients do not possess the knowledge necessary to decode the communicative aspects of the signs and symbols.

The *Mapico Mask* is recognized by all members of the tribe. At the same time it is striking enough to rapidly be recognized by others as definitely Makonde material culture. Even tourists with no knowledge of Makonde or East African tribes will rapidly learn to recognize it for what it is, a Makonde mask. At the same time it serves an economic purpose.

The mask is still used in the traditional way. By omitting important production-contextual aspects, a replica of the mask is considered to be another object altogether. The object must be considered as a multivocal symbol which is put to use in different spheres. The social production context is crucial to the users' perception of the symbolic meaning content of the object.

The reason for the lack of ritual objects in the Southern region lies in the same explanation. The social environment is familiar to the Mozambican Makondes, they have been part of it for decades. Cultural change is taking place, but may be met with other strategies than in the suburban areas of Dar es Salaam. They are close enough to Mozambique to have a frequent contact with the Makonde core society. They do not have to re-negotiate their ethnicity. All the socially relevant and recognized social symbols are still recognized for what they are.

A final interesting point may be the gender aspect of the carving industry. The *Mapico Mask* is, as we have seen in the above, a core symbol of Makonde male culture. Carving is an exclusively male activity, like pottery is an exclusively female activity. Likewise, traditionally men are the political leaders of the *virambos*, which are loose-knit political units overlapping the *litawas* (kin groupings or clans) (Liebenow, 1971:41; Wembah-Rashid, 1975). Carving is completely male controlled, as is economic and political power in the modern European context. Among the Tanzanian Makondes from the Newala district there is the long-standing tradition of the *Wamachinga*, the work migration of young men to Dar es Salaam. In the city, they sell clothes on the streets, especially along the streets in the vicinity of the large market of Kariakoo. Even though they leave the southern part of the country and their families, they do not enter a hostile environment without ties with their own culture. Most of them have contacts before they start on their journey. Through ties with others that have already been in Dar es Salaam, they know people to contact when they reach the city. Many of these young men go back to their villages in the south after working as a street vendor in Dar es Salaam for a while. They come back with money to spend and contribute to the local economy. These pioneers that "made it" in the *Wamachinga* work migration are looked upon as really successful persons and encourage others to go as well. Due to the difficulty in finding jobs in the south, many young men are tempted to leave and thus the Makonde

Wamachinga continue to work the streets of Dar es Salaam. These street vendors are all young men, who have the social liberty to go, whereas the young women do not.

Young men among the Mozambican Makondes travel north as well. Even though they may not be as numerous and famous as the *Wamachinga*. The *Wamachinga* are all Tanzanian Makondes. Still, the steady flow of young male carvers to the urban areas of the north resembles in many ways the trek of the *Wamachinga*. Among the carvers of Mtwara there were constantly rumours circulating about the income one could earn up north, compared to the meagre income one earned in Mtwara. Young men from the two southern groups both travel north with the hope of finding good work and money. The Tanzanian Makonde faces the political threat against the *Wamachinga* represented by political city authorities in Dar es Salaam, as well as shop-owners in Kariakoo who want them removed from the streets, whereas the Mozambican carver faces the threat of a decrease in the flow of foreign tourists, without whom he will rapidly be out of business.

However, for the time being, the main impression about the Makonde carver is one of economic and artistic success, a rare success story from a part of Africa and Tanzania, where the focus again and again is put on poverty, failure and despair. The carver is not part of a large development scheme. He draws solely on resources known to himself and in doing so he shows us some of the richness of the southern culture. Poverty is in the eye of the beholder. Makonde

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The role of knowledge(s) in the making of Mtwara and Lindi

Juhani Koponen

ABSTRACT

This paper is an overview of the systems of production and the uses of information and knowledge in rural development in Mtwara and Lindi and is an introduction to the bibliography that follows. It recognises the existence of a rich local knowledge, but concentrates on the information and knowledge of and through three sets of outsiders: administrators, donors and researchers. Although rural Mtwara and Lindi are commonly regarded by outsiders as little-known peripheries, the paper argues that the functioning data-production systems have generated more information and data than can be turned into and used as knowledge by any single social actor, even if these data vary greatly in quality. A bibliography cannot represent a fair view of all existing knowledge on rural development in Mtwara and Lindi but reflects only what outsiders have recorded of it—a piece of relevant information in itself.

