

VILLAGERS, VILLAGES, AND THE STATE in modern Tanzania



Edited by R.G. Abrahams
Cambridge African Monograph 4

**Villagers, villages and the state
in modern Tanzania**

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This collection of papers on Tanzanian villages has been written by research students who were supervised by Dr. R.G. Abrahams and he has written the Introduction. The Centre has established a relationship with the University of Dar es Salaam's Sociology Department and we look forward to further collaborative studies.

A.T. Grove
Director
African Studies Centre

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R.G.Abrahams

INTRODUCTION

R.G. Abrahams

Despite industrial development, a majority of the world's population remain rural dwellers. Many of them still try to hack out a living from the soil, and their rudimentary technology, along with the major part played by the family in their productive processes, can easily endow their lives with an old fashioned if not utterly archaic air. This impression is of course at least in part immediately belied by the fact that almost all such peasants and other villagers are caught up in the wider world as citizens of modern, indeed often brand new, nation states. Yet such states themselves may also promote images of rural backwardness which they project as challenges for aid supported intervention and reform through the medium of development plans, settlement schemes, large-scale irrigation projects and the like. The character of such plans has varied in its details from one state to another, though their connection with balance of payments difficulties and their underlying assumption that governments possess the necessary expertise to deal with local ecological problems recur with a disturbing regularity.¹

The present volume is concerned with the position of rural communities in modern mainland Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika) where State intervention in village life has been exceptionally intensive in the twenty or so years since independence in 1961. This and other aspects of the country's recent history and development have attracted much attention from a wide variety of scholars in the humanities and social sciences, and a cynic might be tempted to explain the burgeoning of so much vigorous research activity in varying crude terms of academic neo-colonial expansion and perhaps worse. It would no doubt be

naive to dismiss all such views as utterly without foundation, but it is nevertheless also evident that Tanzania has possessed a genuinely powerful attraction of a very different sort for European academics and others, in many of whom it has been able to generate strong sentiments of sympathy and enthusiasm. A crucial element in this 'Tanzaphilia', as Ali Mazrui has dubbed it, has been President Nyerere, who has been chief architect and planner of the new country's political and economic development.² In his writings and his speeches, and in a notable proportion of his actions, Nyerere has stressed his determination to see Tanzania established as a country which will not sacrifice decency for comfort, and which will seek prosperity for the population as a whole rather than for one or other privileged section of it. It has been his aim to achieve this through a realisation of the closely related ideas of "African socialism" and *ujamaa*, and he has hoped that this can be attained without the need for a high level of coercion.

Both the President's idealism and the Tanzanian experiment which sprang from it caught the imagination of many of those who went from a variety of countries to teach and carry out research there, and much of their writing has been concerned with these topics.³ Some has been adulatory and some critical; though the critics do not all agree among themselves, as they focus variously on ideas, policies and special sections of the population, such as "bureaucrats" and "kulaks", which are held responsible for problems of development and other ills. As one might expect, much of the writing in question has had a fairly strong ideological flavour. It may also be noted that only a relatively small proportion of it is based on intensive field research at village level. In drawing attention to this, I do not wish to imply any lack of quality or interest in many of the books and articles concerned, nor do I simply wish to advocate one sort of study rather than another. Indeed, one consequence of the wide

range of interest shown in Tanzania has been the possibility to appreciate the complementarity of different approaches and the blurred nature of the boundaries between many of them. The issue at hand is much more one of balance, though it is of course no less important for that in a country where over 90% of the population live in small rural communities which have been subjected to ever increasing degrees of governmental attention and control in recent years.

This last point underlies much of the content of the present modest offering of case material on aspects of modern village life in five rural areas of Tanzania. The authors of the substantive papers are, or until recently have been, research students in the University of Cambridge, and they have lived and studied for extended periods of a year or more in the communities which they discuss. They are all fluent Swahili speakers (Lwoga is himself of course a Tanzanian), and where possible they have also learned something of the local language(s) of the area where they have worked. They discuss in their papers some of the things which they have seen and heard and come to understand in particular communities, though they have all been deeply conscious of the fact that such communities cannot possibly be understood without constant reference to the wider world in which they are embedded. If, moreover, what they tell us is at times less stirring stuff than some of the grander writings for and against Tanzania's rural development programmes, their accounts perhaps make up for this in other ways.

By no means unimportant in this context is a high level of reliability, but the value of such work does not stop simply there. The formulation of large scale development plans and their implementation at village level, which the Tanzanian system demands, are of course two radically different processes;

and there is much more to the problem of a match between them than "peasant attitudes" or "bureaucracy", or some comparably highly generalised and stereotyped phenomenon. Not surprisingly, such broad categories often appear less clear-cut and meaningful as one approaches "ground level", where there emerges into view a range of social structural and other issues which are not susceptible to instant comprehension and which only detailed study can help to elucidate. As the papers themselves valuably illustrate in their individual approaches to their subject matter, there is not necessarily any single simple route to the understanding of these problems, though there can be broad agreement about many of their features. The problem of the articulation, both synchronic and diachronic, of village and household to which Thiele and Hassett both devote attention in their papers, is clearly likely to be one of the most fundamental of these issues in an agricultural community, and especially in the context of the governmentally imposed modern Tanzanian village framework. Another is the nature of local forms of social (and not simply economic) differentiation and stratification, and the significance of local culture seen, as in Thompson's and Walsh's essays, as a potential source and focus of conflict and misunderstanding as well as social solidarity. The nature of the attachment of a community and its members to their land, which forms a focal point of Lwoga's paper, also clearly needs investigation at the local level. Lwoga's essay at the same time also highlights a further matter which is more statistical than normatively structural, though it is nonetheless particularly predicated by the Tanzanian political and economic system. This is the fact that one can only reasonably expect significant variation among the large number of villages - which are nowadays the country's basic politico-economic units - with regard to such important matters as quality of leadership, valuable connections to external power loci, and more generally the outcome of risk laden ventures. Once again, case study can perhaps throw light upon both the

nature and the influence of such contingent elements in rural development.

It will be clear already that the village is a fundamental local level unit in the modern Tanzanian social and political system, and further aspects of this point will emerge in the course of my discussion and in the papers themselves. The point is an important one because, although most anthropologists have worked and lived in villages of one sort or another in the course of their research, the village is not necessarily the most suitable local unit for analytic focus. It is no accident that the term tends to lack theoretical content and precision, for the world's villages are as diverse in their form and functions as they are ubiquitous. While some persist for centuries, others are intrinsically much shorter lived communities whose members are in constant flux. Some are highly stratified, others egalitarian, some kinship-based and others not, some very large and others small. Some constitute a genuine community, while others may be little more than dormitories. The variation is almost endless, and interstitial forms between extremes abound. Little more can be said than that the village is typically neither the smallest nor the largest group in the societies where it is found; and it is indeed in this intermediate status that much of what is interesting about villages lies. For it is always likely to be problematic how a village as a unit relates to its members and their families as well as to the wider society and especially the State. Certainly this is the case in Tanzania.

It may be useful at this point to elucidate some of the social, political and economic background to the material presented in the papers. Tanzania is a large country with an area (c.940,000 square kilometres) some seven times the size of that of the United Kingdom. Its population numbered a little over 17.5 million in the 1978 official census and it can safely be assumed to have

increased since then. The mainland contains a wide variety of ecological zones, including highland areas in the north and south, a coastal plain flanked by the Indian Ocean, and a large central tableland divided from the coast by the Masai plains and other rather arid areas. The highlands and some areas around the shore of Lake Victoria are rather fertile, but most of the country - like most of the areas discussed in this volume - has a relatively unfavourable environment for agriculture which nonetheless provides the main source of livelihood and sustenance for the vast majority of the population. Large scale industrialisation (which is itself of course no guarantee of a life free of economic problems) has not developed, and it is hard to see how it can do so in the immediate future. Tanzania is, by most standards of comparison, one of the world's poorest countries and it seems likely to remain so during the life time of its present citizens.

It is in this context of an economically poor and basically agricultural society, that the country's various rural development programmes since independence must be understood. There seems no doubt that the President had genuinely hoped that forms of communal production, combined with and indeed springing from the establishment of nucleated village settlements, would develop with encouragement, and that these would lead to an improvement in the economic conditions of the population as well as improving the quality of life in other ways. Increased prosperity was to be accompanied by better health and education and could be achieved without the development of exploitation and class differences. The role of the State was to be mainly helpful rather than authoritarian, providing encouragement, an organisational framework and, expertise and, in some cases, funding, which would help establish eventually self-sustaining rural communities.⁴

As is well known, however, what has happened has been rather different. In September 1973, some six years after the adoption as official TANU policy of his important paper on "Socialism and Rural Development", Nyerere told the TANU Conference that nearly 15% of Tanzania's population were living in *ujamaa* villages.⁵ It was, however, clear that this figure, neither especially encouraging nor discouraging in itself, needed careful qualification. The rate of involvement in the *ujamaa* programme varied greatly from one region to another and was, not surprisingly highest in areas like Dodoma and Mtwara where people had, for various reasons, been compulsorily resettled. In several other areas, where the voluntaristic nature of the programme was adhered to, figures of 3% and less were to be found.⁶ Such figures themselves, moreover, often concealed high rates of village failure which reflected both organisational difficulties and a range of motivational problems. Some villages were got together by local leaders anxious to use them as stepping stones to further their political ambitions, and others were established in the subsequently disappointed hope of attracting substantial material aid. Many broke up when village funds were mishandled, sometimes criminally and sometimes as a consequence of poor book-keeping. In addition, many villages were *ujamaa* in name, but only limitedly so in practice. The communal productive and other economic activities which were at the heart of *ujamaa* policy, were often only a small part of the village economy, and people still devoted most of their attention to private, family-based agriculture.

Presidential and Party disappointment with this state of affairs was less surprising than the extreme shift towards coercion which ensued, despite the fact that this had been foreshadowed in Dodoma and elsewhere. Rapid, compulsory "villagisation" of the country's population, through the creation of thousands of new, nucleated settlements, was declared official Party policy and

was quickly pushed through Parliament despite some MPs' protests in 1974.⁷ That year and the next, massive "operations" as they were called were forcibly imposed upon the large majority of rural Tanzanians. Actual bodily violence does not seem to have been common, but its threat was present, and the moves to new village sites were often accompanied by the destruction of existing houses. Commonly, people were shown their new village site and were simply left there with their belongings and told to construct housing for themselves. The new villages which were established were eventually registered officially under the Villages and *Ujamaa* Villages Act of 1975 which was designed to give final ratification to the villagisation process. The villages were expected to contain about 250 households but some smaller and many larger villages than this are found.

It was by no means clear to many people, not least villagers themselves, exactly what the aim of the new system was. Many feared that compulsory collectivisation was in the offing, and they seem to have been partly right in this. At least initially, however, official propaganda concentrated its attention upon other issues. The moves were, it was claimed, designed to provide higher living standards for members of "development villages" as the new nucleated settlements were (at that time) called. Better water supplies and improved health and education services were to be facilitated by nucleation, as too was agricultural production which could now be organised on a block-farm and/or communal basis which would make it possible to employ machinery, chemicals, and other technological developments in a relatively cheap and well-organised way. The food-production element of the programme was stressed as a matter of particular urgency, though its benefits in this regard have not been evident, at least in the short run. As for *ujamaa* itself, the 1975 Act specified that villages which engaged in sufficiently substantial,

collective economic activities could be officially registered as *ujamaa* villages. This seems only very rarely to have happened if at all, though the term "*ujamaa*" is very widely used by officialdom and villagers alike to describe villages and their activities.

This trend has in fact been coupled with some shift in the meaning and implications of the term *ujamaa*; and this in turn has been extremely closely linked, as Hassett has suggested, to the establishment of villages, ultimately by the 1975 Act, as officially recognised corporate units with their own local level governmental structure. Each village is a CCM Party Branch (TANU was renamed, and to some extent reformed, as the CCM or Revolutionary Party in conjunction with the ruling Zanzibari Party in 1977), and the Village Chairman is the elected Branch Chairman of the Party. There is also a Village Secretary, an externally appointed Party man though usually a member of the village, and a further 23 elected Councillors who together with the Chairman and the Secretary make up the Village Council and most if not all of its various Committees. Many villages also have a Village Manager who is typically a relatively well educated man, often with ties to the locality, who is expected to help the village organise its affairs in an efficient way. Such Managers are often seconded to village work from Governmental or Parastatal establishments. The new villages are defined as multi-purpose co-operatives and as such they are entitled and indeed expected to start a variety of economic enterprises as well as various social and welfare projects. They are legally eligible, as corporate units, to apply for loans for these purposes, and they are also empowered, through their own governmental machinery, to make demands on the labour and financial resources of villagers for such projects. They are also expected to ensure that District and ultimately State-level policies are followed by their members, and these may include demands that

each village engages in some pre-defined amount of *ujamaa* collective cultivation.

The word *ujamaa* itself is a Swahili one with Arab roots which appears to form part of a set of related words involving various connotations of collectivity, assembly, family and association.⁸ *Ujamaa* itself was by no means the most widely used word of this set, before Nyerere chose it as the vehicle for his ideas on African socialism.⁹ It was of course important to find an indigenous word for this purpose, but it is certain that the President breathed a wealth of new life and meaning into it as he adapted it. Leaving aside the issue of the aptness of the term, or indeed the deeper question of the aptness of Nyerere's concept of traditional indigenous patterns of co-operation which I and others have discussed elsewhere, it is clear that in the pre-villagisation period the idea of *ujamaa* was essentially that of collective enterprise by villagers, and occasionally others, for their mutual benefit.¹⁰ Such benefit had both shorter and longer term dimensions, the former through the seasonal distribution of the proceeds of production and the latter through saving in a village fund and through investment, e.g. in machinery or buildings. The, ideally, voluntary nature of the collaboration, or at least of the initial enrolment in an *ujamaa* community was an important aspect of the situation. For, although it meant that relatively few Tanzanians actually formed such communities, it did nonetheless help to preserve the idea, especially if supported by short-term returns, that *ujamaa* was for the direct benefit of those participating in it. In addition, it seems plausible that the relatively small size of many pre-villagisation *ujamaa* villages was also a significant factor in this context since it was easier to feel fully part of a small unit. Thus whereas the population of new villages after the 1974-5 "operations" was typically over and often well over 1000, that of 1973 *ujamaa* villages was only 360; and

even this figure was substantially inflated by the fact that it included larger than average settlements in areas like Dodoma which had already been subjected to some resettlement.¹¹

Many of the pre-1974 *ujamaa* villages were absorbed into the new larger "development villages", and in many cases it appears that their activities were stifled in the process. At the same time, however, various village enterprises were set in motion by village governments either on their own initiative or in accordance with demands from above, as Thiele and Hassett among others have described in their papers. Such enterprises now tend to be described as *ujamaa* activities, but differ in at least two crucial respects from the earlier pattern. Firstly villagers' involvement in them is commonly perceived as being doubly involuntary, since they often appear to be imposed upon them from above and they have not typically chosen freely in the first place to reside in a village of this kind. Secondly, the increasingly common pattern is for return, if any, from a village project to go into village funds rather than come back more directly to villagers' themselves. *Ujamaa* work thus begins to be seen not so much as work for oneself as work for the village and, often enough, for the State, and it can easily take on an appearance of a levy rather than a voluntary contribution. The village as a corporation starts to be identified as something seriously different from the villagers themselves or at least from the large number of them who are not actively involved in village government. And even those who are involved in it may have some degree of alienation if the projects they pursue, such as irrigation, are seen to benefit the State more than the village. Of course, when Party officials and others in the village are seen to benefit from it, there is sometimes at least a hope that the older, more established members of the term may help to boost enthusiasm and morale. The evidence, as

Hassett discusses, that certain types of project such as vehicle purchase may be seen at times to be of direct value to the members of a village. Nonetheless it seems clear that the shift of emphasis towards the idea of a "village project" has generally been accompanied by a heightening of the distinction between villagers and village which I have outlined. One further small reflection of this problem is perhaps worth noting here. A common expression used in village affairs in the mid 1970s was the verb *kujitolea* (literally "to offer oneself") in contexts of work on village projects. This term, however, began to meet some governmental opposition since it appeared to go against the grain of the official ideology. Its implications of volunteering were in themselves partly suspect, and more importantly its suggestion that such work, however gladly done, was for others rather than oneself was beginning to appear too true for comfort.

So far I have paid particular attention to the fact that villages now have an official corporate existence which has made possible the development of a gap between their interests and those of the villagers who live in them. Some such gap is probably inevitable, but its scale and form is of course variable and turns upon a number of factors, some of which have already been mentioned. Thus the fact that villages have mainly been created from above and that they are subjected to continued control from Party and State is clearly of extreme importance, even if one does not accept Coulson's extreme suggestion (1982: 255ff.) that the whole villagisation exercise was a Presidential sop to the bureaucracy in order to increase their sense of effective involvement in the organisation of the country's development. Nor does one need to subscribe to a simplistic theory of conspiracy between "bureaucrats" and "kulaks", in order to perceive that the position of village leaders as intermediaries between the village and the State is a critically important element in the situation. Here, as

earlier pre- independence studies of chiefs and village headmen showed, one has a situation essentially characterised by paradox and structural contradiction, which no amount of good will alone, even when present, can resolve, though different patterns of reaction do emerge. Some village leaders tend to adopt an authoritarian pro-government line vis-a-vis their villagers, or "subjects" as one is almost tempted to call them, while others try to take on a more passive and protective role. Others, again, are there less from a sense of public duty than from a desire to better themselves politically or economically. Many, and probably the majority, have mixed motives and find themselves pulled in different directions at once by conflicting forces both within them and external to them. Thompson's paper is of special interest in this context as revealing some of the strains of village leadership which is not, of course, a leading individual's whole life but rather a complex part of a more complex whole, a partial phase of a life cycle which is itself intricately, and often contradictorily, enmeshed in the lives of others both within and outside the community.

The same thing can of course be said with varying degrees of truth about all villagers' involvement in the village and not simply that of their leaders, and it can easily be extended far beyond the confines of the Tanzanian situation to the point of truism. In Tanzania, however, as in some instances elsewhere, the modern village as a State creation is exceptionally demanding on the time and the attention of its members. They have been given little choice about its form and structure, and they are expected to participate in its organisation, at least to the extent of electing many of its leaders and conforming with their policy decisions, which are in many cases heavily subjected to external pressure. These decisions themselves penetrate into many different aspects of everyday life such as the organisation, including the allocation of labour time, of such fundamental tasks as food production.

I am aware that it is possible to argue in this context that some of the difficulties in question arise because the government has not gone far enough in its attack on the family and the domestic mode of production. Family fields and garden plots continue to exist, and are indeed officially as much a part of village organisation as are communal projects; and the attempt to combine the two clearly tends to create organisational problems when they share the same basic time and labour resources. It is improbable, however, that Tanzanian leaders would have the power, or indeed the wish, to launch a much more radical onslaught on the family. *Ujamaa* itself is archetypically seen as having familistic roots, and families are of course by no means wholly inconvenient performers of tasks and bearers of a wide range of responsibilities which would otherwise fall unwelcomely, and in the last resort impracticably, to the lot of the State and other large scale institutions. More generally, and probably more importantly, family organisation - allowing for some inter-ethnic variation - is for the most part taken for granted in Tanzania as a natural and much respected social phenomenon. It may be seen as needing control and also detailed reform, for example with regard to women's status, but it is scarcely a candidate for much more than this at present.

At the same time, however, we have seen that the Tanzanian State has, through village organisation and in other ways, arrogated to itself substantial areas of policy and decision-making which were previously mainly in the hands of families acting either individually or in collaboration with each other as local communities in the light of local circumstances. It is highly questionable whether such a relatively centralised and monolithic approach to political and economic organisation makes social and ecological sense in a country as variegated as Tanzania. For one is reminded in this context of Rappaport's (1977) commentary on the maladaptive tendencies which are

likely to develop through increases in the scale and degree of centralisation of an ecological decision-making system. Lack of adequate information at the centre and lack of the capacity to process information properly when it is available can lead to both over- and under-reaction to local problems, and attempts at efficient coordination may damagingly affect the adaptability of local groups to changing circumstances. In addition, there are well-known risks that policies promoted from the centre may reflect sectional vested interests under the guise of the pursuit of national well-being.¹²

Yet as Hyden (1980: ch.8) has remarked, although Tanzania might appear at least *prima facie* to be a suitable ground for "small is beautiful" experiments, its political system tends to militate against this and to work in favour of a by no means wholly illegitimate quest for an integrated national economy. The struggle "to capture the peasantry", as Hyden puts it, seems destined to persist, and the issues discussed in this volume are likely to remain problematic for the foreseeable future.

NOTES

- ¹ Cf. Hart 1982: 89, 93, and references cited there.
- ² Mazrui 1969: 255 and *passim*.
- ³ Cf. Cliffe and Saul 1972; Pratt 1976; Von Freyhold 1979; MacHenry 1979; Hyden 1980; and Coulson 1982.
- ⁴ Cf. Nyerere 1966; 1968a; 1968b; 1968c.
- ⁵ Nyerere 1973.
- ⁶ Cf. Abrahams 1981: 82-83; Coulson 1982: 235ff.
- ⁷ The constitutional status of Parliament vis-a-vis the party was more generally "clarified" in the latter's favour during the mid-1970s. For an overview of the villagisation process see Coulson 1982: ch.22, and Abrahams 1981: 45, 74-82.

- ⁸ Such words include *jamaa*, relative, companion, gathering; *jamii*, body, total, sum; *jumaa*, congregation.
- ⁹ Cf. Coulson 1982: 235. I am uncertain of the source of Coulson's information on *jamii* and *ujima* in this context. For *ujima* see Mushi 1971: 22 and *passim*.
- ¹⁰ Cf. Mushi (*loc.cit*) and Nyerere 1966; 1968c.
- ¹¹ On the relevance of the size of communities see also Von Freyhold 1979: 86-87.
- ¹² Rappaport 1977: 61 and *passim*. See also Schumacher 1973.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF VILLAGE CO-OPERATIVE ENTERPRISE IN MCHINGA II VILLAGE, LINDI REGION

Don Hassett

Introduction

This paper is based on fieldwork in Mchinga II village of Lindi District, in Lindi Region, southern Tanzania, which was carried out in 1981-2. The village is situated on the coast about 40 kilometres north of Lindi town along the main road connecting Lindi and Dar es Salaam. This is a dirt road which for most of its length beyond Mchinga is closed to traffic during much of the wet season. Mchinga village has existed as a local trade centre since the middle of the last century. In the 1974 villagisation operations it was augmented in size when the inhabitants of surrounding hamlets were moved into the main village. Now having a total population of nearly 4,000, the community has been split for administrative purposes into two villages of which one, Mchinga II, is the main subject of this paper.

The village is populated by Muslim Swahili-speakers of the Machinga ethnic group. The people of the village are farmers, growing sorghum and cassava for subsistence, and also for sale in a year of good harvest, with other crops grown specifically for sale, especially cashew nuts and sesame. They also fish in the sea, using handlines, nets and traps.

Because of the relative proximity of Lindi town and, importantly, the existence of a bus service between the village and the town, the economy of the village is significantly affected by the urban market. Much of the fish that is caught in the village is cooked and taken by bus to Lindi town for sale.

Fruit and vegetables grown in the village also find a ready market in the town and form an important source of income for many people. Livestock such as chickens and goats are often kept more for the purpose of sale to townspeople than for domestic consumption. The fact that the bus service only runs as far as Mchinga makes the village an important communications nexus for the surrounding area.

In its political organisation the village follows the model established for villages by the Villages and *Ujamaa* Villages Act of 1975. It has a Chairman and Secretary, who are also Chairman and Secretary of the local Branch of the political party (CCM), and a 25 strong elected Village Council which has five Committees. The Village Council is a legal corporation with the right to own property and operate enterprises; it is also a unit of government with the right to pass byelaws, though in practice it mainly serves to transmit to the people policies decided at higher level.

After the new villages were created by resettlement and incorporation in 1974-5, they were charged by the government with a number of functions. The village authorities were given charge of local administration, including the supervision of public services, schools, etc. They were also, as the local Party officials, made responsible for the implementation of Party policies. The most important of these concerned the establishment of socialist production, both in agriculture (which developed only slowly) and in other spheres, including small co-operative businesses, owned and managed by the Village Council as a corporation. These enterprises included shops, transport and productive enterprises. They can be set up on local initiative to meet particular local needs as felt by the villagers. However they face problems of initial capital, of lack of experience in management, and of coping with the current nationwide

economic hardships. The degree of progress and success has therefore been variable. Mchinga II has been more successful than many neighbouring villages in setting up projects of this kind and an outline of its experience forms the central part of this paper.

Since studies of post-1974 villages have usually been more concerned with co-operation in agriculture than in the field of other productive activities and of trade it is hoped that this paper can contribute to a wider perspective of looking at the new *ujamaa* villages. In this respect it complements Thiele's paper in this volume, which pays attention to the nature of the coercive relations required in villages to enforce, with differing success, peasant household involvement in collective agriculture.

The Evolution of Ujamaa Villages Policy

The policy of development through co-operatively run local enterprises predates the nationwide establishment of co-operative villages in 1974. In the earlier period the thrust of the policy was the formation of voluntary groups of farmers living together and pooling their labour. Such communal labour (then as now) was in addition to rather than replacing household production of subsistence and cash crops. The proceeds from collective work were in many cases redistributed annually to the workers in accordance with some measure of the amount of labour they had contributed.

The collective field was meant to be the centrepiece of communal effort. Agriculture was the most vital form of the use of labour and obviously had a symbolic and practical importance far exceeding that of any other forms of work. But in addition to farming collectively, the *ujamaa* villages were

expected to, and often did, engage in collectively organised work of other kinds, e.g. craft-work, livestock raising, co-operative shops, etc. Often these were more successfully organised than the central work of communal farming, and lasted after the communal field was abandoned.

When villages were formed as legally constituted all-purpose co-operatives in 1974-5, the village governments were explicitly given the right and responsibility to set up co-operative enterprises for the benefit and development of the villagers. The Prime Minister's Office's Guidelines on *Ujamaa* Villages of 1975¹ made this clear and outlined the procedure for the village shop as an example of the mode of organisation to be adopted: the shop was to have a full-time manager and be supervised by a sub-Committee of the Village Council. The village shop was the type of enterprise given the most prominence in the Prime Minister's Office pamphlet, and in the wake of 'Operation Maduka', which set out to promote co-operation as opposed to private enterprise in the retail trade, it appears that most villages have by now set up a village shop. Other enterprises that have been set up are operated in the same way, with the necessary staff employed full-time and a supervisory Sub-Committee of Village Councillors.

Unlike the *ujamaa* settlements of the 1960s, membership of the new villages is not voluntary. Every rural dweller is a member of a village. Members are supposed to live within a circumscribed and densely settled residential area. The Village Council is an arm of government, backed by the force of law, with the ability to impose on its members a demand for collective work and to prosecute in the case of non-cooperation; The villages also can and do impose taxes on their members to finance their operations. The villages were given the power under the 1975 act which constituted them

to pass local byelaws setting out penalties for non-involvement in mandatory *ujamaa* work.

Also unlike most of the *ujamaa* projects of the 1960s, the collective product of the new villages is not periodically redistributed to members; the proceeds go to form part of the village's development funds. Households retain their individual cultivations for their own subsistence and cash needs, contributing their communal labour towards benefits for the village as a whole.

Many infrastructural facilities for local development such as roads, schools and dispensaries are provided directly out of central/regional government funds, the village members contributing only the local construction labour involved. Investment in development by the village itself therefore takes the form of the setting up of commercial enterprises of various kinds, of which shops are the most common, and motor vehicles probably the most desired. These are all capital-intensive projects, whereas the village is usually short of money but possessing the major resource of the collective labour of its members. The official scheme for village development thus seems to be that the sale of produce from the communal farm will be a major source of income for the village which can be saved for investment. These internal resources are then to be supplemented by credit from the State banks. Typically the villages are expected to find between a quarter and half of the capital cost of a project, the rest of the money being loaned by the State, and repaid out of the proceeds of the enterprise.

A major obstacle to this road of development has been the lack of progress in setting up communal agricultural enterprises. For reasons detailed below, there has been much greater enthusiasm for capital-intensive, labour-hiring enterprises than for collective agriculture. Few regions of the country have

experienced much success in the latter sphere, and Lindi region, at least until 1981/2, was not one of them. Lacking this source of income, villages intending to set up commercial projects requiring capital have had to look for alternative sources of funds. The villages get a small handling fee for the crops they buy from farmers on behalf of the State marketing authorities. There is a small potential for raising taxes locally. In addition, the income from projects already started can provide funds for new investment. But the most attractive source of finance is credit from the State, and there has been a certain amount of competition between villages to get access to increased proportions of credit over locally raised capital.

Insofar as it is possible to decipher the political motivation of government policy initiatives, one can say that the set of policies described here had as their goal *social* development rather than economic growth in the sense of increased output. The creation of nucleated settlements increased the proximity of farmers to roads, schools, water supplies and health facilities. It was a step towards the fostering of a sense of community, which may be regarded as a prerequisite for the development of an ideology of collectivism; and it increased the villagers' proximity to the institutions of State authority. On the economic side people found themselves further from their fields, trees, and in some areas livestock, and thus the effect on production was never positive, sometimes negative.

Greater efficiency, similarly, was not the reason for encouraging collective agriculture. On the contrary, taking place under the same technical conditions as domestic production, but without the individualistic labour incentives, collective production was inevitably lower. Its rationale was rather in fostering a collectivist spirit, as well as providing a source of income for village-level

investment. Such investment, in turn, could potentially have been provided by private investment, but in accordance with the State's socialist policies it has been judged that planned investment for need is more socially beneficial than private investment in the sectors of greatest profit. These policies therefore should be judged in terms of their social impact; however it is never possible to ignore factors of economic constraint, and the failure to increase the level of rural production has been one cause of the crisis of the Tanzanian economy, which in turn has threatened the viability of the State's social welfare policies.

There are several reasons why the villages' role in establishing labour-hiring enterprises has in general been more enthusiastically pursued than their role as an agricultural producer co-operative. It was not a practical possibility to persuade households to abandon domestic cultivation and rely on the communal field; the peasant family's perception of the risk involved would make this unthinkable. Therefore domestic and communal agriculture were existing side by side and in competition with each other for resources, in particular for the labour time of the individuals involved. Labour on the communal field represents at the least an extra effort over and above the work to ensure household subsistence. But at peak times of the farming year when maximum labour effort is needed, there is not sufficient labour for both, and one must suffer, and most peasant farmers give priority to their own fields.

On the other hand, commercial enterprises such as shops are capital- rather than labour-intensive and involve the labour of a few persons who are duly paid for their work. Thus the majority of the villagers are not directly involved in the management work of setting up or the day-to-day running of the enterprise, but partake of the service it provides. If the capital to start the project comes from a collection among villagers, then a certain sacrifice is

demand, but it is one which less directly threatens the domestic subsistence; the collection can be carried out over a long period of time. Retail enterprises in particular are also a less risk-prone investment than agriculture, where even a high labour input by the farmers may be frustrated by the vagaries of the weather. In addition it is generally true that in an underdeveloped economy such as Tanzania's, trade and transport are more profitable activities than crop production *per se*.

After the villagisation programme, communal agriculture lay dormant as an issue for several years and was abandoned in most of those villages where it had ever been practised. The reasons for this were partly connected with the national food shortage and the campaign during the mid-1970s to maximise food production, when it was tacitly admitted that communal farming was less productive than private. Communal farming was revived as an issue in Lindi Region only in 1981/2. In this season an order was issued from the regional Party authorities that every village in the Region should cultivate a field of at least 100 acres collectively.

Most villages responded to this call by deciding to approach the target in stages, with a smaller acreage gradually increasing over a number of years. The regional authorities then made strenuous attempts to convince village leaders that the targets must be met in that same agricultural year. In every village there was a problem of mobilising sufficient labour to meet the target. Many villages started off with an "all-in-together" approach to work organisation, which was felt to be the most compatible with the spirit of collectivism and community which the Party claimed the work was supposed to engender. However, adequate supervision of individual effort proved impossible under this system and there were poor results in terms of the

amount of work done. Eventually more or less all the villages adopted a system of half- or quarter-acre plots on a village field, which were allocated one per individual or married couple, and cultivated individually at times that suited the cultivator. This removed most of the implications of "the spirit of collective work" and underlined the fact that there was no kind of socialist division of labour in the work, but it enabled a household's work to be individually measured. This measure of work, again, was not, as in an earlier era, so that product could be distributed according to work done, but so that lazy households could be chased up.

The work was thus reduced to a labour cess imposed by the village. Technical conditions approximated to those of ordinary household production, i.e. using hoe and cutlass, and no chemical inputs. The effort put in however was much less than to private fields, since the households were getting no individual return from their labour input. In Mchinga II only about 25 acres were actually planted, and from this they got a very small harvest of only 17 sacks of grain, largely due to the low labour input.

The record of agriculture contrasts with that in other economic spheres. During the period after 1974 when no collective farming was taking place many villages started up co-operative commercial projects, such as shops, milling machines and even lorries. These enterprises therefore became the focus of activity of the village as a collective economic agent. The experience of Mchinga II and the surrounding villages in these projects is described later in this paper.

There is great variation between villages in the degree to which they have progressed in setting up and running their own enterprises. This paper focusses on a "progressive" village rather than a typical one. Some 10% of villages in

Lindi District possess lorries, some owning several. Some villages, on the other hand, have no such projects, not even a village shop. The majority are in a position somewhere in between, but in most villages co-operative enterprise is not very far developed. Time is one factor, and as time goes by more villages begin to get involved in projects, partly in emulation of their neighbours. However with 120 villages in Lindi District alone there are bound to be differences between them in both the human and the natural resources at their disposal. A dynamic and committed village leadership, and the availability of leaders or advisers with commercial experience is an important resource: to some extent such expertise can be built up over time, but inevitably some villages that have a longer history of involvement in the commercial economy and which had earlier access to primary schools etc. are going to be in a better position in this respect.

The hardest thing in many cases is for a population of farmers, with little experience in trade, let alone running a business enterprise, and with no self-confidence in their interactions with government bureaucracy, to get a project off the ground and running smoothly. Once success has been achieved in the first project, experience is built up which will be useful in establishing any future projects, and so there can be a tendency to accelerated expansion. The unfavourable economic conditions within which village enterprise, like all enterprise in Tanzania in the last few years, has had to operate has however been something of a brake on economic expansion.

In addition to the problem of running an enterprise commercially at all, there is the problem of running it profitably while also using it to increase the welfare of the villagers. In some cases there may be a conflict between benefit to the villagers and the aim of profitable operation. For instance, there is one

inland village in another part of the District which owns a bus, but because the village is a considerable distance from a tarmac road, the bus does not run to the village. It runs along the main road, in order to maximise its profit and lengthen its lifetime. From the point of view of the villagers therefore, this bus is just another commercial service, which they can use if they are in that area and for which they are charged like everybody else: the bus duplicates the service of a number of other buses. It does make a profit over operating costs, which goes to the village, but it is apparently all eaten up in somewhat inflated office expenses, with no money being saved for a replacement when the bus's useful lifetime is finished.

The lorry owned by Mchinga II and Ruvu in contrast has, while mainly running a commercial goods service all over the Region, been available to transport villagers on particular occasions, such as attending a religious festival in another village, or standing in as a passenger vehicle when the (private) bus to the village breaks down. In addition it has been used to transport goods for the village shops, at lower cost to the village than hiring a vehicle from outside. This lorry has now been sold, in order to buy a bus; but the villagers are determined that the bus service will run from their village, rather than terminating in Lindi town.

The potential conflict between profitability and benefit to the villagers arises because the benefits which the villagers receive from most of these enterprises are in the form of the provision of services which would not otherwise be available to them, rather than in the form of a financial return as to the share-holders of a private corporation. The benefits accrue in the form of collective rather than individual consumption. There is a conflict between the villagers' interests as the consumers of services, which they want at a

cheap price, and their interest in the long-term viability and continued operation of the enterprise. A balance must be struck.

Establishment and Management of Enterprises: Mchinga II's Experience

The Fishing Enterprise

Following on the establishment of Mchinga II village in late 1974, the first project to get under way was the village fishing enterprise. The boat, originally a gift to an *ujamaa* fishing group within the village from the Prime Minister's Office, was delivered in February 1975. The boat arrived after villagisation and was therefore taken over as a project to be run by the new village government. At this period this was the only enterprise that the village possessed, and was the sole source of income for the village apart from the annual handling levy from the crop authorities. The new village leaders were not very experienced in financial management, and apparently no written accounts were kept.

The boat was an inboard diesel engined vessel equipped with six shark nets. A team of three fishermen was appointed, with a skipper in overall charge of looking after the condition of the boat and nets. The catch was sold on the beach to consumers and traders alike at the going market rate. The fishermen were initially paid a share of 30% of the value of the catch, which later rose to 40%. The rest of the money was periodically put into a bank account. Apparently the money was used for all kinds of purposes by the village leadership, for office and general expenditure, and also for personal loans to themselves, without any formal records being kept. In June 1976 Sh.4,500² saved from the fishing project was used to start the first village

shop: this money was paid back within a year.

As the problems of operation increased, the fisheries bank account remained unused from 1978 onwards as the project was not making enough money to be worth putting in the bank. The boat apparently operated fairly smoothly for the first year or two, but began to develop engine trouble. A major problem for the village was that because of other calls on the use of the money from the project, they had been saving enough to cover ordinary running expenses, but not emergencies such as mechanical breakdowns. The periodic cost of repairing or replacing the nets was also a major charge on the funds and for some of the time they had to hire nets from local fishermen because of the poor state of the village nets. The mechanical problems were never fully solved, and in May 1978 the boat again broke down altogether, and was abandoned. The village then hired a local fisherman's canoe for a share of 15% of the catch and fishing continued with this. The fishermen thereafter demanded and got 50% of the catch because of the harder work of fishing with a sailed/paddled vessel. From the start the village government had found itself in the position of a collective capitalist, having to try to maximise its income from the project at the expense of the employees' pay. Disputes with the crew and the poor state of the nets soon led to the project being wound up altogether.

In late 1982, however, a new Village Manager was appointed, a native of Mchinga who had been working in government departments in Dar es Salaam. He brought a new enthusiasm to revive the project. At this time although there was a catastrophic national shortage of nets and all imported fishing gear, there were some nets on sale in Lindi provided under British aid through a development project. The new Village Manager personally loaned the village

Sh.5,000 with which it was able to purchase new nets and start fishing again, using the canoe, with a new crew of three men, getting 50% of the catch. At the time when I finally left Tanzania in April 1983, the project was still operating.

The Village Shop

The second enterprise to be started up within the village was the village shop. As previously mentioned, the government expected all villages to have a shop, as one of the most important economic enterprises. Mchinga II village shop was started in June 1976, with a Sh.4,500 loan from the village bank account (i.e. the fisheries bank account; later the shop acquired its own bank account). This was supplemented in December of that year by a Sh.15,000 loan from the National Bank of Commerce. For the first couple of years the shop ran well and made a good profit. In July 1978 a second branch at the other end of the village was opened with a Sh.3,800 loan from shop no.1.

But it was just at this time that trading conditions started to get particularly difficult. Although the loan that started off the first shop had been paid back within a year, the loan to establish the second had still not been repaid by 1982, and the shop was fighting to get itself on a sound footing. The biggest problem for the shops that arose particularly from 1978 onwards was the shortage of consumer goods. This was characterised by the rise of the black market and increasing shortages of goods at the Regional Trading Corporation (RTC), where the village-owned shops were obliged to buy. These shortages meant that turnover was low, and profit small, even if the initial capital was high, because goods were not being sold. The result was that overheads, such as rent (the shop building was rented from an Indian family resident in Lindi,

who had formerly had a shop in the village), wages and transport costs ate up the capital.

The village shops and the co-operative shops in the village have individuals, members of or appointed by the Committee that supervises the shop, who act as buyers and go to the RTC in Lindi once a week on the shop's behalf to try to get an allocation of goods. There is considerable scope for corruption in this work in the current situation of widespread goods shortages. Many buyers, having got an allocation at the RTC, are able to sell to black marketeers the small quantity of goods that they have obtained, and return to tell the shop Committee that they were unsuccessful at the RTC. Thus the goods get sold to the public at black market prices, the shops lose money, while the buyers and the black marketeers prosper. One buyer for a co-operative shop was dismissed for this practice while I was in the village; he thereupon and apparently very successfully set up a black market 'shop' in his own house, having learnt the trade during his years of contact with it.

Before the arrival of the Village Manager in 1978, and the starting in 1979 of a cash book detailing the use of money, there were no proper accounting procedures. It seems that there was no auditing either until this period when annual audits by the Department of *Ujamaa* and Co-operatives began. In the early days, money from the village shop, as with the fisheries account, was siphoned off into loans, including personal loans to village leaders. This reduced the capital available for expansion even at the time when trade was going well. From about the start of 1979, the shop bank account has remained virtually untouched because all the cash received for goods is used to buy new goods and to pay running expenses, and there is no bankable profit.

The village shops coexist with two private shops and a number of smaller co-operative shops (see below). They share with these the function of supplying general consumer goods, to the extent that these are available. The village shops however have also taken on a particular role in the supply of cheap food. Many people in the village are dependent on purchased food supplies in years of poor harvest. Maize flour available through private channels is expensive, about seven shillings a kilo. The village government has taken on the responsibility of providing cheaper subsistence food by arranging for bulk supplies of dried cassava from private dealers in Newala (where there is a surplus of cassava), which is sold in the village shops for two shillings and fifty cents a kilo.

The Cattle Herd

The third enterprise established in Mchinga II was the herd of village cattle. Unlike the others this was not established on the basis of a decision by the village council. It was decided by the regional Party authorities that all villages should acquire cattle to be managed on a communal basis. The aim was to improve the diet of the southern Regions, which was low in protein, and to see if cattle-keeping was viable, for long-term aims including ox-ploughing etc. The villages were obliged to buy the cattle from the Department of Livestock in 1977 at Sh.800 a head. Mchinga II bought six.

A collection was held in Mchinga II (50 cents per person) to raise money to build a cattle-pen and to pay the initial wages of the man given responsibility for looking after the cattle. The herdsman receives Sh.70 a month and repairs to the pen currently cost them about Sh.800 a year. They spend Sh.42 a month on injections against trypanosomiasis, administered by

the Divisional Livestock Officer. Several of the cattle have been sold or slaughtered, for reasons of sickness with the exception of one which was slaughtered for a village feast on Peasants' Day 1981. By the beginning of 1982 there were 16 cattle in the herd, of which three were among the ones originally bought by the village, and the rest were their calves.

The two cattle which were sold raised Sh.2,000 between them. The cattle which were slaughtered raised only a few hundred shillings, less than their live market value, because the meat was sold off in the village shop at prices which the villagers could afford: first six shillings and later ten shillings per kilo. This is something like a quarter of the market price of meat in Lindi town, and in fact cheaper than fish in this fishing village. Apart from livestock and meat sales, their only income from the cattle is from sales of milk. They get only five or six litres of milk a week, because the cattle are a meat breed, not a milk breed, and the milk is sold for two shillings a half litre.

The village makes a considerable loss on the cattle, and it is not an enterprise that is run on anything like 'economic' terms. The village leaders see it instead as a service that the village runs for the villagers to provide them with meat and milk, and because the government has asked them to do this for the development of the Region.

The money to support the project comes from other village funds, as well as from the periodic sale of cattle. Mchinga II is one of the few villages in the area which still maintains a herd of cattle; in most of the other villages that acquired them, they died or were sold within a fairly short space of time. It is slightly ironic that Mchinga II, as a coastal village with a better supply of fish than most of its neighbours, has somewhat less need of the cattle as a protein source. In any case, the amount of actual meat and milk that they provide

villagers with is tiny.

In 1982 one beast from the herd was sold to help meet ongoing running expenses; two were killed by lions (and the meat sold in the village) and five were sold to help raise money for the new village bus, leaving a herd of eight.

The Village Lorry

The most recent, and financially significant enterprise established by Mchinga II has been the transport project. From the first establishment of the village government the acquisition of a vehicle by the village had been a priority in the minds of its leaders as an enterprise for development. A bus service to the village exists, but is unreliable, and the considerable traffic of passengers and produce between Mchinga and Lindi often has to rely on lifts hitched on passing lorries.

In late 1975 the village leadership had in fact written to the Tanzania Rural Development Bank enquiring about the possibility of a loan for the purchase of a bus. In 1977 they made a formal application and were turned down, presumably because of their lack of initial capital. In that year the leadership raised over Sh.20,000 through a collection of cashew nuts and from other village funds.

They had by this time decided to go for a cheaper goods vehicle, a five ton Bedford truck. Karadha Ltd., a commercial subsidiary of the National Bank of Commerce, was prepared to loan 50% of the purchase price (which was about Sh.200,000) to villages which could raise the rest of the money themselves. By this time Mchinga II had an ex-MP, Mwalimu Sinani, a native of the village, working on their behalf to secure them the loans they needed, and he proved

their greatest asset politically. They finally obtained three-quarters of the purchase price as a loan from the Karadha Company, and made up the difference between the money they had raised and the deposit with a loan from the Lindi branch of the National Bank of Commerce (NBC). They were committed to eighteen monthly payments of just under Sh.10,000 to Karadha.

The big problem then for the village was the management of an enterprise involving such large amounts of money, which was quite outside the experience of most of them. A Sub-Committee of the Village Transport and Building Committee was set up to supervise the operation of the enterprise, with the village's three political heavyweights on it: Mwalimu Sinani, the former MP; Zuberi Kitenge, the former District Council Chairman; and Mohammedi Kampunda, at that time Party Chairman for Lindi Urban District. All of these were men born in the village and retaining strong ties with it who had been able in the credit negotiations to use their influence with the powers that be for the benefit of their fellow villagers; and also to use their experience to help the villagers to frame realistic proposals. Their experience continued to be valuable in supervising the management of the enterprise. The Chairman of the Transport and Building Committee of the Village Council was appointed full-time manager of the project and given an allowance of Sh.400 a month. A driver and 'turn boy' were also hired.

There was a disagreement over where the lorry should be based: a substantial part of the Village Council thought that it should be based in the village, to reduce costs. The vehicle Sub-Committee however made out a strong case for basing the lorry in Lindi and opening an office there. The latter course was the one eventually adopted. Probably had it not been, the whole enterprise would have failed, since the operation of all vehicle enterprises,

public or private, in the late 1970s was on an insecure footing. Shortages of fuel and spares among other things plagued operations, and a high level of bookings (which could better be secured by having an office on the spot in town) was necessary in order for the project to break even.

The demand for transport, however, was quite high, because there was an overall shortage of transport in the region. The state of the roads, especially off the one tarmac main road, leads to increased problems of maintenance and spares which do not favour the long life of any vehicle. Spare parts and fuel in themselves are even harder to obtain in Lindi Region than in most parts of the country, partly because of the communications difficulty itself between Lindi and Dar es Salaam. These conditions do not particularly encourage private entrepreneurs to start up transport enterprises in this part of the country.

The village lorry managed to get fairly solid bookings, in particular from the parastatal crop authorities who had the responsibility to collect the crops that were bought for them by the villages and stored in village godowns. The crop authorities' own transport fleets were quite inadequate for the task, and they therefore had to hire vehicles to a considerable extent. The repayments on the loan for the lorry were finally paid off in April 1982.

The Village Bus

Even before the repayments on the first vehicle had been completed, the Village Council was debating ways of acquiring a second vehicle. The Council retained its strong desire to purchase a passenger vehicle. Although the lorry had in fact frequently been used for carrying passengers it was obviously not well suited to this task, and the practice was in fact formally illegal, because of the insurance conditions. The Village Council wanted if possible to

purchase a new bus on credit without having to sell the lorry, in order to expand their operations and not to lose the benefits of the lorry such as the transport of shop goods etc. to the village.

Enquiries were made during 1981 about the possibility of buying a Leyland bus. The Village Councillors were told that there was a vehicle available in Dar es Salaam which they could have if they found a deposit of Sh.350,000 by the end of February. The Village Council and the vehicle Sub-Committee failed to agree on a course of action, and a joint meeting of the Councils of Mchinga II and Ruvu was called on New Year's Day 1982 to discuss the problem.

The Councillors at the meeting reaffirmed their intense desire to acquire a bus, but wanted to do this without selling the lorry they already owned. To sell it it seemed would be to take a step back in order to take a step forward. However selling the existing vehicle did seem to be the only way of raising even a significant fraction of the deposit. The meeting concluded with a resolution to levy a tax on the villagers to raise the money, but within a few days this was recognised to be impossible: the money was simply not there in the hungry months before the harvest. The February deadline was missed.

By May it was announced that another bus was available in Dar es Salaam, at a price of Sh.900,000. At a meeting on the 13th of June, the Village Chairman announced that Karadha would loan two-thirds of the money, and the NBC Lindi branch had agreed that if the village could come up with Sh.170,000 it would loan the money to make up the rest of the deposit. The meeting, in a more down-to-earth mood than before, decided that selling the lorry was the only practical course. Its sale would raise about Sh.150,000. Of the remaining money to be found, some could be raised by selling cattle, and

it was decided to hold a collection within the village to make up the balance. The purchase was completed in December 1982, but due to a road accident the bus was not yet in operation by April 1983 when I left the country.

Village Finances and the Palm Wine Trade

Having looked at the four main economic enterprises set up by the village government of Mchinga in the years from 1975, it is worth looking briefly at the financial organisation of the village and its sources of income. The three officials most importantly concerned with finance in the village are the Chairman of the Planning and Finance Committee, the Village Manager, and the Village Book-keeper. The latter two are not members of the Village Council as such: the Manager is paid by the State as an adviser to the village leadership, while the Book-keeper is a functionary paid by the village government from its income.

Under law every Village Council must have five Committees including a Planning and Finance Committee, and the Chairman of the latter is the official responsible for signing cheques for the village. While the Finance Committee Chairman is ultimately responsible for financial matters within the village, and must keep an eye on what is going on, the day to day running of financial matters are, in Mchinga II, in the hands of the Manager and Book-keeper. Many villages have neither such official; a Manager is posted to the more "progressive" villages, i.e. generally those which have, or anticipate having, significant projects for him to manage.

Managers were first sent out in 1978 to try to improve the economic performance of villages by putting at their disposal people with more expertise in matters of planning and business than are usually found among the members

of a peasant farming community. The Managers were taken from among people in government service; the incumbent in Mchinga II at the time of fieldwork had been working in the Ministry of Natural Resources in Dar es Salaam. They are then sent on a village management training scheme at one of a number of colleges around the country. The function of a Village Manager is to think up new projects to benefit the village, and practical ways of implementing them, to put these to the Village Council, and, if they are agreed, to participate in the management of them. Managers are useful in practice, because they tend to keep the village innovating and expanding its range of activities. Managers also in principle, and to a large extent in practice, have a better understanding than village leaders of the problems of implementation of such projects, and how to cope with them.

Book-keepers in villages are sometimes formally trained, and a training scheme exists, but the majority of them at the moment are merely people who have completed primary school and are capable of keeping some kind of track of the income and expenditure of the village. There are considerable possibilities for embezzlement of funds, especially in villages with less formalised records. Mchinga II is now on its third Book-keeper, the first two having been found to be misappropriating money. One of these has since paid the money back, while the other ran away. A cash book with detailed records of income and expenditure for all the projects and funds separately was started in 1979, and seems to have somewhat curbed the opportunities for these practices. The village's accounts are now subject to annual audit by the Department of *Ujamaa* and Co-operatives, which helps to discourage fraud, although the Department does not reach every village every year and their inspection does not always uncover all forms of misuse of funds.

By now the village has four bank accounts, the fisheries account (a savings account), the shops account, the vehicle account, and a general office account (all current accounts). The first two are, as previously mentioned, currently in practice unused. The general office account was opened in July 1981 in order to curb the practice that had previously obtained of using money from all sources for all purposes. The idea was that money from each project was to be kept in a special fund and used for the development of that project; if a surplus of money occurred in one project it could be used for other projects, but on the basis of returnable loans. The general office account was to receive income other than from enterprises, i.e. from the crop handling fee and from village local taxes. The money in this account could be used for general office expenditure and any other approved expenditure such as entertainment of official visitors or the preparations for the village Peasants' Day celebration. To give the office account some extra income, a series of small taxes on local trade was introduced: on lime-making, on the making of palm wine, and a barely enforceable tax on the selling of fruit, vegetables etc. within the village.

The most successful of the taxes developed into a village-run merchant enterprise in itself. This concerned locally brewed alcoholic drink. The standard local alcoholic beverage is palm wine (*tembo*) made from the coconut palm. Despite the opposition of many of the more religiously inclined members of the village to its use, there is a large demand for it within the village. A considerable number of palm owners have their trees tapped for *tembo*. Palms are rarely tapped by their owners, who instead employ a tapper, usually an immigrant to Mchinga, often a Makonde from Newala District.

In May 1980 the village government instituted a tax on *tembo* and decided that the most effective way to enforce this would be for the village to

run its own 'club' (*kilabu*). This was an example of a project which, unlike the others, was set up with the aim rather of generating an income to the village than of providing a service to the villagers, although having an official drinking place also had health advantages. It could be inspected and vetted by the Health Officer, which was not the case for the courtyards of private houses where people had formerly been accustomed to drink (and in practice continued to in many cases).

The 'club' was an open area provided with logs for people to sit on and a central covered dispensing area. The *tembo* was brought here by the tappers and sold for a fixed price to a village-appointed "barman", who would then retail to consumers for a higher price. The difference between the two prices was the village "tax" which was thus realised in the form of a merchant profit. This was thought to be more practical than to try to exact a tax on sales of drink in private houses.

It was declared illegal for anybody to sell *tembo* except to the village 'club', where they would get a price of two shillings per half litre, the beverage being sold to the public for two shillings and fifty cents. These prices were raised in 1981 to two shillings and twenty-five cents and three shillings, and in 1982 to three shillings to the tappers and four shillings to the public. During 1982 this was providing the village government with a steady income of about Sh.40 a day. The main problem from the point of view of the village government was the many opportunities for getting round the village regulations. Many tappers and owners continued to sell a proportion of their *tembo* in their own houses, where the price that was charged was raised to match the charge in the village club, although they were paying no tax to the village. The village government tried putting up the official price to attract

tappers to sell their *tembo* in the club, but of course this only resulted in the unofficial price going up also. Nevertheless a regular supply of beverage to the club was assured, and the village did get an income, even though it was not as much as they potentially might have got had all complied with the regulation.

The other problem was corruption on the part of the village officials involved. It turned out that the Village Council member who had been running the club since it started had been pocketing a proportion of the income. This had long been suspected, but was only discovered when the income suddenly and unexplainedly went down over a couple of weeks. The tree owners said that there had been no drop in the amount of *tembo* produced, but that unfortunately they did not have the receipts issued at the club. It was found that the bar-Keeper had been writing out the receipts and the carbon copies separately for different amounts, so underdeclaring to the village the amount of *tembo* actually sold; and one week he had for some reason got greedy. The village government had no proof as the tree owners claimed to have lost their receipts, so they could take no action other than quietly dismissing the official concerned. Within a few weeks he had hired some coconut palms from an owner and was having them tapped for *tembo*, apparently largely sold unofficially.

Summary Chronology of Events in Mchinga II

Sept.	1974	Establishment of " <i>ujamaa</i> village"
Feb.	1975	Delivery of fishing boat
Nov.	1975	First enquiry to bank about bus purchase
June	1976	First village shop started
Dec.	1976	Shop capital supplemented by government loan

July	1977	Fishing boat breakdown; laid up for several months
	1977	Purchase of village cattle
Oct.	1977	First formal application for loan for bus: rejected
May	1978	Abandonment of motor boat and switch to fishing canoe
	1978	Arrival of Village Manager
July	1978	Second village shop started
	1979	Cash book system introduced
July	1979	Fishing project abandoned altogether
May	1980	Village bar started
June	1980	Lorry purchased
Feb.	1981	Village Council resolves to purchase bus
July	1981	General office fund started
July	1981	Small local taxes instituted
Jan.	1982	Village fails to find deposit money for bus
June	1982	All payments completed on lorry; lorry sold to finance bus purchase
late	1982	Fishing project resuscitated
Dec.	1982	Bus purchase approved and deposit paid.

Enterprises in Other Villages

During my stay in Mchinga II I managed to visit all of the other 13 constituted villages in Mchinga Division and to collect some information about the village-run enterprises that had been started up in them. There were no

villages which at that time (early 1982) did not have any village enterprises, but there were some which had very few and had started very late. All had a village shop. At one village this, the village's first project, had only been started a month before my visit, with Sh.4,000 capital raised out of the crop levy money. At another the shop was virtually non-existent, its retail goods apparently consisting only of a few boxes of matches. It had been started in 1979 with a capital of Sh.2,800 from a village collection: two years later it had only about Sh.1,000 in cash, which was then seized by the police investigating the Village Secretary's alleged involvement in the theft of Sh.15,000 of Cashewnut Authority money.

There is a clear contrast between those villages which have raised money internally to start a shop, usually only about Sh.3-4,000, and those which have managed to get a loan from the National Bank of Commerce. Shops of the latter kind are considerably better stocked and probably more profitable (for this reason) than the often very meagre retail outlets which villages have been able to set up using their own resources. In some cases shops started on bank credit replaced smaller shops which had been started at an earlier period, but had foundered.

The *ujamaa* cattle with which villages were provided in 1976-7 had a mixed reception in the different villages. All the villages except one (which missed out for some reason) received cattle, which they paid for, but only at Mchinga II and three other villages were there still herds of *ujamaa* cattle in 1982. The reason for the differential survival in different villages is not entirely clear. One reason must be the different degrees of motivation on the part of the different village governments to keep a cattle project going, especially as it does not bring much if any profit to the village. Regular

veterinary attention is essential for the survival of cattle in this heavily disease-infested area, and some villages have been more lax than others. In some cases the cattle were deliberately sold in order to raise money for some project, and in fact later in 1982 all five cattle from Ruvu were sold to put towards the deposit on the Mchinga II/Ruvu bus.

In the villages somewhat inland of the coastal strip there are more timber trees available than there are around Mchinga. Much of the timber in the Division is within the Dimba Forest Reserve and cannot be touched, but there are still a considerable number of trees in the unpopulated area around. These are exploited by private individuals, and also in some cases by villages. In one village the village government acts as an agent for timber production, taking an order for a certain number of planks, and employing local craftsmen to saw up the timber. The village government pays the Forestry Department the necessary licence fee for cutting down the tree. In another village there is both a village-run plank-making enterprise, and a village carpentry workshop. The former employs sawyers who take 40% of the proceeds of the sales of the planks, which normally are sold to the village carpentry shop. There a different set of craftsmen are employed as carpenters, making furniture etc. to order, and taking 30% of the proceeds, the rest going to the village. The timber and carpentry industries in the area generally are in a very poor way at the moment because of the acute shortage of tools, particularly saws.