INTRODUCTION

Southern Tanzania, especially its rural parts, may be a peripheral place of which little is known in the outside world. However, this does not mean that there is no knowledge in and of these rural parts, or that that knowledge cannot and will not play as dynamic and diverse a role in social processes there as elsewhere. This can be seen even from a cursory look at some of the major facets of production and the use of knowledge in rural development efforts in Mtwara and Lindi. This, I hope, will be demonstrated by this paper and in the bibliography that follows.¹

1. Acknowledging the ambiguity of the notion of southern Tanzania, this paper is specifically about Mtwara and Lindi regions because my own experience of southern

The paper takes its cue from that strand of recent social thinking which stresses the socially constructed and active role of knowledge. In this view, knowledge is not something waiting passively out there, a heap of "facts" to be discovered, collected and memorized, nor is it understood as something existing separately and distinct from other forces active in society. Rather, knowledge is seen as being actively formed and constructed in ongoing social interaction, negotiation and struggle, and united by close bonds to different social forces, interests and power relations.¹

Oversimplifying the argument, one can say that knowledge is something that individual or collective social actors form and deploy as a means to guide their actions, to confront other actors, and to make sense of, influence and control their natural and social environments. If this is so, it follows that there cannot be any universal criteria for "good" or "right" knowledge; the same piece of knowledge that is good enough for someone with a certain purpose may be entirely inadequate for someone else for another purpose.

But how knowledge is constructed and internally structured remains an elusive issue. Recently, the common idea of an overall stock or corpus of knowledge from which our narrower specific knowledges draw has been challenged by participants in the indigenous knowledge debate such as Scoones and Thompson (1993). They argue that no knowledge should be conceived as a systematized, unified stock which can be tapped at will. Instead, we have only fragmentary, diffuse, multi-layered knowledges that are unevenly generated, held and controlled by different people in society. Hence, all knowledges are relational and situational, embedded in conditions of their production and guided by the purposes of their producers: "Knowledge is always in the making" (Thompson, 1996:108).

Tanzania comes from some short-term consultancy work that I have undertaken in these two regions. This work was undertaken in connection with the FINNIDA-supported Rural Integrated Project Support (RIPS) programme. While I have drawn on my previous work in writing this paper, neither FINNIDA nor RIPS should in any way be held responsible for the views expressed here.

1. There is no one obvious source for such a view. Rather this view draws on and mixes ideas with long and varied philosophical underpinnings. These include the ideas of figures as diverse as Michel Foucault and Jürgen Habermas, and which have been resurfacing in development discourse in the "indigenous knowledge debate". For an introduction to the latter, see John Thompson, 1996, "Moving the Indigenous Knowledge Debate Forward?", *Development Policy Review*, 14, pp. 105-12. See also Arun Agrawal, 1995, "Dismantling the Divide between Indigenous and Scientific Knowledge", *Development and Change*, 26, pp. 413-39.

Another complementary way to approach the internal structure of knowledge is to distinguish knowledge from data and information. If knowledge is seen as situational, attached to particular social actors and continually defined and redefined by them, information and data can then be seen as the raw materials of knowledge. In this perspective, knowledge consists of information and data adopted and actively processed by social actors for their own purposes. From the viewpoint of single social actors, the bulk of available data and information remains excluded and thus redundant to them, but it is this very redundancy which makes data and information useful to other actors.

Applying these—still very preliminary and nebulous—arguments to rural Mtwara and Lindi, we can try to put the bibliography in its proper context by asking questions such as the following: Who needs and produces knowledge and information on rural development in Mtwara and Lindi?; how are these stored and transmitted?; what do the present knowledges include and exclude?; for what purposes are they used?

Against this backdrop, we can see that the bibliography does not, and cannot, represent anything like a fair review of all existing information and knowledge relevant to rural development in Mtwara and Lindi. Being by definition a record of written, documentary and mainly published sources, it precludes all non-written and most non-published information, which in this case is the overwhelming bulk. At best, what the bibliography represents is the state of the outside world's knowledge of rural Mtwara and Lindi.

But we can also see that the bibliography with all its deficiencies and shortcomings—the gaps in coverage and the variability in the quality of the items included—bears testimony to important aspects of rural Mtwara and Lindi and their relationship to the outside world. Its very imperfections can be taken to indicate the forces and factors shaping relationships between rural Mtwara and Lindi and the major outside institutions involved there.