Another enterprise which has been started in many villages is the operation of a milling machine for making flour from grain. Such machines are quite common in some other wealthier parts of Tanzania, but in Lindi Region they are only beginning to be introduced in most areas. They save a great deal of work for women in pounding the grain, so the service benefit to consumers

is real and obvious. These machines are supplied by the Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO); by the end of my fieldwork three villages in Mchinga Division had obtained such machines, with a Sh.13,000 deposit and credit from SIDO itself.

Previously the only milling machines in the area were two privately-owned ones, one at a mission station and the other on a sisal estate. Most villagers in the Division therefore did not have easy access to one, although some took their grain by bus to be ground. Even so it is unlikely that milling machines will be established in all villages. Mchinga II has no plans to get one, partly because of local food patterns: sorghum is not made into flour in this area and Mchinga II grows relatively little maize.

Only two villages out of the 13 have started transport enterprises. The history of the Mchinga II enterprises has been detailed; there is also a village lorry at a second village in the area, a seven-ton Isuzu which was bought in 1981, apparently without a loan, the money having been collected over the years from various sources. A prime mover in the establishment of this enterprise was the local Village Chairman, a very well-known and respected man who has been active in District politics since independence.

Success and Failure

It is important to analyse the extent to which one can say that villages have succeeded in developing co-operatively-based rural enterprises for local needs. While Mchinga II has been one of the more progressive villages in this respect, there are many villages which have gone down a similar path. The kind of enterprises they have set up have been in general tailored to the needs

of the local community. In some cases (as with shops) they have to a large extent replaced private enterprise; in most other cases private enterprise was simply not investing anyway.

The fishing project was the first in Mchinga, and met with the least success, in its original form at least. Fishing in fact appears to be one of the most difficult forms of enterprise to co-operatize, especially where as in Mchinga there is a tradition of independent artisanal fishermen. There have been several experiments with fishing co-operatives along the Tanzanian coast, and most have floundered fairly quickly. The difficulties with this project were both mechanical and to do with labour organisation. The main incentive to fishermen to participate in this kind of co-operative fishing is the chance of access to higher-cost, more productive equipment than they would normally be able to use, so that there is a benefit to themselves as well as an income to the village. But there are chronic problems of maintaining marine motor engines in particular in a village situation in which there are no trained mechanics and access to spare parts is difficult. Fuel is also expensive, and both fuel and spare parts have in the current economic situation become not only much more expensive but often very hard to obtain at all. The large-ply nets used with such motor boats also get damaged quickly, and the nylon to repair them is imported and has become very hard indeed to obtain. Without such capital-intensive equipment, there is not necessarily any greater return to co-operative than to private fishing, except that part of the income goes to the village. There is no tradition here of fishermen hiring their labour out to craft-owners, as there is in some fishing ports in Tanzania. Thus there is likely to be conflict between the fishermen and the village authorities over the former's reward, as indeed was evidenced in the earlier period. With no great commitment to co-operative fishing as a valued source of income there is much less incentive on

the part of the fishermen to take great care of the equipment, and they were constantly being accused by the village leaders of neglect in this regard.

The fishing project was re-started at a time when fishing gear was particularly difficult to obtain for private fishermen, but the village had the opportunity to purchase some through development aid channels. This new initiative also coincided with the appointment of a new Village Manager, locally born, who loaned his own money to the village, and could well be more successful in the labour management of the enterprise.

In the case of fishing the village was competing directly with private fishing opportunities for the labour of the fishermen. In the case of the cattle herd there was no such conflict. On the other hand there was little or no experience locally of keeping cattle, a factor which contributed to the demise of the herds in many villages. Mchinga II was relatively successful in building up a herd, from six to 16 cattle in four years, but a considerably larger herd would be needed for economic viability. Once the herd increased, they would then easily be able to afford to sell beasts to the urban market to meet running costs, and to slaughter beasts to sell cheap meat to the villagers. But there are problems of maintaining a large herd, both because of their inexperience, and because of the extremely dense settlement and lack of good grazing locally. In addition the herd represents a capital asset which there is a constant temptation to realise to help with immediate financial problems. This was seen in Mchinga II in the course of raising the deposit for the bus.

The village shop is an enterprise for which the relevant expertise is widespread in Mchinga, traditionally a trading settlement. However chronic shortages of consumer goods mean that the shop can only just about cover its overheads, and the former are exacerbated by the fact that the shop is in

practice tied to the Regional Trading Corporation as a source of supply.

Transport projects have a great attraction as prestige symbols. The village lorry was undoubtedly a powerful focus of local pride in their achievements. On Peasants' Day 1981 for example it was garlanded with branches and driven through the village in triumph. The attractions of such a vehicle as a symbol of progressiveness in the drive for development constituted a considerable part of the reason for the energy with which the Village Council pursued its purchase, even at the expense of building up other enterprises. But also, transport projects represent an attempt to get to grips with what is most commonly perceived as the fundamental problem of the southern Regions: their isolation from the rest of the country.

The lorry represented a large capital investment, whose management was outside the general experience of villagers. Thus they needed the help of specially qualified persons even to get the loan, and later to take the necessary management decisions. With an office in town, a flow of bookings was more or less ensured which would cover the repayments; the danger lay in accident or mechanical breakdown and the possibility of a halt in repayments which could lead to repossession. The necessity of continuous bookings meant that sometimes when the village required its services for transport of goods or people to Mchinga the lorry was not available; but in general it managed to combine its outside bookings with a service to the villagers (for which they likewise paid). In the case of the passenger vehicle, most of the same considerations apply; it was a larger and more prestigious vehicle, but also should have a more frequent and tangible service benefit to the villagers.

As I have already noted, there were other kinds of village-run enterprise in which Mchinga II was not involved, the most common being milling machines

and workshops. Milling machines are particularly suited to village operation, as they fill a local need, are operated *in situ* and generate a constant income to pay for themselves. They are however rather specific to maize-consuming areas, and machines for hulling rice and sorghum, for example, are much less readily available. Carpentry workshops depend on a manufactured input, saws, which are very hard to obtain in Tanzania today. Their output also is frequently not bought by the villagers, but very often by urban dwellers seeking goods at reduced prices. Thus the village would derive the income benefit, but relatively few villagers would benefit from the service itself.

There are inevitable problems of management with these enterprises. Corruption is always a problem, but not necessarily an insurmountable one. The introduction of fuller and more ordered accounts for villages has reduced it though not eliminated it. Villages with really corrupt leaderships tend not to start projects at all, or they founder quickly. For those for whom office is only a route to enrichment there are faster ways, such as stealing the crop purchase advance from the marketing authorities. Inept rather than corrupt management is more of a problem. Where the project is financed by a loan, management failures in one project will tend to lead to the village not being considered again. Conversely, successful villages get a "progressive" reputation and attract more funds. With such a large number of villages, persons of management potential are inevitably unevenly spread over them. However there is certainly a potential for a process of learning through experience on the part of village leaders. In the course of their experience, the leaders of Mchinga II developed a greater sense of economic needs and practicalities in planning and managing projects. One major factor was the transition from the type of project represented by the fishing boat, which in the first instance was a free gift, to that represented by the lorry, which was financed almost entirely on credit.

The necessity to ensure steady loan repayments meant that the whole project had to be planned from the start on the basis of economic viability, and all decisions had to be subject to that criterion, whether or not conjoined with other criteria.

The Village in Relation to Private Enterprises

Private enterprise in Mchinga II village is of several different kinds. There are first of all the ordinary villagers, the farmers, whose prime commerce is the sale of their agricultural produce. For most crops the State officially has sole buying rights; producer prices are fixed by the Marketing Development Bureau in Dar es Salaam and the buying rights are vested in the crop authorities which are parastatal organisations responsible for the buying and wholesaling of different crops. The village government acts as the buying agent for these authorities, buying crops from the farmers on money advanced by the authorities, storing them until collection by the authorities, and receiving a handling fee for each kilo of crops bought.

However, the crop authorities have not in practice been able to maintain the monopoly which they legally hold over buying. Many farmers find it easy and more profitable to sell their crops to private buyers who offer higher prices. These can then store the produce secretly until the rainy season, when food is short and prices are high, and they can sell for well above the officially set retail price. The price offered to the farmer by the black market buyer is determined by the variations in local supply, unlike the official price which is preset and constant, so that at harvest time in a year of good yields, the private buyer may offer no more than the official price and sometimes less.

But they do offer ready cash at the time of harvest, whereas the farmer intending to sell to the village godown may have to wait a considerable time after the harvest until the cash advance from the authority arrives at the godown and buying can start.

Much of the trade that goes on within villages is of the black market type. The village government has the legal duty to try to stamp this out. In fact it is not stamped out because for a combination of reasons it is in no individual's interests to be the one to start trying.

The *walanguzi* (black marketeers) provide goods that are not obtainable through official channels. Although this unavailability is exacerbated or even in some cases possibly created by the diversion of goods into black market channels, to create a significant re-channelling of goods back into the shops would require widespread and concerted action against the black marketeers. If *walanguzi* were to be effectively stopped from operating in one particular village, it would be unlikely to lead to a significantly greater availability of goods at government prices in that village. Probably the goods would instead be sold on the black market in some other village, and the conscientious village would simply lose all access to the goods. In addition to this factor the village officials are able to demand bribes in cash and kind from *walanguzi* for protection from legal proceedings, which it is worth it to them to pay. This is a powerful incentive to officials not to stop the system, and such opportunities for bribe-taking are thought by many people to be a major incentive to those who seek political office at village level.

In relation to the official sector of private trade, however, the village government has a formally defined supervisory role. The Village Council is responsible for making recommendations to the District authorities in respect

of applications for licences for privately-owned shops and tea-shops. In making or refusing such recommendations the council takes account of the economic position of the applicant and ability to carry on the business; there is also the question of political acceptability, e.g. with regard to black market activities, to which the Councillors have a distinctly ambivalent attitude. In the case of tea-shops, village governments have a further involvement in that they can fix the prices which the owners charge, a process which involves weighing up the public interest against the owners' protestations of their high costs.

The licensees for shops and tea-shops pay a licence fee and tax to the District authorities, a process in which the village government is not directly involved. Co-operative enterprise is favoured by government over private, and is subject to privileges such as not paying direct taxation. The village government does levy taxes, as mentioned above, on some of the major forms of private informal trade within the village. In the taxes that the village imposes directly there is an appropriation of resources by the village government from the sphere of private commerce for the purpose of accumulation for enterprises of its own. Since the licensed private traders pay tax to the State they are in effect also helping to finance co-operative enterprises; since it is the State, through the banks, that mainly makes credit available for such enterprises to be started.

In the *tembo* business the village has declared for itself a monopoly of the trade, and therefore attempts to suppress the private trade by administrative means rather than simply entering into competition with it. In the field of transport, the village is competing with private owners of vehicles, mostly Asians in Lindi town. They compete not only for business - such competition is not particularly intense due to the severe overall transport shortage in this

Region - but also for supplies such as fuel and spare parts. This latter competition is often fierce and involves vehicles owned by government institutions as well. Government vehicles get priority in the official allocation of these goods; conversely private entrepreneurs are in better position to obtain goods through unofficial or illegal channels since their accounts are not open to public inspection.

Village enterprises are in an intermediate position in both these respects, being more flexible in their practice than government departments, but with a greater requirement of accountability than private enterprises. This is equally true in the retail field, where private shops often find it difficult to get allocations of goods from the Regional Trading Corporation as village shops do, but can buy from alternative, possibly black market sources, and therefore are often better stocked than the village shops.

The village, then, relates to private entrepreneurs in two separate ways. With regard to those within the village the village government is responsible for supervising and regulating their activities. With regard to private entrepreneurs in general within any field in which the village government sets up any enterprises of its own, it is in competition with them as another operator within the market.

The regulatory position of the village government with regard to private shops, for example, effectively enables it to safeguard its own enterprise against local competition. Recommendations are only given for licences if the Council perceives there to be a need for the new shop, e.g. if it is in a part of the village where there are currently no shops. If the proposed shop were to be one that would come into competition with one of the existing village-run shops, there would be little possibility of its being recommended. In addition

to this, since 1976 it has been much harder for private individuals to get licences at all to start shops. Licence fees were raised and the number of licences issued to private individuals reduced in an attempt by District and higher level authorities to intervene to favour the growth of co-operative and village shops.

It should also however be borne in mind that the relation between village-run and private enterprise is by no means purely antagonistic. The village enterprises offer a service to villagers as consumers which can in some cases be of direct benefit to them as entrepreneurs. For example, the village lorry provides an extra means of transport for villagers to take their crops, livestock or fish to market in Lindi, while village-run milling machines can be used by traders in the village who have purchased grain at harvest time and want to grind it in the wet season and sell it as flour to increase their profit. Such commercial considerations are not easily separable from the general consumption benefits provided by the services, but they form a significant part of the incentive to active villagers to get such enterprises started up.

Finally the situation with regard to black market entrepreneurs illustrates some of the contradictions implicit in the village institution itself. As an administrative body, the village is charged with the duty of applying the law, which prohibits unlicensed trading in many goods. As a collective entrepreneur and the operator of retail enterprises the village has an interest in removing the activities which are sapping the source of supply for the village shops and endangering their profitable operation. But the problem is that the leadership which takes decisions for the village are themselves individuals, with individual consumption needs, which the black market satisfies, both generally, through making goods available for purchase, and particularly for the

leadership, through gifts and bribes. These individual interests often override the collective interest and lead to the pursuit of short-term gain for individuals at the expense of long-term collective benefit.

This is not to say that individuals can never forgo consumption possibilities for the sake of the village, because clearly, when collections for example are made they do just that. But there is a powerful tension between individual and collective interests which requires particular political conditions for the victory of the latter. Given the necessarily unequal distribution of power within the village it is obvious that, while the village leadership can to a limited extent subdue through administrative means the pursuit of individual interest by the other households that compose the village, the situation is much more dangerous with regard to the individual interests of the members of the leadership themselves. In some cases these interests are overridden by personal political commitment, but this is by no means generally the case.

The Allocation of State Credit

The majority of the villages that set up co-operative enterprises do not do so purely or largely out of internal resources, as we have seen. The village's sources of income are small, and to raise enough money to establish a significant enterprise from scratch would take many years. Under-capitalization was a major reason for the decline of many village-run co-operative shops that were set up in the earlier period. Most Village Councils with ambitions towards co-operative enterprise look towards the State banks as a source for credit to get the project going. Credit is supplied to *ujamaa* villages by the National Bank of Commerce and the Tanzania Rural Development Bank, each

of them specialising in different kinds of project. Each village must engage in bargaining with the higher authorities over the allocation of resources. Thus to an extent villages are in competition with each other for these resources.

The villages' approaches to the banks are mediated by the Department of Co-operatives (formerly Department of *Ujamaa* and Co-operatives) whose role is to supervise village-run enterprises in general and to encourage their formation. The process of negotiating with the bank officials is often daunting to the village leaders who may have little experience of the workings of bureaucratic institutions, and Department officials can help them to present their case. Similarly the Department can weed out unworkable proposals before they reach the banks and can put additional pressure on villages to meet the credit conditions.

The process of negotiating for credit involves presenting the village's record in the best possible light in terms of credit-worthiness and management potential. This skill of presentation is one which village leaders acquire to some extent in any case in the course of visits by Party leaders to inspect the progress of development in the village. Villages which have already established some projects are obviously going to be assessed on the results of those enterprises. If they have been successful this stands the village in good stead, and if they have been unsuccessful they have a lot of explaining to do as to the particular unavoidable conditions which led to failure. The example of Mchinga II shows that a village is in the strongest position when it can command the support of political 'brokers': people either in current positions of power or with experience of official posts who can both advise the village leadership on the best ways of presenting their proposals and their arguments, and can also help to secure approval for them by manipulating personal

connections with the relevant officials.

Ujamaa Villages and Ujamaa

In this paper we have seen that the post-1974 villages have been most successful in the sphere of merchant enterprise rather than that with which they are most usually associated, collective agriculture. It is worth examining the relationship between these activities and the national political ideology of *ujamaa*, and the role which it assigns to villages. Village commercial enterprises are usually referred to as '*ujamaa*' enterprises - *ujamaa* shops etc. Indeed the village as an economic unit has to some extent appropriated the word '*ujamaa*' which formerly was used for a greater range of groupings such as voluntary associations of farmers or a group of people owning a co-operative shop.

In the field of shops at least, such co-operative groups still exist in rural areas, although for most activities they have been replaced by the village. Co-operative shops that are not run by the village government are permitted because they permit a more flexible approach to fund-raising - they are usually run by one of the Party-affiliated bodies such as the Youth League or the Women's Union, which collects money among its members for the purpose of starting up a shop (often a very small one). These contributors are then formally described as "members" of the shop, though they get no dividend from the profits. It is illegal for the shop to discriminate in favour of its "members" in the allocation of scarce goods, though this does happen from time to time.

The 1975 Villages and *Ujamaa* Villages Act distinguishes between a 'village' as a legal corporation and an '*ujamaa* village' where a significant amount of activities are carried out in common; but for all practical purposes such a distinction has since been dropped, and all villages refer to themselves as *kijiji cha ujamaa* (*ujamaa* village). Activities carried out by the village are thus *ujamaa* activities, whereas collective activities or enterprises outside the control of the village government, such as the shops just mentioned, are called merely 'co-operative' (*ushirika*).

This blurs a distinction and disguises the fact that the connection between co-operatives and socialism is not a necessary one. Marketing co-operatives have existed in some parts of Tanzania, as in many African countries, since colonial times, when they appear to have been seen by the participants more as a means of improving the members' position as individual producers in a capitalist market, through mutual aid, than as a road to socialism. The primary co-operatives and regional co-operative unions that were set up in Tanzania after independence were abolished in 1975-6 because they were thought to be hindering the progress of *ujamaa* socialism. The unit that replaced them at the local level was the village.

Villages have started up many more enterprises at local level providing services to people in rural areas than the co-operatives did. This is partly because of the more decentralised nature of the village - under the old co-operative system such initiatives were usually taken at regional (union) level. But it does not alter the fact that most of the economic activities of the new villages have been more identifiably 'co-operative' than 'socialist'. As seen, the successful ones have generally been in the sphere of commerce rather than of production. Even when the enterprises are productive they use small

quantities of hired labour rather than voluntary collective labour, and thus they are more like the merchant enterprises than real communal production such as *ujamaa* agriculture.

The village as an entrepreneur behaves in many ways like a collective capitalist. Its enterprises have to operate commercially in a competitive market: villages at least potentially compete with each other, as well as with private businesses. Its inputs, including labour, are commodities. It seeks to reduce costs relative to returns, putting it always in a situation of potential conflict over wages with the labourers it hires.

However there are also differences. The setting up of these enterprises is not motivated purely by the desire to realise a financial profit. Village enterprises are in the vast majority of cases started with the aim of providing a particular service to villagers. Commercial operation, the necessity to at least break even financially, is a precondition for the provision of that service rather than an end in itself.

We have seen that it is perhaps the 'capitalistic' elements of their labour organisation as well as the fact that they provide real and tangible service benefits to the villagers which have made them more successful than 'socialist' collective agriculture. On the other hand, since village enterprises are usually less viable in strictly commercial terms than privately-owned and -operated ones, it is also the administrative support given to village enterprises by the State which has partly enabled them to succeed in competition with capitalist or small capitalist entrepreneurs.

The position of villages as economic agents is about to change, at least to some extent. Under a law passed in 1982, rural economic enterprises are to be

taken over from villages by new primary co-operatives which will cover a group of two or three or more villages. They will thus have greater internal resources in terms of manpower, and therefore greater potential for raising finance and for finding capable managers within them, than the individual villages. The new primary co-operatives will have responsibility both for organising collective agriculture and for establishing and running merchant enterprises. They will be organised into regional unions which will be able to provide common services which the individual villages or primary co-operatives could not afford.

At the time of writing it is not yet clear exactly how these new co-operatives will work, nor how they will differ from the old, disbanded co-operatives, or from the present system of village-level economic responsibility. The new system may be quite similar to the present one, with economic decisions simply being exercised over a slightly more inclusive grouping; it is too early to tell. The change does however seem to signify some kind of change of policy away from *ujamaa* and towards *ushirika*, in the light of the experience of the late 1970s.

NOTES

- ¹ *Sheria ya Kuandikisha Vijiji na Vijiji vya Ujamaa* ('Regulations for Registering Villages and *Ujamaa* Villages'), Prime Minister's Office, Dodoma, 1975.
- ² Official exchange rates were c.Sh.16-18 to the pound sterling at the time of study.

BUREAUCRATS, PEASANTS AND LAND RIGHTS

A VILLAGERS' STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

Christopher M.F. Lwoga

Introduction

One of the characteristics which identifies the peasantry as a social class is its underdog position, i.e. the peasantry is dominated by other classes in the social formation, and as a result it is forced to serve the interests of the dominant classes as well as its own interests. In this position it cannot participate in political activity except as a recipient of the policies of the dominant class. The peasantry is the largest class in the third world, but it is the least developed.

It is not the intention of this paper to discuss why the peasantry is relegated to the bottom of the social structure, nor to examine the revolutionary potential of the peasantry as a social class. But one would like to repeat Marx's observations on the French peasantry in the 19th century, that the way in which peasant production was carried out isolates them from one another instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse, and therefore in that position "they are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interests in their own name...They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" (Marx 1977: 479).

In Tanzania, for example, we see how President Nyerere has been concerned with the position of the peasantry in the economic development programme. He has often reminded the policy makers and implementers of development programmes of the importance of involving peasants in the

decision-making process so as to facilitate the transformation of the economy in the rural areas. At other times, he has expressed concern over the insensitivity of the bureaucracy to the peasants' needs.

In Tanzania bureaucratic interests have dominated the lives and work of peasants (cf. Coulson 1975). The peasants have been unable to protect their interests against the bureaucrats despite the warning by the President that they should not trust their leaders excessively and that they should take full responsibility for safeguarding their own interests. The bureaucracy, however, uses the coercive apparatus of the State in safeguarding its interests or in implementing policies which are thought to be unpopular with the peasants.

There are very few known instances where peasants have with help from either the Party or a higher level of the bureaucratic hierarchy succeeded in asserting their interests against those of the local bureaucracy. This paper discusses one of those few instances. The issues narrated in this paper are not unique, but the outcome is, in that it was favourable to the peasants.

Through a narrative of events we examine the response of Bigwa peasants to the villagisation programme. The response which was in the form of protest against moving from their traditional land to a new location was not against the villagisation programme as such but against the decision of the local (District and Regional) political powers to alienate land which belonged to the villagers for allegedly public use.

It appears that the concept "public" was understood differently by the local political powers on the one hand and the villagers on the other. For the political powers, "public" meant the government institutions which are mentioned in this paper, and which were presumably for the use of people

other than the people of Bigwa. For the villagers, "public" meant first and foremost themselves and only secondly the government institutions, as they once argued concerning one such institution that it was located in the village and not the other way round.

The protest was carried out by a group comprising 260 families. Theirs was not a rebellion against the State as such, i.e. they did not question the legitimacy of the local power structure, but they protested against what they considered to be an irrational and unjust decision to alienate their land.

A Chronological Summary of Events

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1971 | Earliest land dispute. Peasants reject the Rural Training Centre's request for 270 acres. The District authorities rule in favour of the Centre. |
| 1974 | Villagisation year and the peasants' unsuccessful struggle against moving. |
| 1975 | Peasants organise for a return to Bigwa. |
| 1976 | Jan.: The peasants return to Bigwa and begin construction of nation building projects.

April: The peasants reject the order to move out of the village.

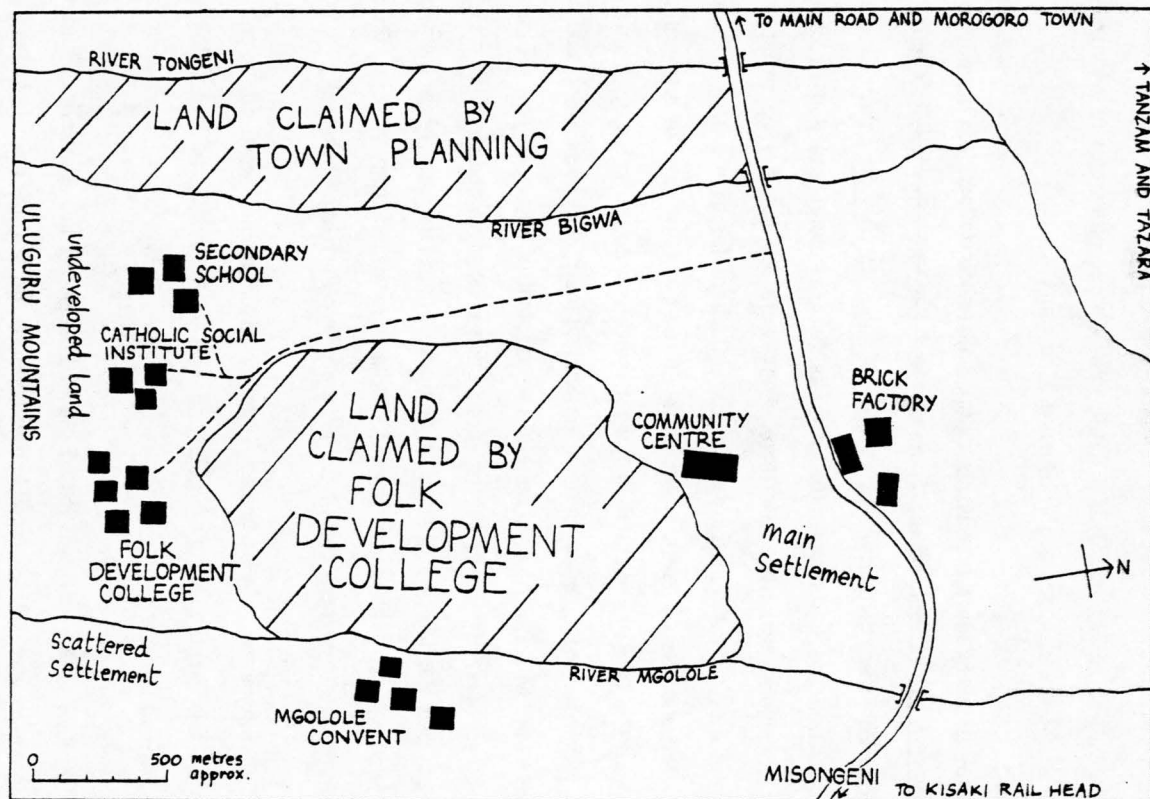
May: Nationalisation of the Mission land. The peasants reject compensation and continue to struggle against moving. |
| 1977 | The struggle continues.

March: The peasants send a delegation to the Prime |

Minister's Office in Dodoma.

- May: (i) The District Development Directorate is requested by the Prime Minister's Office to verify the peasants' claim.
(ii) The peasants' last delegation is sent to Dodoma.
- July: The peasants appeal directly to the Prime Minister.
- Aug.: The Prime Minister's Office orders the registration of Bigwa village.
- Oct.: (i) The village receives its Registration Certificate.
(ii) Land dispute is revived over the 270 acres claimed by the Folk Development College from the village.
- Nov.: (i) The village government passes resolutions on the land claimed by the Folk Development College.
(ii) Land dispute between Miongeni and Bigwa peasants.
- Dec.: The dispute between the two villages is resolved.

BIGWA



Background to the Land Dispute: the Village and Landownership

Bigwa village is situated in a fertile valley, three miles east of Morogoro town, on the lower slopes of the Uluguru Mountains.

During this study the peasants claimed that their village was established long before the coming of the Germans, and that the Holy Ghost Catholic missionaries who acquired ownership of the land from the German administration did not disturb the peasants by alienating land and ordering them to establish residence elsewhere. They were left to carry on using the land, but they were required to pay *ngoto* (Luguru for tribute in relation to ownership and use of land), in the form of foodstuffs or cash in unspecified amounts. The peasants insisted that the tribute was not a bother to them as there was no fixed quantity of food or amount of money which one had to submit to the Mission. Also, in spite of the payment of *ngoto*, no one regarded the land as being owned by the Mission. Each peasant owned the land which he used, and the Mission did not in any way control its use. Moslems who associated *ngoto* with conversion to Christianity simply moved from where they lived to the southern end of the village where they lived peacefully.

The village boundaries were: Tongeni River in the west, the Central Railway line in the north, Mgolole River in the east and the Uluguru Mountains in the south.

The total area which was leased to the Trustees of the Apostolic Vicariate of Bagamoyo was 3,791 acres. The missionaries did not use the whole land as we have indicated above. They built schools, a dispensary, a junior seminary, a Teachers' Training College, a church and a convent. Later they built an Institute for Social Work at Bigwa, and adjacent to it there was built in 1968 a

Rural Training Centre which was then presented to the Tanzanian Government. The Rural Training Centre was changed into a Folk Development College when the rural training centres in the country were handed over to the Ministry of Education from the Department of Rural Development in 1973, and it came to feature prominently in the subsequent land dispute between the peasants and the government.

Ngoto came to an end after independence and the subsequent Africanisation of the Church. The peasants simply stopped paying it and when no one from the Church reminded them about it, *ngoto* died a natural death.

From the above discussion it is obvious that although the land had been leased to the Catholic Church, the peasants did not attach any importance to land ownership by the Church. Their economic security was not threatened and therefore they quietly paid the tribute once a year, and went on with their subsistence agriculture, unaware of the legal implications of the new land tenure system, in which unknowingly they had become squatters on their own land. The landlord, the Church, did not even refer to them as squatters, and they first heard of the word being applied to them in 1976 in the course of the struggle, when they were made aware of the reality that they were illegally occupying land to which they had no claim. This reality was put to them not by the landlord, who also in the process lost land ownership to the State, but by the government which purportedly required the land for public use.

It has been mentioned that the land is fertile, and a number of foodstuffs do well in the fertile soil. The peasants grew maize, beans, millet, bananas, cassava, sugarcane and various vegetables. Mangoes, pawpaws and oranges are also grown. The land is also suitable for cotton. At the time of this study all the land was being used for one crop or another.

The Earliest Land Dispute

(The Rural Training Centre vs. The Peasants.)

The villagers first became aware that there were other forces which wanted their land in 1971 when the government planned to expand the Rural Training Centre. The RTC required 270 acres for its expansion programme, and the Principal of the Centre sent the request for land to the elders in the village. It is not clear why the Principal did not ask for the land from the lease-holder, the Church, or from the local government institution, i.e. the Ward Development Committee (WDC). The issue was later submitted to the WDC, as the elders had refused to accede to the RTC's request. But this step was taken only to formalize the land take-over which had already been decided upon by the District authorities. For this formality, the WDC summoned two elders from the village, Mikael Kilusungu and Mathias Charles to the meeting. The two reiterated their fellow villagers' refusal to give land to the RTC. But despite the refusal, the WDC passed a resolution giving the RTC the requested 270 acres.

A few days after the WDC's meeting several villagers were summoned to be shown the RTC's new boundaries. Mikael Kilusungu was among those summoned. The boundaries were simply pointed out to those present as "running from that tree to that point over there", i.e. no actual plotting was done, which ought to have been carried out by the Department of Lands, Morogoro District.

On 21 April 1971 the Area Commissioner for Morogoro District convened a meeting at Bigwa village at which he thanked the peasants for having "agreed" to give the 270 acres to the RTC. The villagers raised various issues

with the Area Commissioner, one of which was that they wished to know who had given the land to the RTC without consulting them. Also why had the WDC resolved to give the land before the issue could be discussed by them. The reaction of the Area Commissioner was to ask those present to vote on whether the peasants had prior information concerning the acquisition of the land by the RTC, thus sidestepping the issue of their participation in the discussion of the land acquisition.

The show of hands vote revealed 35 peasants having had prior information and 40 peasants having heard nothing about the issue. The villagers allege, however, that the results of the vote were recorded the other way round. One villager who insisted on demanding the clarification of the issue was branded a "confusionist and trouble-maker" by the Area Commissioner. The Area Commissioner then, using "official language", put the peasants where they are supposed to be, i.e. as submissive recipients of government policies, so they were afraid to discuss the issue any further.

The villagers did not yield the land to the RTC and went on using it. On the other hand, the government, showing the same piece of land in the RTC's expansion plans, asked for and secured funds from the World Bank for the Centre's development programme. The issue of ownership remained unresolved. According to the right of occupancy, the land still belonged to the Catholic Church as the lease had neither expired nor been revoked. According to the peasants the land belonged to them since they were still using it as they had been doing even before the arrival of the missionaries or the construction of the RTC.

It should be stressed here that both the peasants and the RTC were fighting for a piece of land which formed part of the best farming land in the

area. This land had been developed by the peasants, and although there was an area of undeveloped land to the south and adjacent to the RTC, the latter was not prepared to develop it.

The Land Dispute in the Context of Villagisation and the Peasants' Struggle Against Moving

The year 1974 will be remembered in Tanzania as the year of villagisation. There was not much variation between the Regions in the methods used to move peasants. In many villages physical coercion was used, resulting in hardship to the peasants and some destruction of property. In such circumstances the peasants' response was hostility, resentment and despair.

The move involved the disruption of peasants' attachment to land. The peasants at Bigwa, like the bulk of peasants in Tanzania, are subsistence farmers relying on traditional methods of production. With an extreme dependence on the vagaries of the weather, land quality is of paramount importance, as the peasants' economic and social security revolves around the land. Hence land which has been worked upon by a peasant for a long time, and especially if it is fertile, is more valuable than new land whose fertility has not been proved. Also the peasant's low propensity to take risks makes him stick to a particular piece of land which is well known for its productivity. When the land he is working deteriorates, he does not move immediately to new land whose quality is questionable. If he has to move, the process is more often than not done in stages. The sequence begins with the preparation of new land for farming, followed by the construction of a shelter and finally the moving of the household.

No such "elaborate" preparations were taken in moving the inhabitants of Bigwa. Army lorries were used in moving the people, who were caught by surprise although they were aware that the government had decided to implement the villagisation programme as was happening elsewhere within the Region. The peasants were not told the date when they would move. They were bundled into the lorries and dumped at Misongeni, for most of them hardly a mile from their homes. The place was overgrown with thorny bushes and the quality of land was unquestionably below that of Bigwa, and inadequate for both residential and farming purposes.

Following the government decision that all peasants should live in communal villages and prior to the forced move to Misongeni, the peasants at Bigwa had written to their Ward Secretary through the local TANU branch asking for recognition of their village as fulfilling the conditions required in the villagisation programme, so that they should not be moved. No reply was received from the Ward Secretary.

Immediately after the move to Misongeni, a committee of 25 villagers led by a private secondary school teacher, Emilian Jaka (a native and resident of the village: he and his family had not been moved), was formed with the aim of pursuing the issue of establishing a village at Bigwa in conformity with the villagisation programme. They submitted the issue to the TANU Regional Chairman, who referred it to the District TANU Secretary (the Area Commissioner). The latter asked the Ward Secretary of the area concerned to present the matter to the Ward Development Committee.

At the time of this study the peasants had in their possession a copy of the minutes of the TANU Ward Executive Committee meeting which was held on 21 January 1976 at Kilongwira, the Ward headquarters, under the

Chairmanship of R.Shomari. The meeting was attended by 13 members, but the name of the Ward Secretary did not appear in the minutes and it was not recorded why he failed to attend the meeting.

It was decided at that meeting that Misongeni village should be expanded to include Bigwa, that villagers who were at Bigwa at that time should go on living there, and that new applicants for village membership (Misongeni) should be accommodated at Bigwa. It was recorded in the minutes that Bigwa could accommodate more than 110 households. There is uncertainty here as to when the peasants did actually return to Bigwa. The peasants claimed that they returned in 1975 after the decision in their favour by the Ward Development Committee. Yet the minutes clearly show that any who were living at Bigwa prior to the date of the meeting were there illegally. According to the Principal of the Folk Development College, the peasants returned to Bigwa in 1976.

The resolution of the said Committee meeting was rejected by the District and the Regional Development Directorates who insisted that the villagers had returned to Bigwa without an authorisation from any of the responsible Party or government organs, and they insisted that the peasants should go back go Misongeni. On 21 April 1976 the peasants at Bigwa invited the District Party Secretary and the District Development Director to see the development projects which they had undertaken. The projects included a godown worth sh.45,000 and a co-operative cotton farm from which the peasants later realized sh.2,000. During the visit the two officials were asked to authorise the opening of a co-operative shop. The peasants were encouraged to go ahead, but a few days later they received an order through the Ward Secretary to move out of Bigwa as the land was required for the development programme of the Folk Development College, for a brick factory and for a secondary

school, and that the remaining area would not be adequate for the 260 households which were then living at Bigwa. The peasants, rather than comply with the order, appealed to the Regional authorities, who upheld the District authorities' decision. Still the peasants refused to move out of the village.

The District authorities then decided to hold a meeting with the Bigwa villagers. The officials reiterated the need for them to move out of Bigwa, and they were given an option to join villages of their own choice in the Ward, but to no avail. The peasants insisted that they had been authorised to return to Bigwa and therefore they would not move out again.

It was clear to the peasants that their village would not be recognised by the District and Regional authorities, and without registration of the village they could be forcibly removed. They therefore decided to take the matter to higher authorities. They asked for assistance from the Prime Minister's Office in Dodoma, by sending a delegation to the Department of *Ujamaa* and Co-operative Development, the department which was responsible for the villages in the country.

This phase of the struggle took place in 1977. By then the Church lease had been revoked (by the General Notice No.602 LD 5049/VI which appeared in the Official Gazette of 14 May 1976), which meant that the land had become State property and the peasants could not claim ownership as they formerly had when it was leased to the Catholic Church.

The Prime Minister's Office sent an official to Morogoro in response to the peasants' appeal. This official met the District officials who informed him of the reasons for moving the peasants to Misongeni. The reasons were listed as follows:

(a) Historically Bigwa was Mission property and therefore the peasants had been squatters. With the revocation of the lease the land had become State property.

(b) To give the peasants a permanent residence elsewhere.

(c) A large part of Bigwa would be included in the Morogoro Township expansion programme. Part of the remaining land would be allocated to institutions which had national importance and therefore the remaining land would be inadequate for establishing a village, according to the Villages Act of 1975.

(d) The remaining land which was inadequate for a village would be used by villagers from Misongeni for farming. (PM/UV/U.22/117 of 18 March 1977).

The official from the Prime Minister's Office was further informed about the total acreage of land in dispute and the allocation to each public institution, as follows:

(a) The Folk Development College	270	acres
(b) Expansion of Morogoro Town	1,999	"
(c) The Secondary School	30	"
(d) The Brick Factory	22	"

Upon his return to Dodoma, the official recommended that the remaining land was adequate for 260 households and therefore the peasants should be allowed to establish a village at Bigwa. The recommendation was communicated to the District Development Director (DDD), Morogoro, but it was not binding on the DDD as the communication further informed him that if the land was found to be "technically" unsuitable for residential purposes, or

if it was proved to be really inadequate then the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) would not object to moving the peasants to any other suitable location.

A copy of the latter was sent to Bigwa peasants, who upon reading the contents sent another delegation to Dodoma because the PMO was giving the District authorities the discretion to move them, whereas they were fighting against the District's decision to move them to Misongeni. Two more delegations went to Dodoma and each time the PMO referred the issue back to the Morogoro District authorities. The villagers, realising that they could not expect to be treated favourably by the PMO (which they had expected to intervene on their behalf and stop the District and Regional authorities from moving them), sent a petition directly to the Prime Minister, who instructed his office to furnish him with full details of the dispute.

The intervention by the Prime Minister resulted in another trip by the same official who had been sent to Morogoro by the PMO before, but this time the DDD was instructed to facilitate the visit to Bigwa by the official accompanied by a Land Officer and an Agricultural Officer from the DDD's office. It was further instructed that the three officials should work together with the village leaders on the issue of establishing a village at Bigwa.

The three officials were told the history of Bigwa village and shown the original boundaries. After that, land surveying was carried out.

Acting on the recommendations of the official who had been sent to Morogoro, the Principal Secretary in the PMO wrote to the Regional Development Director, Morogoro, instructing that plans to register the village according to the Villages Act of 1975 should be instituted immediately. The letter indicated that the villagers' request and complaints were genuine.

The reasons given in the Principal Secretary's letter in overruling the District and Regional authorities' decision to move the peasants to Misongeni were:

- (a) There were already 260 households at Bigwa.
- (b) All necessary social amenities were available within the village or nearby.
- (c) The peasants had shown eagerness to co-operate, having built a godown worth sh.45,000, and were at that time constructing a community centre complex on which they had already spent sh.70,000. Also the land allocated to the village was sufficient for each household to have five or six acres. (PM/UV/U.122/132 of 18 August 1977).
- (d) There was suitable land for agriculture and other economic activities.

This letter shows that the central and local (Regional and District) government had different priorities in assessing the case. For instance, whereas the local authorities were concerned with allocating the disputed land to the Folk Development College (FDC) and reserving a larger part for urban development, the PMO was concerned with the exact meaning of the Villages Act of 1975, and with the co-operation shown by the peasants of Bigwa.

Thus Bigwa became the only village in the Region, and perhaps in the whole country, to have been imposed upon the local political powers from the top. The normal procedure for registration of villages had to be dispensed with.

The PMO wanted to see the end of the villagers' struggle against land alienation by the District and Regional authorities, but peace was to elude them. The struggle would continue between the District authorities and the

village government. Once more the issue would be referred to the PMO, but this time the District Development Directorate was the complainant.

The Nationalisation of Land for Public Interest

According to the law, the President of the Republic can requisition land from a lease-holder if and when the land is required for some public project. The order to requisition the land is published in the Official Gazette.

The notice to requisition the land at Bigwa village was couched in the usual formula of the land being required by the President of the Republic of Tanzania solely for the interest of the public. The notice did not indicate for which public interest the land would be put into use. One can make several observations concerning the order and the dubious motives which officials had in their actions in this particular case.

For instance: the timing of the requisition whereby the Church's lease was revoked in May 1976 suggests that its main purpose was to facilitate the eviction of the peasants and thus thwart their attempt to establish a village. The existence of the Bigwa community was recognised by the government, at least by the Department of *Ujamaa* and Co-operative Development; the department responsible for the registration of villages, approving and supervising nation-building projects undertaken in villages. On 15 April 1976 the most senior officer in the Department at the Regional level endorsed a request for funds from CEBEMO (a Catholic organisation in Holland) for the construction of a community centre complex in the village. Parts of the officer's letter read:

Since the beginning of the year [1976] a permanent community village was started at Bigwa. In order to create decent living conditions for the inhabitants the leaders of this community think that a multi-purpose community centre should be put up...We want to stress the point that the above named help should be given...[I] strongly recommend this whole project in my capacity as Regional *Ujamaa* Co-operative Officer.

However, the recognition of Bigwa community by the officer did not mean a formal recognition by the rest of the Regional authorities; since the village had not been registered yet in accordance with the Villages Act of 1975. But on the other hand, the officer's support for the construction of the community centre complex later helped the peasants in their struggle as it constituted one of the amenities desirable in establishing a village.

Another observation is that the institutions which were based in the village needed far less land than the total nationalised land; and after the eviction of the peasants it was not known for what purpose the remaining acres would have been used. If they were to be distributed to peasants from Misongeni as the officials alleged, then one might suggest that there was no point in evicting them from Bigwa and settling them on inadequate land in the first place. The peasants in fact suspected that officials wanted the land for themselves as happened in a neighbouring village, Kigurunyembe, where villagers had been evicted and then some officials acquired plots in the area and built their own residential houses. While they could not substantiate their suspicions, their enforced abandonment of the fertile land at Bigwa for the poor land at Misongeni appeared to them to defy alternative explanation.

Of the four "public interests" which were allocated the nationalised land, only the township expansion was allocated land in excess of 1,000 acres (1,999 acres). We have already pointed out that according to the Master Plan

of the township expansion, part of the land allocated to the township originally belonged to Bigwa village. It was shown in the Master Plan that the expansion programme would be carried out in 1992. It should be observed that, according to the argument by the District Development Directorate, peasants had inadequate land at both Misongeni and Bigwa, yet the government found it proper to reserve land for 1992 for the urban population.

Taking Tongeni River as the boundary between the township and Bigwa village, the township expansion could be implemented by moving northward, without having to cross Tongeni River. But this area is occupied by a sisal plantation. Thus it seemed more expedient to the bureaucrats to uproot peasants at Bigwa in the 1970s than to uproot sisal in 1992; perhaps because sisal was more important to the nation, for its foreign exchange earning, than the peasants! Also, perhaps it seemed easier to the bureaucrats to evict the peasants than to include them in urban development.

One may further note here that while the villagisation programme was carried out haphazardly, without planning or surveying of the village, careful surveying and planning was carried out for the town's expansion even before it was known who would occupy the land from which the peasants were being evicted. The District *Ujamaa* and Co-operative Development Officer, commenting on the land dispute at Bigwa during an interview with the writer, was of the opinion that such problems need not have arisen at all had planning been done prior to moving out peasants from their old villages. In his opinion, Misongeni village would not have been recommended as a suitable location for a village had surveying been carried out. The bureaucratic attention to urban centres rather than rural areas does not arise by accident however. It is part and parcel of the bureaucrats' orientation. They are urban based even though

they are supposed to spend more time in rural areas working with the peasants, and their urban orientation tends to thwart efforts to develop the rural areas despite the enthusiasm for rural development shown in development plans (as a means of stemming rural - urban migration).

Another point about the behaviour of the bureaucrats in this case is their determination to manipulate bureaucratic procedures and formalities to legitimate their actions. For example, to back up the argument that the land in dispute had been legally requisitioned for public use, maps were drawn to show the boundaries of the land allocated to the FDC and the Township Master Plan. These maps do not prove that the official argument was correct, for the following reasons:

(a) The map showing land allocated to the FDC was purported to have been drawn in 1971, but then the government had not yet acquired the land. Furthermore, in 1971 the land had not been surveyed and plotted by the Department of Lands.

(b) The Master Plan did not have a date of its preparation. However other maps referring to the land in dispute were drawn in 1977. One of the maps which was shown to the writer and which was displayed in the office of the Assistant Development Director was prepared on 20 April 1977, a long time after the peasants had returned to Bigwa.

(c) The letter from the Principal Secretary in the PMO spelt out the boundaries of Bigwa village (they were the same boundaries which the peasants had claimed right from the start to be the boundaries of their village). Part of the land claimed by the township development planners, the FDC and other institutions were included in the village boundaries. Moreover, the District authorities did not dispute this fact at the time when they registered the village

as ordered by the PMO.

Under the usual relationship between the peasants and bureaucrats, the District authorities would have carried the day, by arguing that they were defending the future development of the town for the good of the people, the townspeople. The peasants were evicted from their land "in the public interest", and then their land was being annexed for township development, again in the public interest. The future townsfolk (those who would occupy the disputed land) had advocates who looked after their interests, whereas the peasants had to struggle on their own against the system which supposedly looked after their interests too! The events showed that they did not constitute a "public interest".

Another observation is that the bureaucrats "solved" the problem in the only way they are used to, i.e. by referring the matter to higher or lower echelons of the bureaucratic hierarchy, not to a third party, e.g. the judiciary or a commission. Only when the villagers stubbornly held on to their demand and appealed directly to the Prime Minister, did they succeed in asserting their right to be masters of their own destiny, if only as far as the establishment of a village where they could live was concerned.

The villagers were successful in this case because they had a knowledgeable leader, the school teacher, who was a member of the village and who led the peasants in the struggle by following the established channels of communication between the people, the government and the Party. He knew that the local political powers had exceeded their legal rights in implementing the villagisation operation; and he knew what should be done at each stage of the struggle. The struggle had cast him in a leadership role because of his knowledge of the bureaucratic system and his readiness to face the higher

authorities regardless of possible victimisation by the local authorities. In the course of the struggle he made enemies of the Regional and District authorities, in the government as well as in the Party. At the village's registration he was elected Village Chairman. Although he was careful in his leadership not to do anything that would give an excuse for the authorities to remove him, the authorities disqualified him from the 1980 elections when the peasants wanted him to serve a second term.

It seems that the bureaucratic procedures are unable to distinguish between negative and positive commandism. In the former, the bureaucrats working in a hierarchical and authoritarian structure always work to please the top. In this respect they give orders (even if some of them might be useless) in the same way as they receive orders, rather than consulting with those below them. Moving peasants from fertile land to poor land where they would be subjected to all kinds of hardships is an example of negative commandism. On the other hand, using force to move villagers to higher ground from river valleys, which are annually flooded with ensuing loss of life and property, is more plausibly an example of positive commandism, although admittedly those affected may not regard it as such. Commandism in such a case is used to achieve goals which are more clearly beneficial to both the peasants and the country. Negative commandism is a sign of insensitivity of the bureaucracy to the people's needs.

Public vs. Peasants' Interests

(Dispute over 270 acres claimed from the village by the Folk Development College.)

The District Development Directorate's registration of Bigwa village and hence the recognition of the village government with which the District and Regional officials would have to deal was a reluctant one. The village was now a *fait accompli* and nothing could be done to reverse the PMO's decision. The District Development Directorate regarded the decision as a defeat on its part by the peasants, while the latter regarded it as a prevalence of reason over arbitrariness. The Village Chairman was told by an official of the Directorate that the registration of the village should not be translated as victory by the peasants, as the outcome of the issue was painful to the District and Regional leaders. This piece of advice to the Village Chairman was confirmed to the author by the District *Ujamaa* and Co-operative Development Officer in the course of his research.

Having achieved the registration of the village, the peasants turned their attention to the FDC and its claim for 270 acres. The FDC charged that the village was encroaching on the College's land and that the village was unwilling to release the 270 acres to the College. It should be pointed out that the ruling in 1971 by the District authorities giving the 270 acres to the College had not been implemented as the peasants refused to give up the land and went on using it. Neither did the District authorities enforce their own ruling.

On 7 October 1977 the District Development Director sent a letter to the District *Ujamaa* and Co-operative Development Officer, the District

Agricultural Officer and the Land Officer instructing them to see to it that the boundaries between the FDC, the brick factory, the secondary school and the village were known to all concerned. Also that any areas that had been developed by the Catholic Church should be retained by the Mission. Furthermore, all the peasants who wanted to live at Bigwa village should settle in areas approved by the village government as advised by the technical experts. Thus a meeting was held between the District officials, the Principal of the FDC and peasants' representatives. An agreement on boundaries was reached.

But later, according to the Principal of the FDC, the village government questioned the right of the FDC to own 270 acres. The peasants agreed that they were not against the FDC being allocated 270 acres, but the dispute was on the location of the land which the FDC should be given. The peasants argued that the FDC should expand its boundaries from the south of the College, a suggestion which was unacceptable to the College. The southern area, as was noted earlier, was adjacent to the College, but the FDC rejected that land and proposed that the village should develop it while relinquishing ownership of the well developed land to the north of the College. The villagers, however, further argued that the FDC could command more resources for the development of the "unwanted" area than they themselves could. Thirdly, they argued that since the FDC was committed to embark on agricultural production, and being a training institution located within the village, its rejection of the area was unwarranted.

There was a further claim by the FDC that the maps which were submitted to the World Bank when applying for a loan for the development programme of the College showed the area to the north of the College. The

peasants were not convinced by this argument as they did not see how inclusion of the southern part of the land would have influenced the World Bank against releasing funds for the College's development programme.

The peasants further argued that when the PMO ruled that the village should be registered and that the FDC should be allocated 270 acres, it did not specifically say that the FDC should be given the land in dispute. This argument was based on a resolution passed at a village meeting held on 11 November 1977. The resolution extending the FDC land to the south of the College was based on three considerations:

(a) As the College was running short courses of various kinds, and as it was not an agricultural institution *per se*, the amount of land allocated to the College, i.e. the 270 acres, was adequate. But the College should first extend its boundaries towards the south so that a large piece of land to the north of the College would remain village property.

(b) Some land to the north of the College on which the College had planted banana trees would be included in the 270 acres.

(c) It was the College which was located in the village and not the other way round, hence it was not proper for the College to stubbornly demand land which rightfully belonged to the village. According to the Villages Act of 1975 the village was empowered to distribute land within its boundaries according to the needs of the various parties; and, as it has been pointed out, the official boundaries of the village included the disputed land.

It was also noted in the minutes of the meeting that the village was not experiencing such problems from the other two institutions, viz. the secondary school and the brick factory.

The village further claimed that as an institution which was there to serve the people, the FDC should first serve the people nearest to it before it could claim to serve people from elsewhere, and therefore co-operation between the College and the village was important. This reasoning was in line with President Nyerere's thoughts on rural development, as shown in the following quotation:

No one who ignores the feelings of people can be a socialist, for socialism is about people. And it is not good enough just to think of the 'masses' and how they will benefit from a particular project in the long run. The masses are the people considered together: if you do not care about a small group of people, it is at least open to doubt whether you really care about the large group. (Nyerere 1973: 104)

The peasants regarded the College's stubbornness as a calculated way of harassing them, as part of a large scheme to encroach on the village land and then to use the issue as evidence to prove that the village was unlawfully obstructing a national institution from carrying on its duties. On the other hand the College too held that the peasants were being unnecessarily difficult in releasing land to it for its extension programme.

It was the opinion of the FDC that the registration of the village strengthened the position of the peasants, as the College had to deal with the village government, a legally recognised body. It would not be possible for the District Development Directorate to order villagers off the disputed land. This fact was not lost on the villagers, i.e. the registration and the concomitant recognition by the District and Regional authorities was an important weapon in the defence of their rights.

The College offered to pay compensation for the disputed land and some payments were made in 1976. The majority of the peasants who accepted

payment were those who had opted to remain at Misongeni. 23 peasants at Bigwa who claimed ownership of the disputed land rejected compensation, however, arguing that they were not going to sell their land.

It may be noted in this context that the village had also to deal with land claims from their fellow peasants from Misongeni village. The dispute with Misongeni peasants arose after the registration of Bigwa village and the ruling by the Bigwa village government that the peasants from Misongeni who had hitherto owned farms at Bigwa should relinquish ownership of their farms as it was not right for peasants from one village to own farms in another. It should be pointed out that as the land at Misongeni was largely unsuitable for agriculture, most of the peasants who had been moved there from Bigwa went on using the land which they possessed at Bigwa. There was no official ruling on peasants from one village holding land in another village, and according to the District *Ujamaa* and Co-operative Development Officer, this was one of the problems which affected many villages in Morogoro District as a result of establishing villages without surveying.

The Misongeni peasants complained to the District Development Directorate against the Bigwa village ruling, and the Directorate ruled that they should be allowed to till their farms at Bigwa. However the leadership of the two villages met on 19 December 1977 to settle the issue, and it was agreed that the peasants from Misongeni should renounce ownership of their farms at Bigwa after harvesting the crops they had planted.

As for the FDC's claim, the resolution passed on 11 November 1977 was implemented, i.e. the College was given the land to the north on which it had planted banana trees. This was only a small part of the land which the College demanded, and it was finally forced to turn to the land it originally rejected to

the south of the College.

Conclusion

What emerges from the narrative in the two sections above is the authoritarian relationship between the government and the peasants. This is seen in the way the government dealt with the issue and its effort to bring the peasants of Bigwa under its domination and control. The unity with which the bureaucracy at all levels (including the initial tendency of the PMO to support the Regional and District authorities) acted in this case supports the argument that the bureaucracy's main concern is to safeguard its own interests. Although it sometimes happens that the Regional authorities or the PMO may overrule decisions taken by the District authorities, it is rarely done in support of a group of peasants in a single village. As we have seen, it was only the remarkable determination of the Bigwa villagers and their leader, and the personal intervention by the Prime Minister, which carried the day for them.

The tenacity of the bureaucracy in so far as its control and domination over the peasantry is concerned is further shown by the removal of the school teacher from the top-most position in the village leadership. Having exposed the excesses of the local powers in dealing with the villagisation operation, he posed a challenge and a threat to the local bureaucrats' authoritarian rule. This points further to the difficulties in the implementation of democratic principles in running village government in a system in which bureaucratic control permeates through all aspects of peasant life.

It should also be pointed out that what one learns from such a situation as that of the struggle between the government local leadership and the peasants

of Bigwa confirms what President Nyerere and several researchers into the relationship between the people and their leaders have said; that is, the people's interests are not taken adequately into account in the implementation of the various programmes in the country. What are said to be people's interests may actually be "bureaucratic interests" in disguise. It does not mean that the bureaucracy always necessarily disguises its interests consciously. More often than not the leader's actions (sometimes carried out in good faith, but lacking accurate information on the situation) end up alienating the people from the programmes which are supposed to benefit them. The people are left in apathy, disillusionment, suspicion and despair. Their participation in such programmes becomes passive, resulting in failure of the programmes.

In the villagisation programme which we have discussed in this paper, it is obvious that the moving of the peasants from Bigwa was not in the interest of the peasants, for, were Bigwa not suitable for the establishment of a village as the District authorities claimed, it could not have been changed into a suitable location by an order from the PMO.

Crucial among the factors which made the outcome of the dispute favourable to the peasants was the fact that they stuck to their view that government organs were acting against democratic principles. The Party has often said that it is there to defend the people's rights, but it is not easy to surmount the hurdles erected by the bureaucratic administration when pursuing those rights. The peasants of Bigwa crossed those hurdles. There are many villages, however, which have tried to pursue their rights but have ended up where they began after the higher officials in the bureaucracy, to which the peasants directed their appeals, simply re-directed the issues to the lower organs which were originally involved in the disputes.

There is need for the Party to play a more active role in defending the people's rights, instead of leaving the issues in the hands of governmental organs alone, especially where it is evident that administrators may have abused their powers. It is not all villages which are fortunate enough to have intelligent leaders who would not compromise the people's interests, nor be intimidated by those above them and turned into village tyrants. This is a greater danger now in some villages where village governments have turned into another coercive apparatus of the State, as a result of the inherent ambiguity of their position. On the one hand they are government administrative units, with the role of implementing government policies. On the other hand, they are supposed to be peasants' institutions for decision-making on matters which are important for peasants' well-being. It is easier for many village leaders to be trapped in the administrative role than to defend peasants' interests against bureaucratic pressures.

The success of the socio-economic programmes is dependent on the willing participation of the people. It is they alone who can emancipate themselves and become masters of their own destiny. In this task they need a consultative leadership. Even positive commandism as a method of mobilising the peasants in economic development seems bound to fail.