OFFICIAL DATA AND KNOWLEDGE

A chief producer and repository of information and knowledge on rural society is the Tanzanian state. In Tanzania, as elsewhere, a major part of administrative practice consists of compiling and collating information on the peoples and areas which are being administered

and on the relations between governors and the governed. As Tanzania is a fairly closely administered country, the result has been a considerable accumulation of quantitative and qualitative official information and knowledge.

Much of this information forms an important element in the personal and institutional knowledge of officials, but a fair amount of information has also been made publicly available in the form of statistics. There is a great deal of official data on Mtwara and Lindi specifically. Population figures and the main demographic variables can be obtained from census results. Major rough indicators of health, nutrition and education can be found in administrative statistics and files. Also, some basic data on economic activities are available.

Another question is that of quality: what are the existing data worth? Although sweeping quality assessments of a corpus so huge and varied as official Tanzanian data are hazardous, practically everyone concerned with them admits that in respect of coverage and accuracy, they leave much to be desired.

Administrative data are collected in many ways but two main categories can be distinguished. One is data created through administrative reporting systems starting at village level. These are put to immediate use by officials and stored in administrative files to be kept and transmitted within the bureaucracy as its institutional memory. The second is the national-level data produced by institutions such as the government's Bureau of Statistics, popularly known as *Takwimu*, or certain ministries. These are published as national and other statistics.

Not only are the two sets of data produced and used in different ways, but the problems with them are different.

The general accuracy of national statistics obviously varies. Population census results, for instance, are fairly reliable, while other statistical series may include astonishing leaps, the bases for which remain unexplored and unexplained, and compilation and counting errors are not uncommon. From a local point of view, a further problem is that national aggregation is sometimes done in a manner which makes it impossible to identify the contribution of any individual region or district. In addition, these data often suffer from an inordinate time lag between collection and the release of results.

There are many possible explanations for these circumstances, but a major one is the top-heavy manner in which knowledge systems of

Takwimu and the ministries work. Designed by top planners, these agencies tend to focus on the collection and transmission of data from lower to higher levels. As data are not analysed or utilized at the point of origin or along the way, errors and inconsistencies may go undetected or unattended.

The data created through the administrative reporting systems, running from village through ward and division to district and to region, have a different purpose: to produce timely information for immediate use by the officials at these various levels. They are also used by district and regional planning offices to compile annual plans, or published in district and regional statistical publications such as *Mkoa wa Mtwara kitakwimu* and *Takwimu muhimu za Mkoa wa Lindi*.

Yet the latter data are hardly less free from inaccuracy and other problems than those collected by avowedly top-down institutions. The flow of information may run from the bottom up, but methods of estimation are often primitive. Another major problem is the unclear division of responsibilities between different administrative levels. Data-collection takes place within the existing administrative structure, and this has been confused by repeated changes in the relationship between central government and local government—a confusion lately exacerbated by political reforms that are shaking the roles of state and ruling party.

In a village, population may be counted from time to time to keep abreast of the number of prospective taxpayers, and schools provide information on pupil enrolment. Other local statistics are hardly more than guesswork. Village executive officers or extension workers have few if any means to travel and undertake actual counts. They rely mostly on information from village leaders, or their own more or less arbitrary observations about their own local vicinities.

As regards usability of data, another major problem is storage. Files are in disarray, even in many district headquarters. Officials complain that it is often laborious to seek information in current files, and it may be practically impossible to retrace closed files which are stored in a disorderly manner. In village and ward offices, files are found—if they can be found—in all possible nooks and crannies.

Thus, the picture that emerges of information systems and data production in the Tanzanian state is of some confusion and wastage. Not inconsiderable time and effort are invested by officials in data-collection and reporting, but the conditions in which officials work are

deplorable and much of the activity assumes a ritualistic character. As a result, large amounts of basic data are produced, but their coverage and accuracy are commonly wanting, and only part of the data collected is used for knowledge.

This is not the whole story, however; or perhaps it is the beginning of another story. Grossly inefficient as the Tanzanian bureaucracy may seem in creating knowledge, the issue looks different if it is understood that the administration is not geared to the production of accurate knowledge but to the control and governance of local people and, ultimately, the very survival of the bureaucracy itself. If knowledge is viewed as the technology of power, the primary criterion for what constitutes knowledge may not be the referential or propositional accuracy of statements.