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VILLAGES AS ECONOMIC AGENTS

THE ACCIDENT OF SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

Graham Thiele

Introduction

It has frequently been observed that the yields obtained on collective village farms (CVFs) in Tanzania are, with very few exceptions, substantially below that on household farms (see Hyden 1980: 119; Ghai and Green 1979: 249). One reason usually given is the poor and sporadic attendance for work on CVFs. Hyden, in the context of a more general argument, has claimed that the poor performance of CVFs is a consequence of the structural constraints of the peasant mode of production (PMP). In his conception the PMP is characterised by production by individual households which possess the means of production, and produce only their basic necessities (Hyden 1980: 9-13). The first constraint of the PMP derives from the rain dependent and consequently highly seasonal nature of agriculture. This gives rise to peaks of labour demand (e.g. at weeding) and hence a high opportunity cost of labour at such times. The village farms created complications for labour management and, given these high opportunity costs, risk averse peasants chose to work on household enterprises which gave a more certain return (Hyden 1980: 117).

The second constraint arises because the PMP generates its own particular economy - an economy of 'affection' - in which ties of kinship and locality prevail. Since village leaders are themselves part of this economy of affection they are unable to enforce attendance when village members are absent (Hyden 1980: 115).

The central criticism that can be made of both of Hyden's constraints is that the CVF is treated as but one among a number of enterprises which households might operate, without a consideration of its conditions of existence as a new social entity. Hyden has identified two of the constraints of the CVF in terms of the way they appear to household producers. The first is no more than a statement of the high opportunity costs of peak season labour to risk averse households and the second of the persistence of certain pre-capitalist relations between household members at the level of production. Neither in any rigorous sense can be seen as structural constraints of a supposed PMP, and both conceal the more fundamental point that, under the concrete conditions of rural Tanzania, households remain as the possessors of the principal means of production.¹ Under such circumstances it might be questioned whether the conditions for the social reproduction of a CVF can be secured at all. This paper will suggest a framework for answering this question, first by a more careful examination of Tanzanian development plans, and second using the example of particular villages in Dodoma Region.

Collective Economic Agents in Tanzanian Development Plans

If a set of texts are to constitute a development plan, then they must satisfy a number of criteria:

1. A set of economic conditions under which the plan is to be implemented must be given. These conditions constitute the 'actual' world of the plan.
2. The final set of economic conditions which are the result of implementing the plan must be identified. These economic conditions are the 'possible' world of the plan.

3. A set of practices which will change the set of conditions of the 'actual' world to those of the 'possible' world must be specified.

In the post-independence period two principal development plans concerned with CVFs can be identified. The first, and perhaps better known, plan emerged in 1967. The actual world of this plan is peopled by scattered household producers engaging in limited cash crop production (see Nyerere 1968: 353, 364). By contrast, in the possible world of the 1967 plan the CVF is the basic unit of production. It has a determinate form of supervision of the labour process, constituted by a village committee which village members elect. There are a set of principles governing the return which members receive for work done. Some of the village's income is set aside for investment in productive capital, some for social security and some for collective consumption. The village is a part of civil society and not of the State. It can liaise with other villages and with the State but it is not a unit in the local government administration. Above all, it is entered voluntarily.

In the absence of direct State intervention the possible world comprising a nation of village communities is to be achieved through the operation of a demonstration effect. Once a few households had been persuaded to adopt it, the technical superiority of collective production (principally economies of scale) should lead to its diffusion throughout the nation, just as a new crop type might spread.

The criticism of this plan is identical to that made of Hyden above. A new form of the labour process has a certain set of conditions of existence which must be secured outside of the labour process itself. A collective labour process, which the CVF possesses, operating on the basis of formal rules requires at least a constitution determining the allocation of the product and an

administrative structure which maintains the separation of the direct producers from the means of production. Constitution and administrative structure are both treated by the plan as the end result of collective production, for the village government is to evolve out of the labour process (Nyerere 1968: 358).²

Theoretical analysis thus reveals that the conditions of existence of a CVF were not met in the possible world of the 1967 plan. But by 1975³ that plan had been effectively replaced. In this new plan the village retained a central role, whilst continuing to have a CVF, it would also possess powers of local government. In addition, the Party Branch would be located, where possible, within the village. The requirement that the village be both a unit of local government and of the Party entailed the possession of a much more elaborate set of institutions than those described in the 1967 plan. The principal local government institutions of the Village Council and the Village Assembly will be referred to as the Village Government. The Village Government and the Party Branch offices within the village will be referred to as the Village Administration because together they constitute the entire means of administration at the village level.

In the 1967 plan villages were supposed to come into existence without the intervention of the State. The village, as an institutional complex, would emerge from the production process itself. The 1975 plan reversed the direction of causality: villages would come into existence first as institutional complexes and only later as producer collectives. The plan required that villages as bounded residential units had already been established, as in much of Tanzania they already had. The 1975 Villages Act placed the legitimate coercive power of the State behind the development of village institutions.

This was a legal recognition of the political interventions which the State had already been making to establish villages. The Act gave to the Party and Government the legal power to create villages as institutional complexes and endowed an elected body within that complex, the Village Council (*Halmashauri ya Kijiji*), with the status of a corporation. Villages in many areas had existed as nucleated settlements before 1975. Some had possessed village administrations and some had owned property. In these cases the Villages Act brought national policy in line with developments that had already taken place. But what the Act did do was to specify more exactly the form which village administrations should take, and clarify their legal status.

The transition from ordinary Village⁴ to *Ujamaa* Village (which organises a substantial part of production on a collective basis) seems to rest upon the continuing operation of the demonstration effect within the new institutional context. Party and Government would establish the institutional conditions of existence of the producer co-operatives, a CVF would be organised on a small scale, the demonstration effect would begin to work, and household production would be incrementally transformed into collective production.

The transformation of household into collective production can be given greater theoretical clarity by introducing the concept of class where "classes are categories of economic agents defined by their possession of or separation from the means and conditions of production", and "an agent is an entity capable of occupying the position of a locus of decision-making in a social relation" (Cutler *et al* 1977: 278, 289). The incremental transformation of household into Village production necessitates the creation of a new class of economic agents - a class of Villages. If the logic of the demonstration effect

is accepted, control over the means and conditions of production would be voluntarily passed by households to Villages. Households as a class of economic agents would be left only as the suppliers of labour for the enterprises which the Village caused to operate.

In the 'possible' world described by the 1975 plan (with the demonstration effect working in an institutional context established by the State) households and Villages cannot both reproduce themselves as the controllers of enterprises. If households make decisions rationally, they will observe the superior returns to be gained under collective production, and the Village Council (as the representative of the best interests of the households in the village) will be ceded control over all the means and conditions of production. In this 'possible' world once Village production has begun the co-existence of household and Village production can only be transitional. However, the Third Five Year Plan (Republic of Tanzania 1976: 120) described a block farm on which each household cultivated a plot of measured area supervised by the Village Administration. Thus the 1975 plan tacitly acknowledges that the demonstration effect might not work and that a condition in which households and Villages as economic agents continue to organise substantial parts of production might not be transitory. The distinctive character of the 'possible' world of the 1975 plan is not that all production takes place on Village enterprises but that all aspects of production are regulated by the Village Administration. The block farm and the CVF are thus not to be seen as radically different methods of production. They simply represent different degrees of separation of households from the means of production, depending upon the extent to which Villages have been constituted as economic agents.

If the demonstration effect does not operate to transfer control of the means of production from households to Villages, then it may be asked on what basis could this transfer occur?

In the 'actual' world of the plan households have substantial control over the means of production and most of the labour at the disposal of households is used on household enterprises. But if households do not voluntarily cede control over the means of production to the Village (as the demonstration effect supposes) then coercion must be used in some way to separate them from the means of production over which they have control and make them work on Village enterprises. The most extreme form of separation from the means of production would be the ability to exclude households from access to the means of production - in particular land - which they make use of on household enterprises within the Village. Exclusion from the means of production in its strongest form would mean eviction from the village. A weaker kind of exclusion would involve the imposition of sanctions which would make it hard to operate household enterprises effectively (e.g. the confiscation of property). The physical nucleation of population which had taken place in much of Tanzania in the 1970s facilitated exclusion because it made the surveillance of households and their members easier.

The Villages Act did vest in the Village Council the legal ability to impose sanctions on individuals who did not take part in collective work. But the ability of Councils to use this power would seem to be doubly limited. First, Council members are themselves members of households. They could not be expected easily to use coercion against the class of agents - households - to which they themselves belong. Secondly, a Village Council which attempted to use coercion in this way was responsible to an electorate (the Village

Assembly) which again was composed of household members. For these two reasons, the ability of the Village Council to use coercion against household members would seem to be highly problematic. The conclusion must be that if the demonstration effect does not work then the coercive power of the State directed through the Village Council cannot alone bring about the establishment of Villages as a new class of economic agent. Inquiry must now turn to the general conditions of existence of such agents.

The Conditions of Existence of Collective Economic Agents

Villages as economic agents in the 1975 plan are producers of commodities, and in this they resemble households. In other respects Villages and households are very different. Village administrative structures, and the forms of calculation which govern the operation of enterprises, are highly formal in comparison to those of household enterprises.

Villages as economic agents can be regarded, along with joint stock companies, as formally constituted collective agents of a type which I will refer to as 'collective commodity producing economic agent' (CCPEA).⁵ In this section I will attempt to identify the general conditions of existence of such agents. The features listed below are all ones for which textual support can be found in the writings of Marx and Weber on capitalism. Marx and Weber's writings related to one type of CCPEA: the joint stock company. For both Marx and Weber a 'free' labour force was necessary for production to be organised in a formally capitalist manner; free in the sense of being legally able to sell its labour power, and obliged to do so to secure subsistence. The concept of the CCPEA does not necessarily suppose such a free labour force.

The four features are:

1. Individuals performing particular tasks within CCPEA enterprises must be separated from the means of production as individuals and only be able to set the means of production in motion in their authorised capacity. Conversely, the CCPEA must possess the means of production and determine when and how they should be used.
2. The labour process on enterprises operated by the CCPEA must be supervised by an administrative structure. The form which this supervision takes is determined by the form of separation from the means and conditions of production.
3. Since the CCPEA is an agent it must be capable of acting as a locus for decision-making. It must therefore possess its own means of administration. Individuals who hold positions within the means of administration must be separated from them. Positions within the means of administration cannot be inherited but can only be acceded to by appointment or election. Separation from the means of administration depends in the case of appointment on supervision by superordinate loci, and in the case of election on supervision by subordinate loci.
4. The organisation of production and the distribution of the product must be made on the basis of a formal system of calculation and measurement. Two possible forms of calculation are (a) ordinary book-keeping of a monetary type, and (b) accounting based upon labour time.

It is features 3 and 4 which distinguish CCPEAs from other types of agents producing commodities such as households. These may possess means of administration but office holders do not accede to office on the basis of formal principles of selection, and the distribution of the product by such

agents is made on customary grounds.

The CVF is only one type of enterprise which the Village as a CCPEA might choose to operate. The remainder of this paper will consider the range of enterprises which Villages in one particular Region of Tanzania - Dodoma - were operating, and the extent to which the conditions of existence of Villages as CCPEAs were secured. This task requires an understanding of certain aspects of social and political life in the area.

Christians and Traditionalists

I carried out fieldwork in the three villages of Matumbulu, Nkulabi and Mlowa, all of which lie less than 50 kilometres from what is now the capital city of Dodoma. The people of this area are almost exclusively Gogo,⁶ who have been extensively written about by Rigby (1969). Rigby (1967: 85) observed in the early 1960s that whilst comparatively few Gogo had become Christians some who had were being elected into office in Village Development Committees. At this time though they were relatively ineffective. By 1980, at the time of my fieldwork, there were many villagers who claimed to be Christians. A large proportion of these had been baptised but relatively few were devout, in the sense that they regularly attended Church services. Future references to 'Christians' will refer exclusively to these devout Christians. In any one of the villages there were probably no more than 30 adult male Christians in this category and most of them held offices within the Church administrative structure as Catechists, teachers, or elders. Although few in number, many of them also held positions within Village Administrations. When they held office they tended to co-operate with the District

Administration in establishing working institutions which resembled those described in the 1975 plan. As a loosely bounded group, organised for competition for power, the Christians in any one village could be regarded as a faction.

There also existed another type of faction, which may be termed the Traditional faction. It was most fully organised in Matumbulu. To the extent that it had a policy at all, it was the reconstitution of the Village Administration as a unit whose primary concern was ritual.

The predominant characteristic of the Traditionalists' political practice was one of tactful non-compliance with the orders of the District Administration. The end result of which was the insulation of households from the demands of Party and Government.

This digression complete, it is possible to return to a discussion of the ways in which the conditions of existence of CCPEAs in Dodoma were secured. These can be placed under headings which relate closely to the features of CCPEAs identified in the previous section.

Separation from the Means of Production and Control of Labour

Merchant and landlord enterprises

The enterprises which Villages in Dodoma operated were of two types. In the first type, the Village employed workers for a wage. This type of enterprise will be referred to as a 'merchant enterprise', because the form of separation of workers from the means of production was no different from that

on any enterprise operated by a merchant capitalist. The operation of the shop, as a particular type of merchant enterprise, received the most attention in the 1975 plan. Prior to 1974 Asians and Arabs had dominated retail trade in rural Dodoma. The closing of all substantial private merchant enterprises in Dodoma during 'Operation *Maduka*', established Villages as the sole agents legally entitled to operate such enterprises. Villages in effect replaced Asian and Arab traders (who mostly left the rural areas following the closure of their enterprises) as merchant capitalists.

In the second type of enterprise, the Village did not employ workers for a wage, it used the labour services of village residents. It was a requirement of residence in the Village that this sort of work be performed. According to the Villages Act, residents in the Village have a duty to work (or contribute a monetary cess) when the Village Council demands it, but they also have a right to some kind of return for their labour. Labour of this type is clearly not 'free' in the sense discussed above. A continuing supply of labour rested upon the obligation of village residents to perform labour service for the Village Council. Since the labour service was performed by individuals as a condition of their utilising land within the Village boundaries, it was in effect rendered to the Village Council as a landlord. Hence, the enterprises upon which this type of labour was used will be referred to as 'landlord enterprises'. This kind of enterprise has previously been called a CVF.

The Villages Act gave to the Village Council the ability to determine the trading activities which households would be permitted to follow. The type of trading activity which receives the most description within the plan is the shop. All shops within the Village are to be operated by the Village Council. The 1975 plan does not state how workers in the shop are separated from the

means and conditions of production. It does not specify whether they are to receive a wage for their work or whether the work will be performed as part of the more general labour cess which the Village Council can demand of all Village residents.

In Dodoma, there were four major trading enterprises which the Village Councils ran. Almost every Village operated a shop, a substantial number ran milling machines, a substantial number also made purchases of crops on behalf of Crop Authorities, and a few operated lorries. The site of the labour process in the case of these enterprises was near to the Party and Village offices. The shop was usually adjacent to these offices and the milling machine not much further away. Workers in these enterprises could always be found at a particular, relatively compact site. The tasks which they were expected to perform were highly specialised. The job of the night-watchmen, for example, was quite different from that of shop-assistant. It was immediately apparent if individuals employed in these enterprises were not performing their designated tasks.

Employees in all these enterprises were paid a wage. In Matumbulu the Village paid employees in merchant enterprises at these monthly rates:

One Village book-keeper	350 shillings
One shop-manager	300 shillings
Two shop-assistants	250 shillings
Two night-watchmen	200 shillings
Milling machine attendant	250 shillings

A number of factors can be identified which made the separation of workers from the means of production in the merchant enterprises unproblematic. First, the location of the physical site of the enterprises near to Village office buildings and in the residential area of the village. Second, the

small number of workers involved. Third, the tasks they each performed were distinct. Finally, the labour force was a formally 'free' one receiving a wage which was a substantial contribution towards subsistence. Non-payment of wages and ultimately dismissal were sanctions which could be immediately invoked for failure to carry out work as directed.

The Villages as they existed after 1974 had not been entered voluntarily. The Village was not, as some earlier *Ujamaa* Villages had been, united by a common dedication to collective work. There were many individuals within the villages who admitted that they liked neither the idea of living in a nucleated Village nor the commitment to collective work. If all the residents in the village were to work on the Village's landlord enterprises then coercion had in some way to be used.

Although the 1975 plan stated that Village Councils had a right to demand labour services from residents, it was less specific as to the way in which performance of labour services by household members was to be secured. The encoding of collective work as a legal obligation presumably meant that the Village Council could take individuals who refused to work to official Courts, where they would receive punishments backed by the legitimate coercive power of the State. But the 1975 plan did not specify the way in which a system of surveillance and policing internal to the Village, necessary to ensure that labour services are in fact performed, would operate.

Villagisation, as a nucleation of population, made the possession by households of the means and conditions of production more provisional than it had hitherto been. Throughout Dodoma, land was divided into a set of discretely bounded areas, each of which was nominally under the jurisdiction of a particular Village Administration. The cultivation of land, the ability to

mobilise labour on household enterprises, and the possession of property all depended upon residence in a Village.

Most Villages in Dodoma operated two different kinds of landlord enterprise, a grain enterprise and a vine enterprise. The site of the labour process was far from the site of most administrative practice (the Village office buildings) and it took place over a large area: the area of the grain field or the vineyard. All of the individuals who worked on these enterprises were performing more or less identical tasks so that there was no simple method of ascertaining who had, and who had not, carried out their work properly. On the landlord enterprises the number of workers was large. In theory, all of the able-bodied adult members of the village were obliged to participate. Workers on the landlord enterprises were not being paid a wage and sometimes they received no reward for this work at all. In most cases they saw any work performed for the Village as a deduction from the work which they could perform on their household enterprises.

Four factors have been identified which made separation from the means of production harder to establish on the Village's landlord enterprises than on its merchant enterprises. First, the site and dispersed nature of the labour process. Second, the large number of labourers involved. Third, the identical nature of the tasks which all the workers are performing. Fourth, the non-payment of a wage.

This difference between merchant and landlord enterprises manifested itself in the ability of Village Administrations in both Matumbulu and Nkulabi to run a shop successfully although they never managed to establish a successful landlord enterprise (CVF).

Control of Manpower

It was stated above that the performance of compulsory labour service depended upon a system of surveillance and policing internal to the village. The way in which this system operated differed in detail between the three villages. Each village had been divided into between five and seven discrete residential and administrative areas known as Sections (*Mitaa*). Each Section was in turn divided into about seven Cells (*Mashina*) which were also both residential and administrative units. The Cell is supposed to be the lowest level of organisation in the Party but, in practice, its role was a much more general one. Its most salient function was in the organisation of work on the CVF. In all the villages it was the division of the Village into discrete residential areas which made surveillance by the Village Administration possible. The Cell leaders constituted the most basic level of surveillance. They were responsible for ensuring that the members of their Cells worked. The Section leaders were responsible for seeing that the Cell leaders carried out this task of surveillance properly. The spatial division of the houses within the village into Sections, and the Sections into Cells, located each individual in a particular household at a particular site. Any individual living anywhere within the village was necessarily assigned to one Cell or another. The area over which the labour process was carried out was similarly divided by Section and Cell. The members of each Cell cultivated in the same area of the Village field. The areas cultivated by the Cells of each Section similarly lay within a single block. The spatial division of the village into Sections and Cells, the parallel hierarchy of Section and Cell leaders, and the allocation of work on this basis made the social relations of production transparent. Where a person resided immediately and directly indicated the position he occupied within the labour process of landlord enterprises.

The way in which the system of surveillance operated differed from village to village. In Matumbulu and Nkulabi, the Cell itself was the work team and the Cell leader was its head. The Cell leader was responsible for ensuring attendance on any occasion when the Village Administration announced that a particular task on the Village field was to be performed. The appropriate performance of the Cell leaders in ensuring adequate attendance by members of their Cells depended upon the extent to which their performance was in turn overseen by the Section leaders. The Section leaders differed in the amount of persuasion they would use on Cell leaders. In Matumbulu, the Section for which attendance at Village work was consistently the worst was Kaunda Section. The Section leader was Edwardi - a prominent member of the Traditionalist faction. He would agree to any date that might be set for the completion of a task and then do nothing to ensure that the Cell leaders under his jurisdiction carried out that work. In respect of Village work, Edwardi was the most successful Section leader at insulating the households resident in his Section from the demands of the Village Council.

In both Matumbulu and Nkulabi attendance for Village work depended upon the part of the Village Administration which operated at the Sectional level. Whatever the Village Council might plan for the landlord enterprises could not be implemented if the Section and Cell leaders did not actively support it. In Matumbulu, the Christian faction controlled the non-localised part of the Village Administration, the Village Council and the Branch Committee. The mobilisation of labour on the Village farm was blocked by their inability to gain the support of Section and Cell leaders.

The unsatisfactory nature of the system of surveillance, which depended to such a large extent on the discretion of the Cell and Section leaders, was

further compounded by the absence of real sanctions which could be imposed either on those who were not performing their administrative practices appropriately, or on individual workers themselves. Members of the Village Administration and ordinary village residents alike, in Matumbulu and Nkulabi, agreed that a system of fines (known as *uwudoba*, eg, 'laziness') had been approved by the Village Council under its bye-laws. But they also agreed that the fines were never imposed. Indeed, the Village Administrations in these villages lacked an effective policing body to enforce them. In Mlowa, and some other villages, the village militia (*wanamgambo*) provided this policing force.

Militia training began in rural Dodoma in 1973. By 1981 there were, in most villages, at least a few individuals who had received some militia training. In Matumbulu and Nkulabi, for example, there were two or three individuals who had received training. In a number of villages, particularly those more distant from Dodoma town, many more individuals had been trained.

In Mlowa, the militia were highly organised. There were always a number of men on duty, in their distinctive grey uniforms, outside the Party and Village office buildings. There were more than 30 men who had received training and might be called upon to carry out duties. The majority of these men were unmarried or recently married 'youths', although a number of them were substantially older. The militia here had a certain *esprit de corps* which could not solely be attributed to financial gains, for these were not very substantial. The militia members who carried out Court duties served for a week at a time and they were paid 'allowances' (*posho*) of ten shillings a day. Members of the militia who were required to serve a summons, or to bring

someone who had broken a Village bye-law to the Village office, were paid a fee called *cilatu* (literally 'sandal', cg) of five shillings.

In Mlowa, militia members received their orders from the Party Chairman or Secretary (who were also *ex officio* Chairman and Secretary of the Village Council). The Chairman, Matayo, had been a catechist in the local church for many years and the Secretary a teacher in the church. They were both core members of the Christian faction. They both took pride in being members of the militia and of having undergone militia training. Matayo was regarded as the leader of the militia in the village and he was also the chairman of the Village Council committee concerned with security.

Matayo was elected as Chairman in 1975. He replaced a man who was an eminent Traditionalist, qualified for office by being a ritual leader (*mutemi*, cg). After his election, Matayo and other members of the Christian faction within the village, backed by the Ward and Divisional Secretaries, began to use the militia to enforce attendance at CVF work. A CVF had existed as early as 1972, but it had been poorly attended and had yielded little. In 1975, the large CVF was divided up into quarter acre plots. Each able-bodied adult was allocated their own plot which they were responsible for cultivating. During both of the cultivating seasons 1975/1976 and 1976/1977, the militia were used extensively to enforce attendance. Individuals who failed to carry out an agricultural task on their plot by the specified date were brought before the Chairman and an *uwudoba* fine was imposed. If they refused to pay the fines then the militia seized items of their property. Livestock, grain, chairs and even chickens were liable to seizure. In a few cases, particularly recalcitrant individuals were locked up in the makeshift jail which was used by the Court. After 1977, the militia were only used infrequently, for it had

already been learned in the village that failure to comply with the Village Administration's instructions would be followed by punitive sanctions. By contrast, in Matumbulu and Nkulabi there was no militia and although the Village Councils had passed bye-laws, which imposed *uwudoba* fines for non-attendance at CVF work, such fines had never been systematically collected.

Attendance for work on the CVF in Mlowa was much higher than in Nkulabi or Matumbulu. Household and Village enterprises were, as in Matumbulu and Nkulabi, in competition for scarce labour; but in Mlowa households had been separated to a greater degree from control over the means and conditions of production. The militia under the control of the Village Administration were responsible for maintaining this separation. The levels of production achieved in Mlowa, compared to those in Matumbulu and Nkulabi (shown in table 1) could only have been achieved with very high levels of attendance.

The militia, it may be noted, occupy the same position, as a local and legitimate coercive force, that the *warugaruga* (messengers) employed by Government Chiefs and Village Headmen, used to fill. The organisation of the militia, from 1973 onwards, returned to local administrations the coercive power which had disappeared in 1961 with the virtual disbanding of the *warugaruga*.⁷ The *uwudoba* fine was developed during the colonial period as a 'customary' sanction for failure to attend 'communal labour turnouts'. It had been revived in 1968 as a 'customary' sanction to be imposed by Ward Development Committees for non-participation in self-help projects, but hardly used until the militia were established.⁸ District Administrations in Dodoma had reassembled the same set of coercive institutions established by the British

administration and abandoned after independence. The nucleation of the population and the division of the nucleated settlements into Sections and then Cells had provided the degree of surveillance and control over population which could, in some villages at least, allow the whole apparatus of legitimate coercion to work.

The supervision of the labour process

In Matumbulu and Nkulabi the Cell leaders were responsible for ensuring that the work carried out by Cell members was performed properly. The Section leaders in turn were responsible for overseeing the work of the leaders and their Cells. When work was being performed the Section leaders were supposed to move from the plot of one Cell under their jurisdiction to another, ensuring that the work was being carried out properly. The quality of the work performed by different Sections often differed markedly, varying for the same reason as attendance itself: the diligence of the Section leaders in supervising the Cell leaders under their jurisdiction.

In Mlowa the supervision of work was simpler. The Village field had been divided into half-acre plots and each adult resident in the village was responsible for the cultivation of one of these plots. The Village Administration announced a date by which any particular task was to be completed. Cell leaders were not responsible for organising the work at all, they had only to check that the work had been completed to a sufficiently high standard. In Mlowa there was a 'Work Leader' (*mkuu wa kazi*) who reported directly to the Secretary and Chairman. When the date which the Village Administration had set as the completion date for that task had arrived, the Work Leader together with Section leaders inspected the area within which the

members of each Section cultivated. If an individual had not completed the task of his particular plot it would be indicated by this inspection. Sanctions could be imposed directly on the individual whose work performance was considered inadequate. In Matumbulu and Nkulabi, sanctions had to be applied to Section and Cell leaders before ordinary Cell members. The division of the Village fields into individual plots in Mlowa meant that the legitimate coercive power, which the militia made available, acted directly on workers themselves.

The Locus of Decision-Making

According to the 1975 plan it should have been the Production Committee, a part of the Village Council, which made decisions concerning the direction of the labour process on the CVF. In practice, the managerial decisions which it took were limited and the Committee itself rarely met.

The size of the area which the Village was supposed to cultivate was set by the Party at District level. Village administrations apparently never openly disagreed with a target set by the Party but they differed in the extent to which they attempted, or were able, to implement it. For most villages in Dodoma Rural District the targeted acreage on the grain field was a quarter or half an acre per adult. Table 1 shows the areas which the District Administration claimed Villages were cultivating. The yields which were obtained are also given and these can be regarded in part as a measure of the extent to which these enterprises were properly run. It can be seen that Mlowa was by far the most successful. The yield per hectare was well above that attained on household plots in Nkulabi (467 kilograms), recorded in my farm management survey (Thiele 1983: 76). This was partly due to better soils in

the Mlowa area, but even so yields on the CVF were comparable to those obtained on household farms there.

The District Administration also determined the crops which could be grown. Villages were allowed to plant only the new hybrid sorghums or bullrush millet on their grain farms. Thus, at the most general level of management, Village Administrations controlled neither the form of the labour process nor the crops which were planted.

village	area (acres)	harvest (tonnes)	yield (kg per acre)
Nkambala	120	7.6	63
Nkulabi	90	3.0	33
Matumbulu	80	5.7	71
Chiberera	165	8.0	48
Mvumi Miseni	200	28.8	144
Mvumi Makulu	880	64.6	73
Mungano	200	5.2	26
Miganda	200	6.4	32
Iloilo	200	9.9	50
Mlowa	600	166.9	278
Makangwa	400	46.7	117

Source: Dodoma District Agricultural Office

Table 1: The area cultivated on grain CVFs with the yield for the 1979-80 season.

The other area in which managerial decisions might have been made was concerning the particular agricultural operations which were performed (e.g. spraying with pesticides), and the timing of those operations. In some of these matters Village Administrations accepted the advice of village-based Agricultural Extension Officers. Recommendations were made by the Extension Officer to the Secretary. However, decisions about the timing of operations were generally taken outside formal loci by the Secretary and sometimes the Chairman. Instructions would then be passed on to the Section and Cell leaders for implementation by village residents.

Forms of Calculation

The form of separation from the means of production in the merchant enterprises was quite different from that in landlord enterprises. The supervision of the labour process and the locus of decision making also differed.⁹ Here, our concern is the forms of calculation governing the labour processes of the two enterprise types.

In the villages of Matumbulu, Nkulabi, and Mlowa, milling machine, shop, and lorry enterprises were all run on the basis of double-entry book keeping. Each of the enterprises had its own bank account and the labour used in these enterprises was always paid for in cash on a daily or monthly basis. Matumbulu, Nkulabi and Mlowa all had book-keepers and shop managers. The book-keepers kept their books in the manner in which they were instructed by the Co-operative Department. The Villages' financial accounts were audited yearly and checked sporadically by Co-operative Department officials. In 1980, all three book-keepers kept their books in relatively good order. They were all

capable of calculating a simple balance and producing a statement of the Village's financial assets.