This may explain some of the unreality surrounding much of the data and information on Mtwara and Lindi regions. As with any Tanzanian administrative region, they are politically created governmental entities without much intrinsic cultural or economic content. Their borders are contingent and mostly arbitrary: if they had been based on existing geographical or cultural formations they would look different.

In the creation and reproduction of such entities, the role of knowledge is crucial. What makes it possible to perceive and treat them as units is their transformation into objects of knowledge by the shaping of information to conform to the prefabricated administrative categories. While data-collection by regions and districts is naturally undertaken for practical purposes of everyday administration, it also has the effect of producing the very structures in which administration takes place. It would be far-fetched to suggest that phenomena like "population" or "economy" of Mtwara and Lindi are imaginary, yet they exist only in and through our knowledge of them.

That data-collection and knowledge-production contribute to techniques of government and revenue collection has not been lost on the villagers who are not necessarily eager to have their own knowledge extracted and turned into official information. This is neatly demonstrated by the statement of a group of inhabitants of Kilwa Kivinje (as quoted by M.S. Masaiganah):

We are tired of government experts who come here every day to collect information from us and go back and dump it in their files and we remain the same in spite of many promises that have been made to us.

Our councils have become "monsters"... Their workers come and collect revenue and eat and we are left with nothing.

DEVELOPMENT AND DONOR KNOWLEDGE

"Development" has, contrary to some popular conceptions, been around a long time in Mtwara and Lindi. It, too, has produced a significant amount of information and knowledge both in documentary and personal form. The state has been the main actor in development efforts, but here it has had to cooperate with so called donors, who have their own priorities, interests and styles.

Much of Tanzania's rural development practice during the last twenty years or so has been intended to attract foreign donors to prepare, finance and implement master plans for water and rural integrated development plans (RIDEPs). Each administrative region of the country was allocated a multilateral or bilateral donor of its own to prepare a water master plan and/or rural integrated development plan for the region in question and, it was hoped, to finance their implementation.

As part of this process FINNIDA became the foremost donor in Mtwara and Lindi. It funded the preparation of early RIDEPs but failed to take responsibility for their implementation. Instead, it financed the water master plan and the implementation of a pioneer rural water project which operated until 1993. Meanwhile, the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA) started in 1978 to prepare an integrated long-term programme. New, "second generation" RIDEPs were completed in 1980-81. ODA, too, failed to finance the implementation of these programmes as a whole, although until 1984 it supported certain projects identified in the plans. Thereafter foreign support to regional rural development continued in modified form with the launching of the FINNIDA-supported Rural Integrated Project Support (RIPS) programme in 1988 (see Voipio, in this volume).

Many other donor agencies have also been involved in Mtwara and Lindi regions, including the World Bank and UNICEF. For the present, in addition to RIPS, the main foreign-supported rural development projects in Mtwara and Lindi include cashew promotion by

the World Bank and ODA and basic services and child survival and development programmes by UNICEF.

These activities have resulted in a number of major documents such as:

- * the first-generation RIDEPs funded by FINNIDA, namely "Lindi Region Integrated Development Plan 1975/76–1979/80" by Finnplanco consultants and "Mtwara Regional Integrated Development Plan 1975–80" by Finnconsult consultants, both in 1975;
- * the Water Master Plan in 1977, with revisions in 1986, by Finnwater consulting engineers, and their concomitant evaluation reports;
- * the second-generation RIDEPs funded by ODA, namely "Lindi Regional Integrated Development Plan 1981–86" and "Mtwara Regional Integrated Development Plan 1981–86";
- * background surveys to the second-generation RIDEPs by the ODA Zonal Survey Team and researchers connected with it;
- * regional development plans;
- * regional sectoral plans such as forest action plans for Mtwara and Lindi (available in draft);
- * various project documents and evaluation reports for RIPS.

These documents can be read both for what they include and what they ignore. They obviously provide considerable useful if superficial information on different aspects relevant to rural development in Mtwara and Lindi. Not only are they helpful for reconstructing the recent history of the area, but most of them also offer background data for present development efforts. This is especially true of studies undertaken by the ODA Zonal Survey Team in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The British researchers collected a great deal of information on physical environment and mapped out basic farming systems. Also, the studies by Finnwater in the mid-1970s and mid-1980s on geographical and physical factors affecting water supply, though certainly not free of problems, are of lasting value. Even the earlier documents contain useful information on a number of specific aspects about which no later quantified data are available, e.g., the cultural composition of the regions.

Yet these documents can also be read to show the ruptures and discontinuities in rural development interventions: how each team of developers has wanted to start with a clean table, ignoring the lessons

of any but its most immediate precursors. This tendency towards developmental amnesia is also manifested in the poor accessibility of the reports. In principle, they should be easily available, as most of them have been printed. Yet their circulation has been restricted, and most known copies of them are literarily gathering dust in places beyond the reach of those in need of them.

However, there is also an encouraging example of a successful locally run development programme with an effective information system. This is the Child Survival, Protection, and Development (or CSPD) Programme (*Mpango wa uhai, kinga na maendeleo ya watoto*) sponsored by UNICEF. Formerly known as Child Survival and Development (CSD), this programme concentrates on children under five. It is managed by local district staff and village committees, with support from regional staff and with external financial assistance.

CSPD, which works only in parts of Mtwara region, distributes comprehensive statistical information on trends in the nutritional status of children in its working area. The programme claims to have reduced the percentage of severely malnourished under-fives from 8 per cent in November 1987 to less than 2 per cent now. Occasional doubts have been expressed about the figures, but the system on which they are based is impressive.

All children are regularly weighed four times a year. The mothers are given a card for each child in which his or her weight gain is marked. The graphic card, with its red, grey and green sections is easy to follow. Every village keeps a register of the status of its children and relays the result.

This, it has been argued, is an excellent case where the information generated is not simply reported upward and dissipated, but where it stays in the village and is transformed into usable local knowledge. UNICEF representatives suggest that it was the improved information produced by the community-based monitoring system that led to the initial reduction in rates of malnutrition. This occurred before other elements of the programme, such as improved water or health facilities, had been established. Knowledge of the actual state of child nutrition has brought about a reallocation of resources within households, it is suggested. Parents devote more time and care to their children, and feed them more frequently.

RESEARCH DATA AND KNOWLEDGE

Another type of information and knowledge is that produced by professional research. It is convenient, and for our purposes sufficient, to distinguish between two main types of professional research, "academic" and "adapted". Academic research, has a longer-term orientation and seeks answers to questions which are derived from theory or an explanatory model. Adapted research is commissioned by development or other agencies to elucidate a particular issue of interest to officials or projects, and which tries to find immediate answers to questions arising from development practice.

In terms of academic research, Mtwara and Lindi are generally regarded as neglected. Although the situation has begun to be redressed during the past few years, this situation still by and large holds. Compared with most other regions in Tanzania, the number of academic dissertations, papers and books on Mtwara and Lindi remains extremely small. While the titles on Tanzania in general are counted in tens of thousands (cf. Widstrand, 1992:12, fn. 3) only a few dozen items can be found on Mtwara and Lindi. In particular, the dearth of more ambitious works on cultural and social systems is obvious.

In adapted research, the situation has been largely similar, but in recent years the picture has begun to change. The intensity of research activity sponsored by donors has been increasing and the traditional gap between "negative academics" and "positive practitioners" (Chambers, 1983) has begun to narrow. A major institution responsible for recent research is the Naliendele Agricultural Research Institute outside Mtwara town, especially its Farming Systems Research Unit. Additionally, development projects and programmes in the area have sponsored some research.

Naliendele is part of a national network of research institutes of the Ministry of Agriculture of Tanzania. It undertakes research on several aspects of agriculture and livestock. Since the multidisciplinary Farming Systems Research Unit was added in 1986, the number of works of direct relevance to rural development efforts has gradually accumulated. Many works have concentrated on cashew, sponsored by the World Bank/ODA-funded Cashew Improvement Programme. Recently, an increasing amount of work has been directed to oilseeds and minor crops, such as groundnuts. Furthermore, general

surveys have been undertaken to update and expand earlier work undertaken in the 1970s.

Among development programmes, CSPD has commissioned several studies on Mtwara. Associated with these have been studies carried out by Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre (TFNC) researchers. Socio-economic studies sponsored by RIPS include those on women's groups, on microenterprises and on population.

Views on the value of research for rural development differ. While research is ritualistically glorified as the form of knowledge superior to all others, in fact, academically oriented research is commonly viewed with considerable misgiving by development practitioners. A discussion of this controversy is far beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say that the quality of research on Mtwara and Lindi obviously varies, but even a cursory perusal of the reports shows that they provide basic information on crucial topics such as agricultural systems and food security.