The forms of calculation used to measure inputs and outputs on landlord enterprises were quite different. A monetary cost was not usually given to the labour used on landlord enterprises. Although some part of the product of the enterprise might be distributed to those who had worked, the amount distributed bore no clear relation to the market value of that labour, or to the opportunity cost of that labour to households. According to book-keepers, the Co-operative Department was trying to encourage the recording of labour input, in man-days, on landlord enterprises, so that some value could be given to this input. None of the book-keepers had a clear idea about the operation of an accounting system which used labour days. Under these conditions, Village labour appeared to the management of the enterprises - the Village Council - as something to which no cost attached.

The shop, milling machine and lorry were all operated more or less according to formally capitalist principles. In these enterprises the Village used the same forms of calculation and was the locus for the same kinds of decision as any other merchant capitalist (although accounting was being used to ensure continued viability rather than profitability). In respect of its landlord enterprises, on which all village residents were obliged to work, the Village cannot be regarded as a merchant capitalist. The labour force used on these enterprises was not paid a wage, it was not a 'free' labour force, selling its labour power on a market. In the absence of such a 'free' labour force the operation of formally capitalist accounting is inhibited. But if capitalist accounting was not being applied to these agricultural enterprises neither was an alternative form of calculation based upon labour time. In the absence of

either of these types of calculation, it could only be the case that enterprises were not being run efficiently. The 'rule of thumb' calculations which were used on household enterprises to organise production could not be applied to the vastly larger Village enterprises without considerable waste of resources.

Goods, Services and the Christian Factions

The relative success of the CVF in Mlowa depended upon two conditions which the District Administration had been instrumental in establishing: first, the creation of the village militia as a coercive force, and second, the reorganisation of the labour process so that each individual was directly responsible for a particular cultivable area. The creation of a village militia was not in itself sufficient to ensure that the sanctions which could make the labour process possible would actually be used. One further thing was required: the presence of a group within the Village who were prepared to co-operate with the District Administration to utilise the local machinery of surveillance and policing. A Christian faction could constitute just such a group. In Mlowa, for example, the Christian faction, led by Matayo, effectively controlled the militia. This was a central factor, frequently cited by village residents in Mlowa, for the success of the landlord grain enterprise in that village. The Christian faction in Matumbulu, lacking access to a legitimate coercive force, had never succeeded in running their landlord enterprises.

Despite the importance of the militia in providing legitimate coercion, the success of the CVF in Mlowa did not depend upon force alone. Matayo was not voted out of office in the 1977 Party elections, although he was recognised as the leader of the militia. And there were other Christians in the Village

Council who survived the elections which took place from 1977 onwards. The Christian faction in Mlowa took control of the Village Administration in 1975 and consolidated that control in the years that followed. Although many people complained about working on the CVF the work was generally accepted as legitimate. As a number of non-Christian village residents pointed out, if Matayo were voted out of office and a Traditionalist Chairman voted in, Village work might stop but the shop, lorry, milling machine and stand-pipes would also disappear. The Christians were tolerated by the majority of villagers as a necessary evil rather than liked. Villagers were prepared to accept the circumscription of household autonomy and the performance of a limited amount of labour service on the Village's landlord enterprise in exchange for the guaranteed provision of services. The continued control of the Village Administration by the Christians was underwritten by the direction of a continuous flow of goods and services from the District through the Village Administration.

The degree of circumscription of household and individual autonomy which was acceptable to ordinary villagers was clearly limited. The Village Administration went beyond this limit at its own peril. In Mlowa most villagers were prepared to cultivate half an acre each on the landlord enterprise. Any attempt by the Village Administration to increase that area would have met with considerable resistance. It might have led to the Chairman and other Christians being voted out of office, or to other forms of political protest. Indeed, in 1981 Christians in Matumbulu Village Council elections were defeated for precisely this reason: Christians on the Council were seen as having gone beyond a reasonable circumscription of household autonomy.

Two Conceptions of Progress

Mlowa was regarded by the District Administration and its inhabitants alike as a Village which had succeeded: a Village which had begun to achieve 'progress' (*maendeleo*). For villagers the most salient characteristic of 'progress' was the continuing supply of goods and services through the Village Administration. The residents of Mlowa were well aware that their shop was better stocked than those of neighbouring villages, that they had a lorry which provided a twice weekly bus service into town, and that stand-pipes were being plumbed in to every Section of the Village.

Residents of Nkulabi would complain that 'we have had no progress' (*'sisi hatuna maendeleo'*). The shop was poorly stocked throughout 1979 and much of 1980. They did not have a lorry and the two stand-pipes which had been provided earlier rarely worked. 'Progress' was defined by the presence, as in Mlowa, or the absence, as in Nkulabi, of services.

There were many individuals in Mlowa who also thought that the militia were part of this progress. They valued the more general policing which the militia under the direction of the Chairman provided. Many residents of Nkulabi cited Nkulabi as a village which had a weak leadership, which lacked a militia and in which violence was rife. When I informed inhabitants of Mlowa that I was planning to go and live in Nkulabi, their response was almost always to warn me that it was a place where no one could walk around after dark without fear of being robbed or murdered. The warning, whilst exaggerated, was partly true. In Mlowa fights were rare; if anybody had started a fight in Mlowa they would have been arrested by the militia. In Nkulabi, fights, usually associated with beer drinking, were much more common. Between 1979 and 1981 three men had died of knife wounds from fights in

Nkulabi.

In most rural areas of Dodoma, the customary sanctions and elders' courts which had provided judicial control were more or less ineffective by the late 1970s. The Cell and Section leaders who had partially taken over this judicial practice would only be appealed to in relatively trivial and usually civil cases. The breakdown of customary sanctions was probably hastened, and certainly made more evident, by the very large and nucleated settlements in which people were now living. In the absence of a police force stationed within the village there were no sanctions which could be invoked against those committing criminal offences, without considerable delay in summoning the official police force from the town.

The coincidence of disturbances of the peace with beer-drinking is perhaps not accidental. Within natural economy, beer had been consumed as a means of organising the labour process, within a general context of kinship, affinal and neighbourly reciprocity. By 1980, the production and consumption of beer had become commoditised, and it was no longer kin, affines and neighbours who drank beer together. It was as members of no socially constituted group or category, except civil society, that individuals collected to drink beer. In the absence of effective sanctions regulating their intercourse, the emergence of violence was perhaps only to be expected. In such circumstances well organised Village Administrations, and their legitimate coercive arm the militia, were welcomed by a substantial part of the population. This welcoming of a superordinate judicial authority in Dodoma where the State's judicial presence had hitherto been comparatively weak, is perhaps analogous to the welcoming of chiefly rule by acephalous people, for the judicial authority which they provided, recorded elsewhere in Africa.¹⁰

For village residents, the attributes of progress were the continuing supply of goods and services and an effective militia. The provision of both of these was seen as resting upon the Village Administration. In Mlowa, many villagers had accepted that the cost of such progress was a limited circumscription of household autonomy, in general, and the performance of labour services for the Village, in particular.

The District Administration's conception of what constituted progress was different but partially coincident with that of villagers. At the most general level, progress was seen as the realisation of the 'possible' world of the 1975 plan: the organisation of a substantial part of production on Village enterprises and the total regulation of household enterprises. But, as officials often pointed out, even the successful village of Mlowa only distantly resembled that 'possible' world. They realised moreover that the powers of the District and Village Administrations were distinctly limited.

In practice the District Administration used a more limited set of attributes to determine what constituted progress. The Village Manager in Mlowa asserted that there were three attributes used by the District in characterising a Village as one which had made progress:

1. the size of the Village farms
2. the amount of money in the Village bank accounts
3. the number of projects or enterprises (*miradi*) which the Village operated

In terms of all these attributes, Mlowa, said the Manager, was considered one of the most successful villages in Dodoma. He contrasted it with the Village of

Mvumi Miseni. There, he said, each adult nominally cultivated a quarter of an acre on the Village farm but few people regularly attended work. There was little money in the Village bank account and the Village operated few enterprises.

The extent to which a Village had progressed was, as far as the District Administration was concerned, determined by its activities as an economic agent; the provision of services appeared as a necessary cost of ensuring that continuing co-operation. This is a different ordering of the attributes which village residents themselves regarded as constituting progress. For them progress was the provision of services and the activities of the Village as an economic agent appeared as a necessary cost of maintaining the provision of those services. When villagers and District officials referred to progress they were talking on one side of consumption (of services) and on the other of production (on Village enterprises). The two instances (of consumption and production) were, it was argued above, intrinsically linked. The provision of services, as a collective form of consumption, established one of the conditions of existence of the labour process on Village enterprises. A Village could only be successful as an economic agent if it supplied services and it could only supply services if it functioned as an economic agent.

These differing conceptions of progress were the representation within discourse of a class struggle. The struggle was between Villages and households as economic agents constituted in radically different ways. Under the conditions of production of Dodoma, it was a struggle from which neither side could emerge victorious. It was possible neither for household production to be completely subsumed nor for the Villages to completely disappear. The purely technical problems of bringing even a part of total production under the

control of the Village were enormous. In addition to the technical problems, the Village Administration was itself constituted of the heads of the very households which it was attempting to subsume. The Village Administration could under these conditions only control a part of total production; it had to balance the conflicting requirements of the District and of individuals. If it attempted to restrict the activities of households to what was considered an unreasonable extent, its members could be voted out of office. If it failed to comply or to appear to comply with orders demanding the restriction of household autonomy, then the supply of goods and services from the District might be affected. Mlowa had been successful as a Village because its Village Administration had found an appropriate balance between these opposing class interests. It had managed to reproduce itself as an economic agent, but this reproduction depended, as we saw above, upon an accidental configuration of factors of which the 1975 plan was wholly ignorant.

NOTES

- ¹ The arbitrariness of the assignment of these two constraints to the PMP is matched by the arbitrary nature of a mode of production identified by the form of the unit of production or its method of calculation as Ennew *et al.* (1977) have argued.
- ² Hindess and Hirst (1975) used the same argument against Wittfogel's theory of oriental despotism: a labour process cannot produce the bureaucracy required to administer it, if the labour process requires that bureaucracy in the first place.
- ³ This date is used for convenience of reference; Republic of Tanzania (1976), which I regard as part of this plan, was published a year later.
- ⁴ Henceforth 'Village' with a capital 'V' will refer to the institutional complex described by the Villages Act.
- ⁵ The argument here derives from Bettelheim (1976) who argued that in the Soviet Union *sovkhozy* and *kolkhozy* are 'enterprises' of a similar type to joint stock companies. I have used 'CCPEA' instead of 'enterprise' because the latter has a different meaning here.

- ⁶ Using the Bantu prefix, they are properly called *Wagogo* and the language they speak *Cigogo* (indicated in the text as 'cg'). Nowadays *Kiswahili*, the official language of State discourse, is also spoken in many contexts.
- ⁷ Jellicoe (1978: 208) describes the coercive role which the *warugaruga* occupied, and its collapse after independence.
- ⁸ Hill (1973: 360) describes the reintroduction of *uwudoba* fines at a meeting of the District Council.
- ⁹ See Thiele (1983: 178-183) and Hassett (this volume) for a description of these differences.
- ¹⁰ Southall (1953: 233-234) documents such a voluntary submission.

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THE BEWITCHMENT AND FALL OF A VILLAGE POLITICIAN

Graham Thompson

This paper presents a case study of a failing village politician who eventually comes to believe he has been bewitched by one of his fellow villagers. The events from which this case study is drawn occurred during field research in Mlalo, an area of the Western Usambara mountains of north-eastern Tanzania which is the home of the Shambaa people.

The Shambaa are today predominantly cash cropping smallholders and traders deriving their wealth from growing European vegetables and fruits, rice, tea and coffee. Much of what they sell does not enter the State marketing system but is sold privately, often by the farmers themselves who travel regularly to markets in Tanga or Dar es Salaam. However some pockets of peasant subsistence agriculture based on cattle, maize and bananas still exist in the mountains, particularly in those areas some distance from all-weather roads. The village governments of the Western Usambaras (Lushoto District) are in direct competition with private traders but are weakened by inefficient supplies of basic farming equipment, seeds, fertiliser and foodstuffs which are vital to the people in the period before the harvest. *Ujamaa* shops and a few village-owned grain mills are the main evidence of governmental economic penetration in the area. Very few villages have *ujamaa* land of any size (around 1.5 acres was the average in the Mlalo area) and work for these farms is rarely performed by most villagers. The major problem in their further development from the government's point of view has been the high density of the local population, the consequent scarcity of land (population density in the Mlalo area is around 90 people per square kilometre) and the soil's

degradation under the intensive cultivation necessitated by the fast growing population (more than 50% of Mlalo inhabitants are <50). But these problems are compounded by struggles within villages themselves firstly over methods of development and secondly as to whether development is a welcome thing at all. The first kind of struggle often emerges between individuals contesting for political appointment or the preservation of their power once they are in office; the second between leaders and other groups (traders, subsistence-oriented farmers) who repudiate the government's interference in their chosen paths to wealth or subsistence. Most people believe the government is there to help them but only on their own terms. What these terms are, at least for some of them, will become clear below.

Both in my account of the background to the case and in my final analysis I will make use of an analytic terminology of creeds, credentials, credibility and social credit. I have chosen these terms for the following reasons. It was apparent to me during fieldwork that neither anthropologists nor sociologists have yet determined the correct analytic framework which will describe and explain the behaviour of groups or individuals who inhabit the borderlands of two economies (or even indeed religions). In the Shambaa case there are two predominant systems of exchange, one involving the accumulation of symbolic capital over and above material capital ('traditionalist'), the other involving a primary emphasis on material capital. But Shambaa trader-farmers are not simply facing two ways; they are under pressure to be three-faced in their further outward conformity to the dominant socialist ideology of government workers and village leaders. If one tries to analyse people's actions as flowing out of only one system of objective conceptual structures, then one will never grasp the praxis and strategies which social individuals pursue in relation to differing and changeable goals, nor the processes of historical change brought

about by the conflicts of different goals and interests.

In order to overcome the reification of personality and the over-determination and objectification of social consciousness implicit in most social analysts' categorisation of behaviour I have tried to develop new terms of analysis. The use of the term 'credential' helps to group together social facts ordinarily separated by such analytic categories as class, ideology, belief and practice, whilst at the same time it restores ideological freedom to the individual social actor. The term describes those features of our life which we are constantly presenting to ourselves and others as making up our self-identity. This presentation may become regularised into a social habit, an unconscious act. Individuals gather together credentials in the social sphere, not just of course for the sake of inward self-identity, but also for the external confirmation of that identity as right, proper and respectable, as forms of symbolic capital (cf. Bourdieu 1977).

Ideas and values visibly expressed, dress, a certain manner of farming, attendance at social gatherings, the reiteration of kinship links, the obedience to one man's orders rather than another's, belief in and defence against witchcraft - all these are common forms of credentials used amongst the Shambaa today. I term them credentials because they are advertisements by social actors for group values - the creeds, ethos, or habitus of one group or another. By means of such credentials people are oiling their social activity in order to make their goals and interests easier to fulfil. They are both self-confirmatory acts and orientations towards creating social credit with one's peer group.

Credentials are also social demarcators and are often the social conventions of status groups. But we must allow that some social individuals might by

necessity belong to more than one distinct status group and must therefore adapt their behaviour to the needs of different groups. In the Western Usambaras social distances are nowhere as refined as in a class society such as our own; yet differing systems of social and religious values, means of production and social organisation do exist. The concept of credentials can help us to see a way through the maze of conflicting loyalties and seemingly paradoxical ideologies, for it allows the possibility that a person is relatively free to manipulate or even change his credentials when he confronts individuals or status groups with other orientations of ethos, status or class. That this freedom to change is not in practice always present is a matter of the ingrained and unconscious nature of credentials in social life, especially for instance in a social formation whose unitary ethos provides no means of comparison to one's own credentials, and hence no basis for the critical reflection necessary for their change. But the Shambaa are not such an extreme case.

Credentials cannot form tight systems, nor can they be easily subsumed under one ideology or another. In societies (such as the Shambaa) undergoing change from within and without it is more often the case that the use of some credentials is ambiguous. They come to form loose systems of practical logic available for human praxis but not for rigid and exact theorising. Some credentials might be thought of as hard rather than soft, i.e. they form core and often sacred events for common carriers (e.g. the strict observance of the five daily prayers for devout Shambaa Muslims). Soft credentials are peripheral to central values and are more often ambiguously utilised and more easily consciously manipulated, e.g. the Christian Shambaa habit of wearing brightly coloured Islamic *kofia* (hats); this aids their business and political bargaining with Muslims. Surface appearances of unity are very important because this

hides the differing goals and intentions of participants in social negotiations.

The use of the term 'credential' in the analysis below in no way destroys the value of the concept 'ideology'; it should help to deepen and broaden the nature of this concept in reminding the armchair theoretician that ideas are not only thought but spoken, manipulated, used in argument and debate, purposefully betrayed, inscribed in ritual and even fought over. If I prefer to use the term creed rather than ideology it is because it is easier to see how credentials are manipulated in defence of particular creeds; whereas an ideology embraces too great an expanse of conceptual space. In summary then credentials are manipulated (or merely held in view) both as a means of self identity and as a defence of creeds and interests; and finally people work at their credentials to create lasting credibility and a fund of social credit and charisma through which they can convince others to work and co-operate with them. Negatively speaking credentials do not, of course, always harmonize. They can be important markers of differences in class or status or belief, and consequently become a cause for conflict and social strife. The story below emphasizes the results of such conflicts.

The paper falls into four sections. The first details the general background of the leading character - the Village Secretary Guga. The second section describes the case proper with an account of the events leading up to his bewitchment. The third section deals with the divination of witchcraft by a local medicine man and the events consequent to that divination. Finally I shall make a detailed analysis of the case and then consider its general relevance to questions of Shambaa and the wider Tanzanian development programmes.

The Background to the Case

Guga was the Secretary of a small Shambaa village of around 1,400 population in one of the most densely populated areas of the Usambaras, an area of mixed cash and subsistence agriculture. Guga was unusual in that he had had a secondary school education and could speak reasonably good English, but like many other young Secretaries of the area he wore smart western clothes together with a brightly coloured Islamic hat (*kofia*). He gave the impression of a progressive and dynamic leader despite the fact that he had only been appointed to his job one month before I first met him. He was the son of an important Muslim elder who owned considerably more than the average amount of land for local farmers. From money that the father had made from his rice farm he had sent Guga, the last son, from primary school to Muslim secondary school at Tanga where, after completing two years, he had obtained employment as a clerk. He came home briefly to marry and then returned to Tanga for four years. None of the four other brothers had had the benefit of such an education and all but one, who was a tailor, were farmers or traders of cash crops. Guga gave up his job in Tanga to take on the responsibilities of his village, partly through choice and partly through the direct pressure of the District government and Party leaders, and also that of some of the villagers themselves.

Guga's suitability for appointment to the post of Village Secretary must be explained by reference to several factors. The first set of credentials that he was able to employ were traditional in kind. These were important to his obtaining the initial approval of the elders of the village who still dominated the five village Committees. These credentials were partly supplied by his father's earlier importance in the village and his present close involvement in

traditional affairs. This included the father's regular attendance at funerals; his knowledge of traditional medicine; the organisation of his labour for the family farm in which he preferred exchange of labour (*ngemo sa*)¹ at peaks in the agricultural cycle rather than hiring labourers; the general openness of his dealings and his renowned generosity towards kin and neighbours. His father in other words, despite at one time having indulged in a small amount of cash cropping, basically maintained a traditional ethic of economic behaviour with which he gained local respect and symbolic capital among all age groups. Furthermore, despite his wealth in land, his house was traditionally built and showed no outward signs of wealth in terms of goods or possessions. Politically his father was still a powerful man in the neighbourhood: he once acted for a short time for his village as a councillor to the local chief; and today he advises in court cases at the local magistrate's court, so that his knowledge of traditional Shambaa law and custom is well respected. But, because of his age, he had retired from active participation in village politics or membership of its Committees. A secondary source of Guga's traditional credentials came from the marriage of his father's sister to the brother of the Chairman of the village, and the two families were close neighbours.

The second set of credentials Guga could employ derived from his family's standing amongst the Islamic faithful and his own devout adherence to Islamic creeds. Guga's father had been one of the first of the villagers to become a Muslim back in the 1920s when Islam made its first major expansion in the mountains. He still attended regularly the Friday communal prayers in the large mosque of the local market town and, like many other elders, would seldom be seen without his *djellabiah* robe and *kofia*: he never wore western clothes. Guga's brother was a well-known and highly respected Muslim teacher who had instructed many of the local farmers' children in weekly

madarasa - the Koranic schools for children. Both he and his brother were conspicuously strict Muslims, abhorring alcoholic drink and following the rituals of the five private daily prayer sessions. They both, too, played major parts in the local Muslim festivals and services making explanations of the Koran and Islamic tradition from the Arabic into Swahili. Guga's Islamic credentials did not, of course, appeal to all but it was a fact that the vast majority of elders had already been won over to Islam and there were in the area very few vestiges of public traditional religious ritual. Furthermore Guga was part of a young 'revolution' of educated Muslims who claimed to know the reasons for the Islamic ritual and creeds rather than, as they often accused the elders of doing, acting out the ritual blindly and sometimes mixing it with a traditional logic which was not sanctioned by the words of the Prophet. However on the whole the arguments and conflicts between young and old had been over minor matters of the form of rituals, they did not touch upon such larger matters as spirit possession or witchcraft. On these issues the attitude of Guga and the young Muslim teachers was one of aloofness rather than positive repudiation.

Guga's final credential for his job was his high level of education. This was his positive asset when he was working with those young educated farmers still remaining in the village, though their numbers were few. Education usually led the young to leave the village in search of town employment. With these few, however, he could at least share certain progressive attitudes learnt through his education - namely an enthusiasm for modern aids to farming and a love of western consumer goods that came as much from a common acquaintance with town life as from education itself. Guga had returned from town the proud possessor of a bicycle, a radio, and a battered old camera with which he used to do some business in portrait

photography, a service in great demand amongst the young. Guga's long term of education had also been a main credential for the government hierarchy who had appointed him, both at Ward and District level. Although his appointment ultimately came from the District headquarters in Lushoto, this was the culmination of a process in which the names of several possible candidates are first put forward by the village leaders after meetings in the village in which all can attend. Further approval for the candidates is then sought from the local Ward Secretary (under whom the Village Secretary directly works) before being sent on to the District headquarters of the one Party government. Every step in Tanzanian education is made with an increase in the weight given to political studies, both in the workings of the State and the ideology of Nyerere's African socialism. This and his long membership of the Party made Guga particularly attractive to the District authorities, who appeared to be making a positive drive to appoint younger and more educated Village Secretaries who were often devout Muslims.

The job of Village Secretary is at the interface between village politics and national and District policies. So it was that Guga was expected to spend much of his time at meetings outside the village, at Ward or District level, learning about various matters of policy. He was expected to educate the members of the five Village Committees into the acceptance and administration of these policies (the nature of which will become obvious in the ensuing discussion) and also to act as their general secretary, writing letters, keeping accounts and making records of meetings. His role, however, intimately depended upon the characters of the two other village leaders.

The Village Chairman, who was the elected leader of the village, saw his main role as a liaison between the other elders of the village and its younger

more educated leaders - the Secretary and the Village Manager. He largely took a back seat role in the administration of the village, but his symbolic authority was used to ensure attendance at meetings and the keeping of order therein. It is a common joke in the Usambaras that many Chairmen are voted in because of their benignly ineffective qualities so that individual farmers will not be disturbed in their normal farming activities or others in their private businesses.

The Manager, unlike Secretary and Chairman, is a government appointee from outside the village and should be an expert in at least one major field of central concern to village workings. Unfortunately in this case, the Manager was an expert in education only, being a former teacher, and so he took it upon himself to educate the village elders into the mysteries of State and Party apparatus and ideology, but did little else. This left Guga with more work than was normal for a Secretary. He took responsibility for two main areas of activity and financial income for the village which should have required the active advice of the Manager, namely the *ujamaa* co-operative field and the village-owned shop; but these projects devolved solely on Guga.

How did Guga see his own job? Firstly he appears to have seen it rather like a huge business enterprise in which he was forced to try to make a profit in order to reinvest in the development of the village. The sources of his profit were to be the *ujamaa* field (where crops directly produced by voluntary labour were sold to the State or the villagers themselves), the village shop, the taxation of certain crops and the licensing of one village bar. Profits from these could be used to extend the school, buy farming aids such as fertilizer and improved seeds, set up a maize mill (with the additional help of a government loan) and other amenities. The ideal of communalising the labour

of the village on a large *ujamaa* farm was beyond Guga's grasp and was recognized as being impossible anyway by the higher District authorities at this stage of development (although earlier policies had attempted this in isolated villages of the mountains - attempted and failed). Thus Guga was not unduly pushed to be a representative of the more radical socialist policies of his country except where this coincided with the images of success and development he saw in those around him. Guga's perception of his job did not put him at odds with the political hierarchy, nor did it clash with that of the more progressive farmers of the village, though it did put him in competition with the latter.

The Events Leading to Guga's Bewitchment

Guga took on the job in October 1979 and was appointed for a six month probationary period without pay. However, his appointment was not made without dissent from some quarters of the village. Immediately after taking up the appointment, Guga fell into an argument with his neighbour, Khalifa, who was not at all pleased that Guga had become Village Secretary. He himself had been Secretary some years before during which time he had made the village-owned shop part of his own house. Although he had resigned as Secretary, Khalifa still wanted to manage the shop. Guga distrusted his neighbour and immediately proposed to the Village Economic Committee that the shop be moved to his own house. This was accepted and the move was made, but Khalifa was very disgruntled and decided to hit back by issuing threats to take Guga to court over a piece of land that had long been in dispute between the two families. Khalifa, a much older man than Guga, had long ago bought half a field from Guga's father, and had always claimed that

Guga and his family were still using land that they had sold to him. However this time, as on previous occasions, Khalifa did not act on this threat because independent witnesses seemed to support Guga's claim that, in fact, it was Khalifa who was trying to extend the land at Guga's expense. The rivalry between them persisted throughout Guga's term of office, and Guga always referred to Khalifa as the one who was stirring up trouble amongst the villagers when things went badly for him.

Guga's first task was to organise the planting of the *ujamaa* field which he undertook in December, 1979. This was seriously held up until after the first rains had all but finished because of the difficulty Guga had in recruiting labour. Most farmers and their wives were reluctant to give away the statutory two half working days on the *ujamaa* field because they were too busy with their own planting. The field's awkward position on a high stony ridge in a wattle forest was a further disincentive as was the fact that Guga was unable to get fertilizer which had been promised him from the State Trading Company. The same problems of labour arose at the time of harvesting the following March. There had been little rain in the second rainy season, the maize cobs were small and the plants withered in the hot sun because they were harvested too late. There was only enough maize to sell back to the growers themselves, and at the distribution of lots fighting broke out between the women, many of whom grabbed what they could and ran off to their homes.

Guga's second task was to build up the village shop in his own house. This was supplied with goods by the local Regional Trading Company (RTC) - the State-owned supply network. Here too he faced many problems. Because of genuine national shortages after the Ugandan war, and also corruption at the

local and Regional level, Guga was frequently unable to maintain a full store of goods for his customers, particularly in the key areas of sugar, flour and kerosene. The villagers tended to hold Guga responsible when goods were not available even if it was the fault of the suppliers. This view was reinforced by the fact that the goods appeared in private shops at twice or three times the government price. In reality these goods were not resold by Guga himself but by the corrupt managers of the local RTC. However, from the villagers' point of view Guga could be seen as part of the supply network and not an unwilling victim of it. In times of shortage kin and neighbours to whom he owed favours pressed Guga to supply them with larger amounts of goods than other village members. On the whole Guga refused to do so but felt guilty at withholding this help for, even if equal distribution benefited the wider village, it was behaviour which ran directly against the traditional norms of kinship obligations. Lastly, Guga tried to provide himself with income by stocking the shop with goods such as clothes and coconuts which he himself had bought from major towns - a practice which was strictly-speaking illegal, but so common in Usambara village shops as to have become a local custom. This made the shop a more attractive place to visit, but also left Guga open to the suspicion that he might not be keeping separate accounts between his own business and that of the village. Despite all these disadvantages and supply problems the shop did indeed thrive for a time in the early months of 1980.

After the harvest Guga was involved in another challenge to his leadership. There was a local bye-law (passed under pressure from District headquarters) which was designed to halt soil erosion in the over-worked fields of this densely populated area. The law prohibited the grazing of cattle in harvested maize fields as this damaged the fragile top soil. However, according to the elders (and confirmed by Cory 1951) the Shambaa had always had a traditional

right to do this on their own fields and on the fields of others if permission was given by the owners. Many village leaders turned a blind eye to this practice but Guga, being a new and conscientious leader, began to prosecute such cattle-keepers who infringed the law. This made him very unpopular especially amongst the more traditional farmers whose grazing land had been increasingly diminished by the expansion of arable land.