A more serious problem with research reports on rural Mtwara and Lindi is poor accessibility. This suggests that the knowledge-guiding interests of the social actors concerned do not often converge. Although the situation has improved, not only is the existence of most studies known to only few development workers, but most are inaccessible to researchers. Many belong to the category of "grey literature": conference papers, studies commissioned by aid agencies and so on, which exist in limited number and in unfinished form. In addition, only one or two copies of academic dissertations may exist in a single European library.

There are, however, a few places where much of the literature can be located. One is the Farming Systems Research Unit at Naliendele, which keeps not only its own reports but also those of many other institutions. The other is the library of the UNICEF office in Dar es Salaam, where many otherwise inaccessible unpublished reports and papers can be found. Additionally, the library at the regional UNICEF headquarters in Mtwara keeps some of the documents mentioned.¹

1. In Europe, the library of the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Helsinki has made an effort to collect some of the basic literature and documents on Mtwara and Lindi.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

All the forms of knowledge discussed above are what may be called outsiders' knowledge: that of officials, developers or researchers. In recent development discourse, the existence of knowledge which is not only different but also of a different kind has been recognized. This is local knowledge, also called indigenous knowledge (and sometimes abbreviated to IK). By this is meant the large body of knowledge, mostly unwritten, that the people themselves have of their own society, culture and environment. Such knowledge may cover topics like land use, farming practices, or medicine and healing: it is preserved and transmitted from one generation to another by cultural means such as tradition and ritual.

While local knowledge remains a major resource for local society and is part and parcel of local culture, outsiders have become increasingly interested in appropriating some of it for their own purposes. This interest is not new, but its intensity and forms have changed. Traditionally, the indigenous knowledge of African peasants has been approached in either a "modernist" or a "populist" vein, or a mixture of both.

The modernist approach is firmly rooted in mainstream development thinking. It prevails among administrators and other officials and field staff of development projects. Its hallmark is its regard of most if not all local skills and knowledge as primitive vestiges and as obstacles to development. Because it is inferior to modern ways of doing and knowing, the old should be displaced by the new.

A populist attitude is not new but has made considerable headway lately—not only among researchers but also in part of the aid establishment, particularly in the metropolises. It takes a fundamentally more positive view of local knowledge, maintaining that rural people in Africa, as elsewhere, are knowledgeable and motivated actors who have a good grasp of their environment and the forces active in it. They know local agroecological conditions, soils and cultivation methods and so on much better than the outsiders who are supposed to teach and advise them. But it is also emphasized that indigenous knowledge has severe limitations because of its localized and non-cumulative nature and that it needs to be complemented by modern knowledge.

Recently, a third approach has been gaining ground. (The outline below derives from Banuri and Appfel Marglin (1993).) This is the "knowledge system" approach. It also appreciates indigenous knowledge but not only or even mainly for its technical merits but because of its underlying rationale. Contrary to modern knowledge, which, for all its strengths and triumphs, is seen to have grave defects such as universalism, individualism and instrumentalism, non-modern knowledge is seen to be characterized by virtues such as embeddedness, locality, community, lack of separation between subject and object, and a non-instrumental approach. From this it follows that these two types of knowledge cannot complement or intermix with each other. Rather, they are knowledge systems in their own right. Indigenous knowledge should not only be respected as legitimate, but its existence and workings should encourage Western researchers to re-evaluate their own epistemological presuppositions, such as the instrumental attitude towards nature.

Leaving aside epistemological awareness, it is clear that the modernist approach has been challenged in Mtwara and Lindi as well, and encounters between local people and outsiders are increasingly interpreted as knowledge interfaces. It is realized that it is insufficient for outsiders to approach problems using their own concepts, such as "backward cultivation methods" or "malnutrition". Rather, more should be understood of the ways in which the people themselves see and conceptualize their problems, and how they relate to development activities from outside.

Especially RIPS, after its first phase, and some other later development programmes have opened the window to indigenous knowledge through the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) approach. Dozens of local officials and NGO representatives have been given courses in the use of PRA methods, and PRA exercises have been undertaken in dozens of villages. Moreover, other agencies working in the area have adopted the approach and begun to apply it in their work. These include TFNC researchers and Naliendele farming systems and other researchers who are now employing PRA to some extent.

As a result, many PRA reports are now available and contain some background and historical information on the village and a village map drawn by the villagers (sometimes, more intriguingly, two competing maps and their interpretations). They also contain seasonal

diagrams indicating different phases in major livelihoods, wealth rankings revealing social and economic stratification, and ranking lists and diagrams showing how villagers perceive the problems of their village and how they value the institutions working in the area.¹

It would be wrong to imagine, however, that the PRA approach is a ready panacea to the problems of knowledge and power in development. Despite its sharing, interactive and empowering ideology, in practice PRA can become as extractive, unidirectional, and disempowering as any other approach. PRA, too, produces data and information to be used in different knowledge constructions and can perpetuate inadequate and irrelevant notions.

An example is the way intra-village social differentiation is dealt with in most PRA reports. PRA methods have themselves been powerful in disclosing the pervasiveness of social stratification in rural society, but the implications of this have been largely overlooked in the methodology itself. It emerges from the few scattered methodological comments in the PRA reports that only a small proportion of villagers ever take part in the exercises, and those that do are often village leaders, old men (*wazee*) or youngsters (*vijana*). The absence of women, especially peasant women, is noticeable in many reports. Yet the reports speak of villagers as a category as if such differences do not exist or matter.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper provides a schematic overview of the existing information and knowledge relevant to rural development in Mtwara and Lindi. The underlying argument is that because knowledge is a constituent of social action, it must be seen in relation to its subject and to its intended and actual use, and there cannot be any general criterion of knowledge: what is good knowledge varies from case to case. But it has been suggested that different knowledges base themselves partly on the same data and information, and that data and information may

1. These are mainly mimeographed reports of PRA workshops and training courses organized by RIPS. For summaries, see the following documents: "Participatory Rural Appraisal". Report from a PRA course in Mtwara, 16-28 August, 1993 and Hadija Maulidi, "The socio-economic analysis from PRA done in seven districts of the Mtwara and Lindi regions", August 1994.

be more amenable to discussion in simple terms of quantity and quality.

Four broad sets of information and knowledge on rural Mtwara and Lindi have been identified: those of administrative, donor, research and local origin. The three former have been called outsiders' knowledge and are seen as fundamentally different from indigenous knowledge. Although some of the implications of this division have been hinted at and the resulting knowledge interfaces have been briefly indicated, the paper has not attempted a systematic analysis of the dynamics of such interfaces. This is because if knowledge is an integral part of social action, knowledge interfaces are part of social interfaces, and discussion of them cannot be confined to the level of knowledge.

Rather, the paper has concentrated on the more modest task of delineating the contours of existing data and knowledges and tracing some of the conditions of their production and use, particularly of outsiders' knowledge. A major observation is that existing data-production systems have generated much more information and data than can be turned into and used as knowledge by any single social actor, or can ever be included in a bibliography. Moreover, this information has been produced in difficult conditions which make most of it partial, fragmentary and of highly variable quality.

In such a situation, the bibliography mostly reflects the priorities and preoccupations of outsiders who are, for their own reasons, interested in documenting their knowledges, and less the strengths and weaknesses of the actual stocks or domains of knowledge. Similarly, if many of the included items are difficult of access, this may not be because of shortcomings in library systems, but rather because of the divergent knowledge-guiding interests involved and the inherent logical discontinuities in rural development intervention.

Thus, the bibliography obviously has considerable limitations, but these do not necessarily render it less useful. Rather, the bibliography, like any document, will arguably yield more and perhaps better data and information for constructing social knowledge the more carefully it is read not only for what it includes but also for what it excludes.

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Select bibliography on rural Mtwara and Lindi

Juhani Koponen

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For those documents and papers which are public but poorly accessible, the bibliography also indicates the place where the document was consulted and/or where it is presently available. A failure to mention any particular document at a specific library does *not* imply that the document would not be available in the library concerned.

LIBRARY SOURCES

| | |
|---------|--|
| FINNIDA | FINNIDA Library, Helsinki |
| IDS | Institute of Development Studies Library, Helsinki |
| LRDC | Land Resources Development Centre (now Natural Resources Institute) |
| Mtwara | Mtwara Regional Headquarters / RIPS Library |
| Nali | Naliendele Agricultural Research Institute, Farming Systems Research Unit |
| ODA | Overseas Development Administration |
| Private | in private possession |
| RIPS | Rural Integrated Project Support (Programme) |
| SIAS | Scandinavian Institute of African Studies Library (Nordic Africa Institute), Uppsala |
| TFNC | Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre Library, Dar es Salaam |
| TNR | Tanganyika/Tanzania Notes and Records |
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