In June and July supplies of major staples became erratic again and Guga's village shop had little to sell. In June also the Village Manager resigned his post and went back to teaching in a local school. There was no one to take his place and Guga's work and responsibilities increased still further as a result. But this was the time, after the harvest and during the long cool dry season when there were many Muslim festivals, and Guga offered to accompany me to them, taking along his old camera whilst I was busy making tape recordings. I soon gained the impression that Guga was tired of his village political problems and pretended instead to help me, interviewing local Muslim teachers and visiting a round of Muslim festivities. This attitude was probably reinforced by the fact that, despite having completed his probationary period, he was still not receiving pay for his village work. At the end of July and just before Ramadhan, he returned from a business trip to Arusha with a new cassette recorder which had cost him about Sh.2,000. He now began proudly to make his own recordings of Muslim festivals and of the events during and at the close of Ramadhan, and he played these back to many eager younger listeners, members of the faithful. However, it was shortly after these events that affairs at the shop and generally within his own village moved from bad to worse. Committee and general meetings were poorly attended. Despite the fact that he was beginning to get supplies in the shop once more, the number of people buying them decreased. It is possible that at this point he suspected

that people thought he was 'eating the profits' of the shop and were unwilling to buy there, because he then produced a plan to move the shop to an independent building and install a paid manager. However this needed funds the village did not possess. Thus he began a subscription drive by which members could form a co-operative, those who had contributed benefitting later from slightly cheaper prices. Despite his plans, the response in the village was poor; again people refused to attend the meetings he called and very few offered to become subscribers. In fact right up until his resignation the shop remained in his house and continued to do badly. Guga was naturally very bitter at this point; the failure of the *ujamaa* field, refusal to attend meetings, and, more especially, the decline of sales in the village shop made him feel that perhaps there were some in the village who were stirring up trouble against him and who wanted him to quit. He particularly suspected the ex-Secretary, Khalifa, as a prime trouble-maker but also railed at times against many of the older village and Committee members whom he saw as uneducated and basically lazy men, only interested in the village as a whole when it fitted in with their own purposes.

The Divination of Witchcraft

In September of that year Guga began to help me interview local medicine men. Towards the end of that month we visited an old medicine man in a remote mountain area some six miles from Guga's home. During the interview Guga showed a certain discomfort which he appeared to try to hide by feigning boredom: his eyes frequently turned towards the ceiling and his hands fidgeted from one thing to another. However, after we began to ask about matters of divination, his manner changed. The medicine man agreed to show

us his methods of divination but he claimed it needed a concrete problem to be divined in order for his skills to be shown properly. Guga, with my approval, then asked him the prospects for his own coming business trip to Dar es Salaam. The medicine man, Kika, divined that the trip would have a positive outcome; however he also divined that he could face problems on his return from Dar. By a slow process of inquiry and further divination Guga was led to confess that there were indeed problems in his village, especially with the village shop. Kika went on to divine that this was due to witchcraft of the kind called *Kisimu* (see below). He told Guga that people in his village were indeed jealous of his wealth and position and suspected him of corruption ('eating the funds' of the village). It was this that had led to witchcraft and caused his lack of success. Kika made one more divination at Guga's request - to find the name of the man who had bewitched him. The first name that Guga offered was immediately confirmed by Kika's divination as the name of the witch, Khalifa, the same former Secretary, the man who had fallen out with Guga's family over the disputed land claim and whom Guga believed to have been responsible for stirring up the people against him as the new Village Secretary and shop manager. Guga later told me he believed that Khalifa had bewitched his shop specifically because he desired to have it back under his own management.

There was a pause in the divination proceedings as Guga went to make his mid-day prayer in the forest above the house. On his return he was asked to remove his western nylon shirt, his shoes and his Islamic *kofia*. Having divested himself of the most prominent of his western and Islamic credentials he underwent a full treatment for the curing of his bewitchment, a treatment climaxed by the cutting of his chest and back and the insertion in the cuts of a black powdered medicine. He was also given a talisman designed to ward off

the possibility of future bewitchment and make his work successful once again. This was prepared from the same black powder wrapped in paper and then bound with black material torn from Kika's own cloak. The ceremony concluded with killing a chicken, paid for by Guga, which we subsequently ate together.

The case did not end there. A week later Guga's Muslim teacher brother returned home from a business trip to Tabora and immediately began to complain of severe and unnatural headaches. He did not suspect witchcraft at first but then his brother told him about his own bewitchment. Guga persuaded the teacher to obtain the help of yet another medicine man after hospital medicines had not relieved the headaches. In fact, Guga's brother visited three separate medicine men in the next two weeks before gaining a cure for the headaches. The last two experts also divined witchcraft, and one of them had earned the teacher's anger by making many cuts on his face; it was the last one who managed to cure the brother, revealing in the process that the house had been planted with charms, in the shop, the kitchen and the front door; it was these, he said, that had been responsible for the lack of custom and for Guga's troubles. From that point on Guga made little effort either to fill his shop with goods or further organise the village, nor even to attend Ward meetings in the local market town. In December he called a village meeting and announced his resignation.

The Analysis

Kisimu (sa) witchcraft is the most common form of witchcraft occurring between Shamba men today. It is a variety of witchcraft which has the specific

effect of spoiling another person's business, although it can have adverse effects on personal health too in the form of headaches. It is, if you like, the Shambaa form of overstress from new economic conditions and competition. Conversely, *Kisimu* medicine is often asked for by the clients of medicine men in order to ward off business failure and ensure greater success, regardless of whether witchcraft has occurred.

We must note two more general features of Shambaa witchcraft before going on to a more general analysis of the case. As in many societies, Shambaa witchcraft is connected with jealousy and malice and it is said to be directed against the objects of the witch's jealousy: people, cattle, crops or business and the fruits of business. Secondly, it is today rarely an open affair - face to face accusation of witchcraft no longer occurs, except perhaps between co-wives. The cause of this secrecy may be the long colonial repression of open witchcraft accusation but it could also result from Shambaa beliefs in the efficacy of anti-witchcraft medicines and charms, and their legitimate use once a person has been attacked. There is only a very fine line in Shambaa beliefs between the offensive and the defensive use of charms and medicines: it is very much a question of the interpretation of each individual, as he moves between fortune and misfortune, success or failure.

As the causes of misfortune and failure have broadened into modern economic and political spheres, concurrently there has been an increase in this form of witchcraft treatment. The Shambaa themselves are quite aware of this regrettable increase and often blame it on the self-seeking values which they claim the young men bring back from urban life after periods of migratory labour. However at one level of analysis there is a growing competition for scarce resources between all Shambaa - competition over land, political

appointments and influence, and the ability to make monetary profits from the growth, sale or resale of cash crops. In this all men are pitted against one another as they move towards the same goals of success and expansion of their own interests. Khalifa and Guga were obviously rivals in this way and their rivalry was expressed, at least by Guga, in terms of *Kisimu* witchcraft.

But this rivalry may be complicated by appeals to rival creeds and credentials, representing on the surface at least the pursuit of very different goals and ideals. In this sense Khalifa was merely a symbol for the frustrated Guga of the intransigence of the older generation. It was they who held onto more traditional credentials against his own 'progressive' attempts to get the *ujamaa* field under way, to make his *ujamaa* shop a success, and to prevent soil erosion by the restriction of grazing rights.

The failure of the *ujamaa* field was a serious blow to his authority and a diminution of his credentials as a strong leader. But the venture was a two-fold disaster as the village lost potential income from the field and Guga's ability to further the development of the village in other ways was therefore restricted. Likewise the failure of the shop produced a similar weakening of his credentials, and his actions to improve them only led to further suspicion by villagers that he might be misusing the profits for himself. The conflict between the material bureaucratic values inherent in the rule of equal distribution of its goods and the traditional demands of kin (no matter how distant) also left him, inevitably, with a weakened political base on which he could otherwise have manoeuvred to avoid disaster. But this lack of favouritism combined with his display of privately bought goods (both in his shop and in the pathways of his village) led to a situation where both kin and unrelated villagers distrusted him as a thoroughgoing individualistic

businessman.

The villagers' refusal to co-operate was not only motivated by self-interest, but it was also prompted by their own distrust of his progressive credentials. His attachment to educated and town values was his chief stumbling block in the administration of his village. Many older people without education see the latter as a double-edged sword: it may bring comfort in one's old age by virtue of the high salary of an educated son, but it is also said to lead to arrogance and the loss of respect for the elders. There again the urbane credentials of Guga must have displeased them, particularly his very open display of private wealth in the form of camera and tape recorder. Such display is frowned upon by older Shambaa who say that it directly stirs up jealousy amongst the less fortunate, and goes against the publicly accepted Shambaa norm of sharing displayed wealth (or instead not showing it off at all). These views of the elders and more conservative members of the village obviously contributed to Guga's political failure and his eventual decision to resign. It is also interesting to note certain incompatibilities of different credentials in these events. Kika, the traditional medicine man, insisted that Guga's western clothing (and his Islamic hat) be removed before treatment could commence. Khalifa, Guga's brother, did not object to cuts being made in his back but was furious that they should be made on the most public part of his anatomy - his face. This indicates the distance created by such ceremonies between devout Islamic credentials (the hat, the teacher's face), or westernised-urban credentials (the shirt and shoes) on the one side and the traditional credentials of witchcraft sufferers (the raised scars of the body or face) on the other. I shall say a little more on this below.

But the question remains, why was Guga so keen to accept the judgement of Kika, the medicine man, that he had indeed been bewitched. Guga was seeking for an explanation of his misfortunes as village leader, his failure to activate the village and, more specifically, to make the shop a success. But as an educated and progressive-minded man he might be thought to have been able to resist the temptation to fall back on witchcraft as an explanation. Why was witchcraft such an attractive mode of explanation? Firstly, we must stress that, as far as his village troubles were concerned, Guga was working at a high level of stress and anxiety; there were two or more different sets of rules of behaviour in which he had to operate, and the psychological debt created by their contradictions and the different demands of villagers and his own political superiors were the specific causes of such stress. By believing in his bewitchment Guga could at one time unload his anxiety (and possible guilt) upon the one man he saw as representing both the stubborn and unenlightened older generation of traditional farmers and also the major economic and political rival to himself.

The logic of his belief in witchcraft, however, goes beyond mere explanation of misfortune and unloading of anxiety. Guga had become tired of the problems with his village, perhaps he had already come to see them as insoluble and that the demands made upon him by the villagers were intolerable. We have seen that he found difficulty in satisfying all of their demands from within the logic of his position. In this contingency, witchcraft could become the most attractive solution to his problems because he could now at least resign and feel personally vindicated over his own efforts for the village. It would be, after all, impossible to work with villagers who might continue to bewitch him. From this point of view witchcraft is acting as an agent of fission, but it is important to note that, unlike cases among the

Lugbara (Middleton 1960) and other tribes, this case does not represent a splitting of like from like; Guga has left the village to pursue his own career, not in the same terms as the majority of the villagers; they in turn have won freedom from him and his attempts to run the village like a socialist business.

In a wider perspective we can see that Shambaa witchcraft still acts as a major form of social control. It is the fear of being bewitched which operates to control people's behaviour according to traditional norms; but the fear of being thought a witch is not such a potent deterrent. The permanent witch-figure occurs in Shambaa view most usually as an older woman, frequently childless and with a strange appearance and manner. Men are much more rarely thought to be permanent witch-figures. In fact the code of secrecy over witchcraft matters makes it very difficult to openly accuse a witch and publicly condemn him. Shambaa complain that it is really quite impossible to know who is bewitching whom, and their only recourse when witchcraft approaches epidemic proportions is the periodic series of witch ordeals where an outside specialist is brought in to administer anti-witchcraft medicines to whole villages. The witches then become mad if they perpetuate their craft. In our case it is clear that there would have been no further use in pursuing the witch. As the medicine man implied at his divination, the bewitched man had to some extent called up his own troubles on himself. From this point of view the medicine man is the incarnation of traditional values reminding the young materialist leader that the latter's values are in danger of destroying the old order of things. More than that he brands the Secretary as a permanent reminder of his transgressions.² It was more embarrassing for the Muslim teacher brother; when he underwent his treatment he was branded on the temples. These marks are not only treatment but the deepest reminders that one is still a member of the tribe and its traditions and that even the

protections of Islamic beliefs cannot remove one from the dangers of witchcraft. It was ironic that Guga once said to me after we had discussed Islam and its attitudes to spirit possession: "A righteous man, a man of faith, fears no one nor any evil spirit."

The point, however, is not clearly expressed by saying that Guga's Islamic faith could not protect him from witchcraft. It is rather that the failure in his leadership of the village pushed him into a re-evaluation of his creeds to the point where witchcraft became an acceptable explanation for his plight. Nevertheless it took some time for him to convince his brother of its reality. This conversion experience was heralded and symbolised by the cutting of the body, the taking of new credentials, those closest to the real man underneath the covering of outer credentials - both Islamic and urban. It certainly pushed Guga into a completely new life direction for, after resigning, he endeavoured to pursue his career by joining a secret all-Tanzanian brotherhood pledged to finding jobs and success for its members by the manipulation of magical charms, ritual and an underground network of contacts placed at all levels of government service and business life. This African form of Freemasonry was called the African Traditional Medicine Company and was based in Iyayi, southern Tanzania. It was in a sense the perfect contrast between the western-type career and credentials he still so much valued and his rebirth into the world of traditional magic. The organisation was supra-tribal (even incorporating elements of Hindu beliefs); yet at the same time possessed the aura of African ethnicity. It was in this way he undertook the very necessary task of re-making his self-identity, his diminished store of credentials; but it was significant that afterwards he returned to live in Tanga in order to build once again his store of social credit in a different sphere.

Looking now from a wider perspective at these events, Guga's career as a whole is not dissimilar to that of a great many other young educated Tanzanians. The two years he spent with his village in government service is just one step in his attempts to lead a life independent from the constraints of the home farm and the incessant demands of his kin. From clerking to trading to government employment and back again to being a clerk in Tanga - this continual round (some would hope it to be an upward spiral) will inevitably finish in retirement back in the homeland. But the hope is of a career in one service or another where substantial savings can be made which can later be invested in land on the migrant's return and thus to set up a second base for one's children. And if this is to happen Guga's failure with his village will be a minor episode in a long play whose major acts will be staged away from the homeland. But the inevitable return is often marked by a sudden investment not only in material productive capital (i.e. land, wives, etc.) but also symbolic capital. Many returning migrants are forced to make sacrifices to the ancestors as a way of re-integrating them into their lineage, and this action is the first in the establishment of a new social identity. The sharp-practising entrepreneur, the urban drunkard or the layabout government employee who forgets to send his money home gradually become the arch-conservative Shambaa Muslim elders who display the most traditional of credentials. This may be because comfort in old age is dependent on reliance on the family and neighbourly labour for the subsistence crops of one's farm and on the recognition of one's own symbolic capital. The economy of affection, as Hyden calls it (Hyden 1980: 18), assures the elders control within the homeland village and presents a serious stumbling block to the efforts of a man like Guga. As has been intimated in my initial theoretical remarks, the language of class differentiation and class formation between kulaks and poorer peasants can gain no foothold in the complex interplay of credentials and alliances at village level. As I have

shown elsewhere (Thompson 1984) the economy of affinity (where symbolic capital is paramount) and the capitalist economy form a tightly intermeshed system, not two rival systems being fought over by peasants at different levels of economic wealth. The wealthiest Shambaa elders incorporate their poorer brethren of all ages in this system by manipulation of labour exchange practices (*ngemo*) and Islamic credentials. The latter is achieved through the investment in Muslim festivals, the training of Islamic teachers, and the building of Islamic schools and mosques. In this way ideological differences are nullified and capitalist accumulation is sanctioned, and there only remains outward social differentiation dependent on age, degrees of Islamic devotedness and education.

In this case, as in many others I witnessed in the Usambaras, witchcraft is not acting as a sanction against capital accumulation as such but rather against the public display of privately acquired and disposed wealth. If this wealth is invested in symbolic capital - i.e. through increase in the members of one's family and hence in marriage alliances and labour networks, in Islamic credentials or in ceremonies directed towards the ancestors - such witchcraft is avoided. And, although in this case witchcraft belief aided the forces blocking village development, this is not to say that witchcraft in itself is the problem here. In fact, in terms of Nyerere's African Socialism, witchcraft is a positive force in stopping the formation of economic classes and of separate class ideologies, and in maintaining an economy of affection which is close to his kernel idea of '*ujamaa*' organisation (see also Hyden's reference to witchcraft cases in Njombe - Hyden 1980: 79).

In fact the form of witchcraft displayed in our case study raises a number of main issues and problems of socialist development in the Western

Usambaras, and the major contradictions inherent in the present socialist programme of Tanzanian development. Thus an important background factor in the case was the shortage of both agricultural and grazing land, a problem common to all areas of the Usambaras. This shortage has been produced by a population explosion over the past thirty years or more and also by the productive relations inherent in Shambaa customary rights over land and its inheritance. In the Usambaras actual villagisation, as a physical process, was not thought necessary and enforced communal ownership of land was held to be impossible at this stage of development (see Cliffe *et al* 1975). Emphasis was placed instead on the establishment of small exemplary *ujamaa* plots of land with labour co-operatively performed by all villagers and profits ploughed back into village amenities. If the labour was not forthcoming the sanction of a small fine (usually a chicken) was thought to be the best punishment. The idea was that such plots would reveal the benefits of more extended similar enterprises, and the logic of the communal sharing of labour was supposedly based on the traditional practice of *ngemo* labour exchange. But this policy ignored several problems. Firstly, given the continuance of traditional productive relations, the shortage of land in the area only allows the smallest plots to be available for communal work, and these plots are usually those with the poorest soils. If more land was made available this would directly attack individual and customary property rights of the Shambaa, unless of course the government went into the business of buying land. This would go against its own norm that all land belongs to the State, but it may be forced to do so nonetheless if it wishes to make communal plots genuinely productive and give real benefit to the villages. Otherwise it will have to attack the customary rights in land head on and this would lead to an inevitable backlash. Secondly the use of co-operative labour on *ujamaa* land is not at all similar to *ngemo* work. Simply put it has no pay-off in symbolic capital and gets in

the way of the urgent tasks on the home farm. My inclination is to believe that it cannot have a pay-off for the participants at this level. It is interesting in this context that in a neighbouring village where the Village Secretary was the son of a Kilindi sub-chief there was not much of a problem in securing co-operative labour; the villagers were apparently still responding to the man's past symbolic capital, and hoping for some of their own in return (Kilindi chiefs are believed to control the rain). But this case illustrates that this leader was in a sense working a hidden ngemo system (picking up past social credits). The normal situation, however, is of a village political leader without such auspicious traditional credentials, from whom no symbolic capital can be earned by co-operative labour. Inevitably the pay-off will have to be of a more direct material kind, not necessarily wages but at least direct access to valued cheaper communal facilities.

The second major problem in development has already been pointed to in the above analysis and is also recognised by Cliffe (*et al* 1975): the question of legitimacy of lower order government leaders. I have already indicated in the above case study the sources from which this legitimacy may come. But the study itself shows that modern sources of legitimacy - from devotion to Islam and from education - may not be enough in themselves to enforce the respect and obedience of villagers more in tune with traditional credentials of authority (these being the Kilindi themselves, the lineage, their councillors (*wadoe*, sa) and headmen (*Wagoshi wa chengo*, sa). In Guga's village power in the Committees rested with ex-Kilindi councillors and headmen, and nearly all the ten house cell leaders (*balozi*) were headmen. The change to purely secular political authority cannot be made overnight; the fund of traditional credentials, together with those Islamic credentials which can act as a bridge between traditional and bureaucratic modes of authority, have to be used and

indeed are being used³ in the pursuit of socialist programmes. This paradox is inevitable.

Finally I must return to a matter which lay at the heart of Guga's problems. This is the seeming contradiction between impersonal bureaucratic rules of conduct and those of a member of a kinship-based society whose loyalties are to the economy of affection. In discussing this one needs to differentiate between two very different forms of corruption recognised by the Shambaa themselves. The first results from the demands of kin for distribution of a key man's (like Guga) access to goods, services and jobs, and it is based on the economy of affection and the build-up of symbolic capital. The second is personal corruption of a kind which benefits only the individual, e.g. in material possessions, or in jobs in which he forgets his kin. This is clearly reprehensible to the Shambaa and is felt inevitably to call forth witchcraft. Obviously the two are often interwoven, and the most successful careerist hides the latter with the former. Now a contradiction in African socialism is that it advocates the commitment to others which marks the first kind of behaviour whilst making it difficult to obtain by imposing bureaucratic rules of equality on its leaders. Can there be a resolution to this dilemma? One possibility is that the economy of affection has to be completely overcome by capitalist relations of production in order for development to take place. However, the modern small time farmers and traders of the Shambaa think very differently. They have managed to incorporate their own form of development within traditional structures of authority and production. Should it be so hard for a socialist government to do the same with benefits for all?

NOTES

- ¹ Shambaa terms are marked 'sa' where they first appear in the text.
- ² In some witchcraft cases as many as 40 or 50 cuts are made to different parts of the body. The visible pain caused by this blood-letting, exacerbated by the rubbing in of powdered medicines, may be seen as part of the punishment for individuals who call down witchcraft vengeance upon themselves by their naked greed or lust. It is just one of the mechanisms by which the Shambaa maintain the importance of symbolic capital over and above material capital.
- ³ No fewer than eight out of the eleven villages of the Mlalo basin have political leaders who are closely related (fathers, brothers or sons) to Islamic teachers.

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VILLAGE, STATE, AND TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY IN USANGU

Martin Walsh

Shortly after independence, chiefship was abolished as an administrative office. While a number of chiefs remained in office of one kind or another, it was clear that it would only be a matter of time before the new structures of local government were sufficiently developed in the rural areas to replace all but their traditional ritual functions. In theory, the pattern of village administration introduced in the mid-1970s has completed the process. In practice, many villages are far from meeting official requirements, and have become sites of conflict between villagers and the State. In this paper, based upon recent fieldwork in Usangu, Mbeya Region, I want to examine a case where much of the blame for this circumstance seemed to fall upon the former paramount chief.

The main part of the paper is devoted to a detailed description and analysis of the events surrounding a cholera outbreak in early 1981. Close to the heart of the old chiefdom, these events involved not only the villagers and village authorities but also necessitated a degree of external intervention which highlighted the nature of relations between contemporary agents of the State and the ex-paramount. From this I will argue that the latter's role in village life is not quite as straightforward as first appeared to be the case: the authorities were not, as they tended to assume, simply dealing with what Miller (1968) has referred to as "the political survival of traditional leadership". The apparent power of the former paramount was the product of a complex interplay of perceptions and misconceptions about his position in the local community, concealing the real nature of relations between peasants and

the State at village level.

Historical Background

There was nothing new about the modern administrators' mistrust of the Sangu chief. For most of the period of indirect rule relations between the Provincial and District authorities and the hereditary rulers of Usangu had remained distinctly cool.¹ Usangu, in particular its western half, was stereotyped as backward and underdeveloped; a situation often blamed upon successive chiefs. Such a view was clearly expressed in the Provincial Commissioner's report for 1945:

The administration of the Umalila Chiefdom continues to be carried out satisfactorily by the Chief, but the same cannot be said for Usangu. In the western end directly under the Chief, resistance to all efforts to improve conditions is still apparent. The one school in the area, within a stone's throw of the Chief's compound, receives no support and maintains a roll of forty with the greatest difficulty. The present school teacher attributes this to resistance on the part of the Chief and elders who fear that education will cause a breakdown of the old tribal sanctions. No improvement in the quality of the little court work done has been observed, and continued nebulous complaints of oppression and maladministration emanate from that area (ARPC 1945: 80).

The chief in question was Mkanuwoga and the school, at Utengule, had been built two years earlier. Similar charges had been levelled against Mkanuwoga's predecessor, Mtenjela. He had failed to lend his full support to the establishment of Malangali School, just to the east of Usangu: according to the administrative officer detailed to investigate his case, "the drunken chief" was in the habit of "ticing up witness to trees", and, as rumours of his

illegitimacy began to circulate, there seemed "no doubt that the tribe", as well as the authorities in Mbeya, were "getting tired of him" (Pollock 1931: 264). The result of this investigation was the adoption of a caretaker arrangement by which the administration of the chiefdom was supervised by two of Mtenjela's advisors and a potential successor, an arrangement which lasted from 1931 until the death of Mtenjela in early 1937.

Mkanuwoga had emerged as heir to the stool by 1935. But neither the attempt to groom him as a suitable successor, nor the appointment of a regent (to allow for the education of Alfeo, his son) after his own death in late 1950, succeeded in producing a compliant ruler. In addition, the decade leading up to independence marked the emergence of a new set of concerns for the administration. Not long after Alfeo had returned to Utengule (in 1953) plans were under way to start a scheme of controlled irrigation and cultivation at Mbarali in the eastern part of the chiefdom, in an area outside his immediate jurisdiction. As its paddy surplus soared, Mbarali Farm rapidly became a showpiece for the economic development of the Southern Highlands Province; visited by the Governor of the Territory in 1959 and frequently eulogised in administrative reports. Attention was diverted away from the failings or otherwise of the Sangu chief, and the area around Utengule was increasingly viewed as a backwater.

When the Provincial Commissioner, J.E.S. Griffiths, went on tour in August 1958, he spent time at Mbarali, paid a courtesy visit to the founder of the Baluchi community in Rujewa,² and discussed the development of irrigation, communications, educational and medical services with the sub-chief and court elders at Madibira. Utengule, though, was not a place to linger. On his way back to Mbeya Griffiths sped through in his Landrover, leaving only a

terse record of the event in his diary:

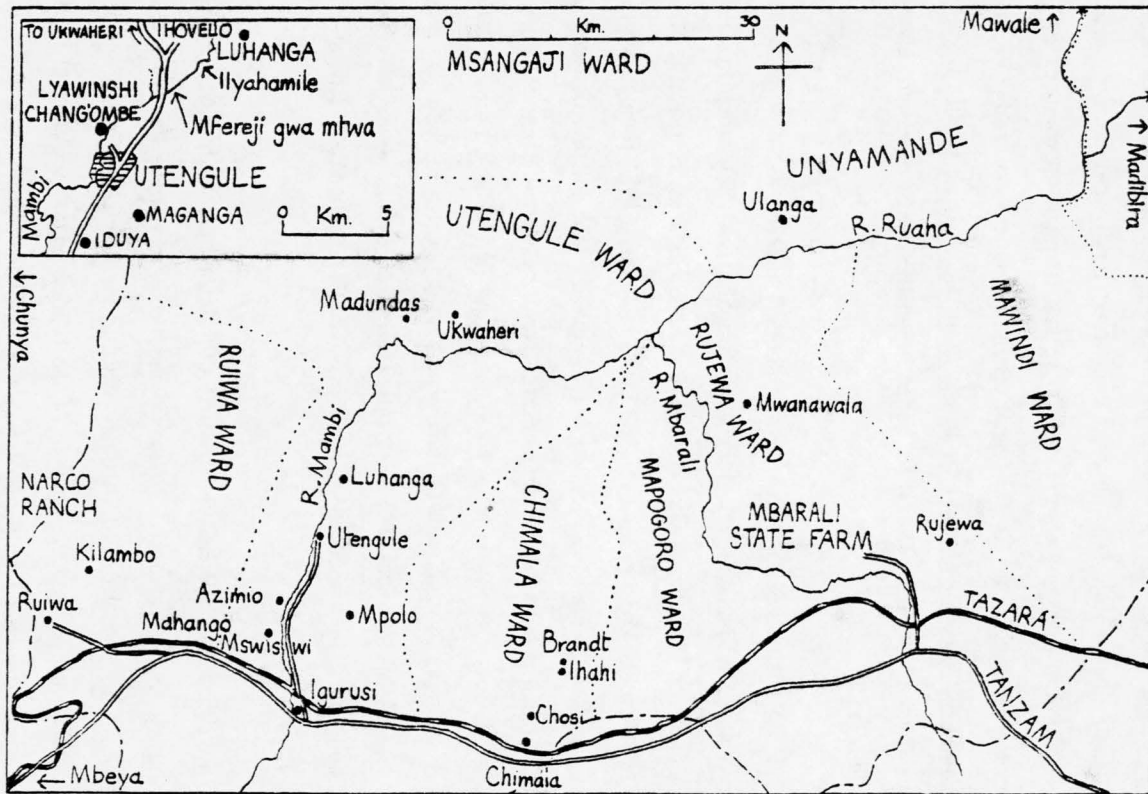
... to Utengule (outside here there is a fair amount of thorn tree destruction going on for eleusine planting - a pity). Utengule village a depressing collection of huts including a large white house in bad repair belonging to Merere (Griffiths 1958: 17, entry dated 23.8.1958).

The reference to eleusine, finger millet, is not without significance. In the eyes of the British administration this was the archetypal "uneconomic" crop, known to be grown mainly for the production of *pombe*, native beer. Utengule was a far cry, indeed, from the success of Mbarali. And the image, as we shall see shortly, has stuck.

The Modern Setting

The western half of the Southern Highlands Province is now Mbeya Region (*Mkoa wa Mbeya*).³ Usangu is still administered from the west as a part of Mbeya District (*Wilaya ya Mbeya*). Where the old Native Authority was divided between a number of sub-chiefs (five since 1954) with Merere, in Utengule, at their head; in 1980 it was split into two Divisions (*Tarafa*), Ilongo and Rujewa. The former, comprising Ruiwa, Utengule, Msangaji and Chimala Wards (*Kata*), is administered from Chimala: the latter, comprising Mapogoro, Rujewa, Mawindi and Madibira Wards, had its headquarters at Rujewa. By the end of 1981 Rujewa/Mbarali had become a Sub-District (*Wilaya ndogo*), a transitional stage to becoming a District (*Wilaya*) in its own right, separate from Mbeya District (see map).

USANGU



The rising administrative fortunes of Rujewa mirror the continuing success of Mbarali State Farm. Mbarali, which in 1980 produced an estimated one sixth of all the rice grown in Tanzania, makes frequent appearances in the national press. According to one recent article, the enterprise at Mbarali "is a good influence on the villages near to the farm and likewise on the whole of Mbeya Region" (Kyando 1981). Its impact upon the image of eastern Usangu is in little doubt.

Ilongo Division cannot boast of any similar success. Its most prominent State venture, the National Ranching Corporation's (NARCO) ranch in Ruiwa Ward, has been beset by a catalogue of problems. Not least of these has been theft of its stock. The loss of over 300 cattle in January 1981 prompted a rare visit by soldiers to Utengule, looking for the thieves. The relation between the NARCO ranch and its surrounding villages is very different from that posited for Mbarali Farm. If the villages surrounding the latter "have profited daily" from its example (Kyando 1981), there seems no doubt that the villagers living near the NARCO project, not to mention those squatting on it, have been something of a hindrance to its progress (see Hazlewood and Livingstone 1978: I, 11.43).

When President Nyerere toured parts of Mbeya Region in June 1981 he went to the NARCO ranch. Ironically, the need to smooth the way, quite literally, for his visit deprived Utengule Ward of the services of a long-awaited road grader, and delayed the opening of the Igurusi - Utengule road to its dry season bus by over a month. Earlier in the year the Ward Secretary (*Katibu Kata*) had announced to a meeting of village officials in Utengule that a grader would be provided to assist in the work of road-mending sometime in late May. The promised help failed to materialize and villagers had to work

unaided two Saturdays running to ensure that the Baluchi-owned bus could resume its journeys from Utengule to Mbeya on 1 July 1981, almost seven months since the service had been suspended at the start of the rains in December 1980. The work was late - the rains had stopped in early April, and the road should have been passable by bus earlier still. During the late colonial period the roads passing through Utengule (none of them metalled) were generally kept in a much better state of repair than they are now. They were levelled every year by a private contractor, based at Igurusi, and all but the most recent maps show the old Native Authority road from Igurusi to Utengule connecting up with a dry weather road to Chunya. Virtually nothing remains of this now.

The shift of priorities, though, does not entail that Utengule is in imminent danger of becoming a ghost village. When the bus is not running (in 1981 this was more often the case than not, thanks to mechanical failure and the nationwide shortage of spare parts) and also where it does not run (further north than Utengule) the Baluchis are only too happy to make space available to fee-paying passengers on their lorries and smaller vehicles, charging at higher rates than on the bus. The availability of transport of some form or other, except at the very height of the rains, ensures that much of the traffic from the inner plains towards the main highway and the larger centres in the south is still funnelled through Utengule. The village retains a large catchment area to the north, extending across from Madundas and Ukwaheri towards Ulanga (where links with Rujewa and Madibira become more important), and the boundaries of Utengule Ward are skewed in recognition of this fact.

The continuing strength of Utengule in this local economy reflects and is reflected in the existence of other services, both corporate and privately-owned.

By 1981 there were ten shops in the village (all but one owned privately and most by Baluchis), two milling machines, various local craftsmen and women, a much-used dispensary, a primary school with the full complement of seven classes, a cattle-dip and the prospect of once-monthly cattle auctions held throughout the dry season; to mention only the most obvious infrastructural features.

With a population of 1,860 at the 1978 census, Utengule had been growing throughout the decade. The 'villagisation' programme in 1974 brought a significant number of settlers, though not all into the nucleated centre of Utengule. On what became the north-western end of the enlarged administrative unit of Utengule village, for instance, the old hamlet of Lyawinshi was converted into the satellite settlement of Chang'ombe with the influx of Sangu mainly from two villages to the west, Kilambo and Nenjelesa (which was later settled by Sukuma immigrants from the north). Not all of the movement into the area was in accord with official plans however. Three kilometres to the south of the main settlement is another satellite of Utengule, Iduya. This was once the site of no more than three Sangu homesteads, but now is a thriving community of some forty Ndali (originally from Ileje District) who moved there despite government plans to settle them in Mpolo village.

Many newcomers were attracted to Utengule during the 1970s by the promise of a fresh water supply, to be piped from the hills to the south. Igurusi had its first standpipes in 1976; Utengule by 1979. Over the same period modern village government took shape in Utengule, with its formal set of offices and committees, led by a locally-elected Village Chairman (*Mwenye Kiti*) and the Branch or Village Secretary (*Katibu wa Tawi* or *wa Kijiji*), a

Party appointee. Village organisation reaches down to the so-called ten-cell leaders (*mabalozi wa kumi kumi*), supervising the affairs of small clusters of homesteads (ideally ten): in Utengule there were 32 of these, 15 of whom were paid-up Party members.

The contrast with Luhanga, the village immediately to the north of Utengule, is instructive. Where Utengule has a nucleated core surrounded by satellite hamlets (Iduya, Maganga, Chang'ombe...), the centre of Luhanga is scarcely recognizable as such and the village consists mainly of dispersed homesteads in groups of twos and threes. Population at the 1978 census was 806, less than half that of Utengule. Over a third of the total are recent Sukuma immigrants, only partially integrated within what formal decision-making processes there are in the village. At the height of the dry season this widely scattered population is served by a single well, and large queues must form for water. During the rains the larger part of Luhanga is inaccessible to motorised transport because of a diversion of the river Mambi which fills with water, blocking the route into the inner plains. There is only one milling machine in the village; this can grind but not clean maize cobs like one of the Utengule machines. There are no shops and fewer other services (in March 1981 some Luhanga residents became founding members of the newly formed Utengule village shop). Crops have to be marketed through the office of the Branch Secretary in Utengule, from where they are sent to the nearest National Milling Corporation (NMC) godown in Mswiswi. In 1981 the local primary school gained an extra class, leaving it two short of the full complement of seven. There were no immediate plans to extend the water pipeline north from Utengule (it ended at Chang'ombe). The construction of a cattle-dip in 1981-82 was hampered first by the dry season shortage, then the wet season excess, of water. Utengule possessed a superior infrastructure in almost every respect,

as might be expected of the village designated as the Ward headquarters. If a frontier had to be drawn between the inner and outer plains then the boundary between Utengule and Luhanga would be a convenient point at which to draw it.

The pace of development further south, though, has left Utengule a comparative backwater. The conversion of the old Great North Road into the Tanzam highway with American aid, and the parallel construction of the Tazara railway by the Chinese, both complete by the mid-1970s, have sealed the balance in favour of the fertile, perennially accessible fringe of the plains. In Utengule Ward these two internationally important routes run through the village of Igurusi, burgeoning with a population which is approaching 4,000, and perforce divided between two separate village governments (Igurusi and Majenje). All year round the buses and trucks rattle through, the bars and 'hotels' reverberate with revelry, a score of shops (post office included) conduct a brisk trade, and the market bustles with Nyakyusa (and other) traders selling their wares. Utengule, 20 kilometres to the north, pales by comparison. No bars, not a single 'hotel', a market that can rarely muster more than a handful of stalls; scarce wonder the frequently voiced complaint that Utengule is very definitely '*porini*', 'out in the sticks'.

Prominent among the complainants are the school teachers and other 'educated' outsiders sent, with their families, to complete terms of office in Utengule. This has had its effect. Although Utengule is technically *the* Ward village, the centre of its administration, all but one of the Ward officials have their offices in Igurusi. In 1981 the only exception was the Veterinary Officer, obliged by the contours of the pastoral economy to stay while his colleagues could plead that the poverty of communications with Utengule necessitated

their removal south.

Before the start of the present decade Utengule had lost its magistrates' court to Igurusi. Subsequently only minor disputes could be settled by the village authorities in the old court house (*baraza*), now the locus of village government and the site of the Branch Secretary's office. The comparative isolation of Utengule made the procedures for dealing with serious criminal cases even more cumbersome and unworkable. The police and military were infrequent visitors: serious cases had, in theory, to be reported to the police post at Inyala, half a day's journey away. There was only one lock-up in the village (which also doubled as a grain store), making violent disputes particularly difficult to handle. In defence of this situation officials at higher administrative levels argued that the capacity of the village to mobilize its own militia (comprised of villagers) rendered visits by the organised forces of law enforcement unnecessary, except in the most extreme of cases. For Utengule, though, this was just one of a series of fictions regarding the administration of local affairs which could only be believed, or at least convincingly maintained, by an outside observer.

This kind of disjunction between theory and practice was reinforced by the reluctance of the higher officials themselves to visit Utengule. While village officials (including the school teachers and local dresser) were regularly required to attend seminars and briefings with their superiors in Igurusi, Chimala, Mbeya and elsewhere, the same superiors rarely, if ever, ventured further than Igurusi and the main road. Of the more important Party officials, the Ward Secretary came to Utengule once a month to chair a meeting of the Branch Secretaries and Village Chairmen of the Ward, and maintained (though rarely frequented) a house in the village. As far as I know, though, the

Divisional Secretary only visited Utengule twice in the 1980-81 period. It scarcely figured on the itineraries of his superiors.

The only positive gesture towards Utengule, a visit by a recording unit of Radio Tanzania promised for late November 1980, was cancelled at the last moment. The arrangements for this had directly involved Alfeo Merere, the Sangu chief. His authorisation was necessary if the special set of drums (*malenjela*, s)⁴ lodged in his Utengule residence was to be played. Assent was given, and Alfeo announced the fact to a gathering of elders a week or so in advance, when the drums were being played at a ritual in honour of his deceased mother (see below). In the event they were not to be brought out again, neither that year or the next; a turn of events which led Alfeo to reflect bitterly on his (or his people's) treatment at the hands of external authorities.

So far I have said little of the contemporary relation between the Sangu chief and the agents of the modern State. A discussion of a sequence of events which did bring a number of officials into Utengule - rather less pleasant events than those planned by Radio Tanzania - and which directly involved the interests of Alfeo, will enable me to analyse the nature of this relation, as well as that between the chief and his people, or those who would once have been directly under his jurisdiction, the residents of Utengule.

Cholera and Sacrifice

Towards the end of the dry season in 1980, on November 18, a small group of government officials, headed by the Divisional Secretary (*Katibu Tarafa*) from Chimala, descended upon Utengule for the day. Accompanying the Divisional Secretary were the Divisional Co-ordinator (*Mratibu Tarafa*),

Agricultural Extension Officer (*Bwana Shamba*), Health Officer (*Bwana Afya*) and the Ward Secretary (*Katibu Kata*) from Igurusi. After a brief inspection of the local dispensary they made their way to the nearby primary school for the principal object of their visit, a meeting with representatives of the neighbouring villages of Utengule and Luhanga. 32 villagers attended, filling the classroom set aside for the purpose. Among these were the two Village Chairmen and Branch Secretaries; while the majority of those present were ten-cell leaders from the two villages, all but six of whom were from Utengule. Although billed as a *Semina ya Kilimo*, Agricultural Seminar, the meeting ranged over a wide variety of topics concerning village development. Each of the visitors spoke in turn, with the exception of the Ward Secretary. Their addresses were followed by a lively debate chaired by the Utengule Village Chairman. The exchanges rose at times to a heated pitch, not least over conditions for the provision of insecticides and plans to improve and extend collective village production in Luhanga. In most respects it was typical of meetings of its kind, although this was the only such seminar held in Utengule over the 1980-81 period. The meeting came to an end at six p.m.: it lasted for seven hours without break or refreshment for the participants.

First to speak was the Health Officer. The threat posed by the possibility of an outbreak of cholera (*kipindupindu*) coming with the return of the rains, and the need to adopt measures to prevent or combat this eventuality, loomed large on the agenda, and featured in both his and subsequent addresses. The threat was (and remains) a very real one. Cholera has been endemic in Usangu since at least 1978. Largely unknown on mainland Tanzania for most of this century, it spread throughout the country in the course of the 1970s. On some accounts it reached Usangu by way of Malawi, crossing the border between the two states in 1972 and already by the following year was well established

in Kyela, on the plains at the north end of Lake Nyasa. In Usangu the outbreaks vary with the season and from one location to another. In May 1980 Rujewa suffered: the following August, when I first arrived in Usangu, the dirt track north of Chimala and Chosi leading to Ihahi, Brandt Mission and on into the interior of the plains was closed by armed guard in an effort to restrict access and contain the disease. In Utengule cholera had already struck earlier that year, forcing the closure of the village school from March until May. Although these repeated outbreaks fell short of truly epidemic proportions, they were sufficient to prompt considerable official concern, to some extent alarm. These fears proved, ultimately, to be justified: when I left the area in January 1982 there were some 60 residents of Mbeya, the Regional capital, hospitalised as victims of an outbreak which threatened a serious disruption of communications and all the attendant economic consequences.

At the Seminar, the Health Officer outlined a series of measures designed to effect higher standards of hygiene with a view to containing future outbreaks of the disease. The virtues of deep and fully enclosed and roofed latrines were emphasised, and the principles for their construction sketched on the blackboard. The inhabitants of Utengule were berated for failing to ensure that the latrines outside their dispensary, which had just been inspected, met the proper specifications. The assembled company was instructed on the finer points of the distinction between *maji safi*, clear water - as was normally, if not always, drawn from the standpipes in Utengule - and *maji salaam*, safe water which has been boiled or otherwise treated to kill off bacteria. The villagers of Luhanga, with no piped water supply at all, were advised to build wells: guidelines for their construction were again drawn on the blackboard.

Other speakers, including the Divisional Secretary in his concluding address, turned to attack the evils of excessive and careless consumption of locally-brewed beer, *pombe*. The need to exercise a certain degree of hygiene in communal drinking was stressed; and the imperative delivered that its production was to be curbed and its sale more effectively controlled than had hitherto been the case. This was an old complaint. The rationale underlying official hostility to the *pombe* economy ran far deeper than the concern over cholera and health. The *pombe* economy was felt to conflict with the requirements of agricultural production (as a drain upon capital, land and labour) and to constitute a serious obstacle to village development. It would be no exaggeration to say that this was construed by the District and Divisional authorities as *the* most serious block to development in many of the villages of Usangu. This at least was the message most frequently and emphatically conveyed at meetings of this kind in the area: a message with a long history stretching back to the colonial period and earlier, to the (Protestant) ethic imported by the German missions.

The Seminar itself was conducted in exemplary fashion. When it finally came to a close an hour or so before sunset, many members of what was becoming an increasingly fidgety audience were only too keen to dash for the nearest source of *pombe*, fearing that there might be scarcely any left to quench their thirsts, already aggravated by having effectively been denied a good three hours of legitimate drinking time (the two village clubs, *vilabu*, opened at three p.m. on weekdays - this was a Tuesday - and at midday at the weekend). The Divisional Secretary was careful not to follow them, though three of his colleagues did (but not all to drink). He went instead to find a cup of tea; conscious no doubt of the fate of his predecessor at Chimala, a Nyakyusa man whose involvement in the *pombe* trade had cost him his job:

some measure of the political stakes involved.

The Seminar had an immediate, if limited, impact. The next day drinkers in the circle (*kikao*) frequented and partly run by the Utengule Branch Secretary had shifted from their usual position out in the open, lounging on logs under the shade of a tree. Instead they were huddled between the mud brick walls of an as yet unroofed, unfinished hut (this was being built on the edge of the club site with the help of labour and cash contributed by regular drinkers in the group, hopefully to be ready in time for the rains). The bowl of *pombe* in their midst was for the first, and as it happened only, time diligently covered with banana palm leaves to deter flies and other such undesirables. At its side, on the ground, lay a smaller bowl of water for the use of the drinkers who were loudly entreated to wash their hands after visits to one of the two club latrines or (when it served the same purpose) a nearby banana grove. Other drinking groups had also moved indoors, most of them into the club buildings, the common property of the village and barely large enough to accomodate all of the drinkers on busy days. Following instructions given at the Seminar, drinking outside was henceforth forbidden on pain of paying a Sh.50 fine.

These strictures were short-lived. In both Utengule and Luhanga drinking continued much as before, as did other practices thought to be inconsistent with the desired levels of hygiene and which had been condemned at the Seminar (in Luhanga there were no clubs but *pombe* was drunk, as it was in the mornings in Utengule, in the homesteads where it was produced). However, in the weeks that followed fears were repeatedly voiced, particularly by the women producers of *pombe*, that the clubs in Utengule might be closed down altogether, in view of their unclean state.

These fears were soon to prove justified. With the rains well under way, the new year (1981) saw confirmation of a cholera outbreak in the Ward, a few miles to the south-west of Utengule itself. In the first week of January all the clubs in the Ward were closed down. The Ward village by name, and conveniently sited further away from Igurusi than the villages which were directly affected (in the Mswiswi area), Utengule was chosen as the centre of operations. Medical staff were drafted in from Mbeya with the requisite medical supplies, most important of which were drips and antibiotics. Victims of the outbreak were brought to Utengule: by the second week in January there were already 12 in the village dispensary and emptied school rooms. The schoolchildren were sent to work on the school fields for the duration. The Ward Secretary was obliged to move temporarily to Utengule to supervise the running of affairs. A number of special provisions came into force and meetings were held throughout the village to ensure that these became common knowledge. Some of the paths in and out of Utengule were sealed off - to Luhanga, Azimio and Mswiswi - and movement between villages discouraged. The marketing of foodstuffs, particularly fruit, was restricted. The production and sale of *pombe* was banned, as was any large gathering of people, such as might for instance accompany the rituals of mourning. In the homesteads even water drawn from the standpipes was to be boiled. Cooking and eating utensils were not to be left on the ground or on the floor of huts (as was the norm) but always properly washed and left to dry in the sun on makeshift platforms erected for the purpose outside. Latrines, mostly surrounded by straw fences, were to be properly enclosed and covered over. A frantic building activity began to remedy this situation and avoid the threat of a Sh.50 fine, the sum payable by all those who elected to flout or otherwise failed to comply with the emergency measures.

The outbreak was contained, though whether as a result of these measures or in spite of their ineffectiveness is debatable. Only one resident of Utengule village was claimed by the disease (and not for certain: his may have been an attack of dysentery). The number of patients being treated in Utengule never exceeded the level reached in the first fortnight of the emergency. By the end of January the cholera appeared to have been confined to the area south of Utengule and the village of Azimio in particular. A single doctor from Mbeya remained in Utengule. The prohibition on *pombe* remained in force and the clubs stayed closed until the middle of February when the outbreak, at least as far as Utengule was concerned, was declared to be over. It had lasted for approximately one and a half months. The village was once more free from the menace.

The overall impact upon the local economy is difficult to judge. The cholera came at a time, in the middle of the cultivating season, when trade is generally at a low ebb anyway. Because of the rains and transport difficulties there were no cattle auctions and their attendant markets to disrupt. Some villagers later complained that the construction of latrine buildings had delayed the transplantation of rice seedlings and was ultimately detrimental to the crop. On the whole, though, the 1980-81 growing season and the main maize crop was not a particularly bad one. And the cholera outbreak - or suitable reconstructions of its disruptive effects - did have at least some fringe benefits. Most importantly, it provided villagers and the village authorities with a ready-made excuse for failing to meet production targets and implement projects outlined in the November and other seminars.

There is no doubt that the cholera would have had a far more serious impact upon local life had all the provisions designed to contain the outbreak

been adhered to or more comprehensively enforced. True, many villagers were induced to avoid large gatherings (including the mourning ceremonies held for the fatality referred to earlier). This, like the imposition of a few, apparently token, fines upon householders who did not build structures over their latrines, was a matter which rankled for some time afterwards. But there were areas of deliberate defiance in which it was neither practicable, nor in the best interests of those officials charged with the task, to intervene. In this respect the *pombe* economy was paradigmatic.

The importance of *pombe* production in the local economy cannot be overestimated. Not least it formed one of the major sources of income for women, the producers of all of the several grain-based varieties. A number of middlemen (on a good day there were at least 16 separate *vikao*, drinking groups, in the centre of Utengule) as well as the consumers also stood to lose from an effective ban. But this was not to be. In Utengule there was no need for the buried and concealed tins of *pombe*, the feigned innocence of men with bamboo straws up their sleeves, and the furtive sips which coloured stories of prohibition from the main road, where soldiers patrolled and courts were at hand. The Ward Secretary was content to spend his many idle hours in Utengule playing *bao* (a board game), and turned a blind eye to the illicit activities going on around him. In the homesteads the production and consumption of *pombe* (drunk, as always, from the communal bowl) continued unabated. The only major difference was the inconvenience of decentralisation, restriction of the afternoon trade to the homes of villagers (some office holders included). For the producers this was a boon, as they were afforded freedom from payment of the normal village tax upon brewing. Significantly, *pombe* prices remained stable throughout the period of the ban.

If the ban in Utengule did not pose a serious threat to the local thirst for alcohol, it did threaten the ritual economy of village (Sangu) life. In one respect the November Seminar anticipated these events. Concluding his address to the assembled representatives of Utengule and Luhanga, the Divisional Secretary had switched onto an unexpected tack. Declaring his tribal affiliation as a Nyamwanga, he told his audience that the hereditary chiefs of his homeland continue to conduct *mitambiko*, ritual offerings, for the benefit of the country. Just like Merere in fact. Intimating that these were traditions worthy of respect he signalled my presence at the back of the room and suggested that the village authorities should follow my example (hadn't I after all travelled all the way from England just to stay at Merere's old tribal seat and study the history and customs of his people?) by according Merere the recognition that he was due. In future he should be invited to attend meetings of this kind, his participation to be regarded as a valuable asset. This gesture (whatever its motives) was to prove more than a little appropriate.

The last public offering on the graves of Alfeo Merere's forebears had been held at his 'residence' (*mbalino*, s) in Utengule three weeks before the Seminar, on the 28 and 29 October 1980. Like many such rituals it was multiple in purpose. One of its principal functions was to mark the formal conclusion of the cycle of mourning and inheritance ceremonies which had followed the death of Alfeo's mother in 1979. It was also rumoured to have been prompted by a desire to resolve some unspecified *shida*, difficulty, in Alfeo's own household (the illness of a child? disease in his herds?). But its timing was largely determined by the impending transition from the dry to the rainy season; the ritual was to ensure that this transition took place in the desired fashion. Indeed, it spotted with rain for the first time on the very night separating the two days of the ritual. Less than a month later and three days

after the Seminar (that is, on 21 November) the rain fell in earnest, marking the start of the wet season proper.

By the end of December the heaviest of the rains were over. There followed, as usual, a break in the rains. The second and third weeks of January (1981) were as bright and sunny as any at the height of the dry season (thereafter it only rained sporadically until mid-April when, on the 15th, I recorded the last fall of drizzle in my diary). Traditionally this necessitated another offering. And this year it was felt to be even more imperative with cholera threatening the lives of villagers and the well-being of the whole community. But this posed a problem. An offering would involve the open celebration of a number of practices which the authorities had proscribed in the interests of containing the outbreak. The ritual required a public gathering for two consecutive days and the preparation of two different kinds of *pombe* (*wujimbi*, s), namely *mfwango* (s), a millet beer for the rites on the graves and *nsuga* (s), a maize beer for general consumption. It also demanded the slaughter of a cow, preferably black, whose left foreleg (*mbambulwa*, s, the sacred cut) was to be cast, raw, onto the graves, while the rest of the meat was to be roasted on an open fire; the breast and the back to be shared out among the women (signifying their role in suckling and carrying their children) and the remainder to be given to the men (crudely wrapped portions being sent across the village to any notables unable to attend). This was not what the Regional health authorities had in mind. The blowing out, spraying or spitting of *pombe* (after which the ritual, *mafunyo*, s, is named) is clearly incompatible with measures designed to prevent the spread of highly infectious and virulent diseases, even if it is (as it was in this case) directed towards achieving the same result.

Only two months earlier, in the November Seminar, the Divisional Secretary (a Christian) had sanctioned Alfeo's ritual authority and urged his greater involvement in the formal processes of decision-making in the village(s), implying that the government could ill afford to ignore his wider influence. This commitment was put to the test when Alfeo and his ritual specialist (*munjajila munya mafunyo*, s), Mfumbulwa, pressed for an offering at the height of the cholera outbreak.

The Ward Secretary gave his assent (whether this came from a higher authority I cannot say) and the ritual went ahead. Thus, on the morning of 15 January the main participants assembled on the verandah (*shitala*, s) of Alfeo's residence in Utengule. There they were joined by others (anyone who cared to share the *pombe* provided by Alfeo's wives); sitting, talking and drinking until well after nightfall. The next day began similarly, until the participants were led outside by Mfumbulwa and the most genealogically senior member of the royal family present, Salche Mugasi Merere. Picking their way through a field and undergrowth at the back of the residence (close to the river Mambi), they approached the small, low hut (*shiyumba*, s) which houses the grave of Mtenjela, and, removing sandals and headgear at the entrance, they stooped to enter the dimly lit interior. Inside, the participants took it in turns to throw down pieces of raw meat; to drink, spray and pour libations of *mfwango* (s), onto the grave. These actions were accompanied by whispered prayers, which included requests to deliver the land from the ravages of cholera. With some reshuffling of the participants this ceremony was repeated in a larger, brick-built building nearby which shelters the graves of Mgandilwa and Mkanuwoga Merere. Back outside, they joined everyone else to roast and share out the rest of the meat. All this time Alfeo was in his residence, waiting for the moment when, after a farewell visit to the graves, the main participants made their way

back to the verandah to thank him in unison, thus concluding the ritual.

Interpretation and Misinterpretation

It would be wrong to infer from this that relations between Alfeo and the authorities were any better than those between his predecessors in office and their colonial masters. The chequered course of Alfeo's political career after independence (and the abolition of chiefship as a political office) bears this out.

In 1963, after a brief spell as Divisional Executive Officer in Utengule, he was transferred to the same post at Mbozi, in Unyiha, west of Mbeya. Unhappy with this (a shrewd move to keep him away from his traditional domain), he resigned after three months and returned to Usangu. Thereafter relations deteriorated. In 1965, the year that Tanzania adopted a one Party State constitution, this conflict came to a head. Charging Alfeo with failing to assist in the implementation of newly instituted development programmes, the Ward authorities tried, unsuccessfully, to confiscate his stock of poultry (amounting to little more than 20 chickens). They followed this up with an attempt to seize some 300 head of cattle in Alfeo's possession, but again were unsuccessful.

By this time Alfeo had become well established in Luhanga, beyond the immediate reach of his political enemies, who could operate rather too easily in Utengule. In less than a decade, though, he was working rather successfully within the new socialist framework. From 1972 to 1976 he held the post of Divisional Secretary at Chimala. But at the end of this term he was again transferred to the west, this time to Chunya. As before, Alfeo resigned and

returned to Luhanga. On his own account this was because he preferred the immediacy of economic returns on his own land to the promise of a monthly salary. While informants suggested other, 'affective', reasons - a desire to be re-united with his wives, or close to his cattle - it is not difficult to read a rather more canny reckoning into this return to 'the wilderness'. Luhanga remained his home base through to the early 1980s, when his only official position was as treasurer of the Village Development Fund (two years before, though, he had helped to collect some Sh.200,000 in aid of the war with Uganda).

This history exhibits a pattern. The modern authorities, like the British, have tended to see the Sangu chief as an obstacle to progress; as a challenge to their authority in the traditional (therefore economically backward) core of the old chiefdom where his influence remains strongest. Having failed to lure Alfeo away from this local base (making use of his administrative skills elsewhere), and short of an excuse or unwilling to risk direct confrontation, the Party has had to settle for a policy of containment. The remarks passed in the November Seminar and the events of the following January (1981) were no exception to this.

The Divisional Secretary assumed (rather too readily) that the matters discussed in the Seminar would be conveyed to Alfeo; and that the successful adoption of new measures in either village was largely conditional upon Merere's agreement. His comments were cleverly designed to tease Alfeo out into the open; to secure his complicity in the formal decision-making process, and at the same time to define his role (as well as mine) in the politically neutral idioms of tradition, ritual and respect. During the cholera outbreak this ploy paid off. Obligated by tradition (rather than personal inclination) to see that

an offering was held, Alfeo was hardly in a position to do this in open defiance of the authorities; certainly not when the attention of officials in Mbeya was trained upon events (the course of the outbreak) in and around Utengule. This would be to invite intervention. But the only alternative was to seek their permission to hold an offering. In doing so Alfeo appeared, in effect, to be signalling the subordination of his ritual to their secular power.

On the first day of the ritual Alfeo could hardly contain his anger. When I asked his permission to enter the burial huts and record the next day's proceedings, his answer bristled with sarcasm. Glancing in the direction of an embarrassed Branch Secretary, he replied that the matter was not in his hands, that I must go to the Party office (a couple of hundred yards away in the old *baraza*, court-house) when it opened the next morning and ask for permission there. The Branch Secretary shuffled uncomfortably on his stool, lost for words. The suggestion was ridiculous. The ritual was performed with Alfeo's consent, on his property; hence the formal thanks offered to him at its end. If any other permission were necessary, then it would have to come from Mfumbulwa and Alfeo's other ritual advisors. When I approached the Branch Secretary the following morning he could only grin and send me on my way to the ritual, knowing full well that under the circumstances his assent (or equally, refusal) was worthless. At the ceremony itself he was conspicuous by his absence.

Other comments of Alfeo's made over the two days were equally telling. He lamented that it was now politically inexpedient to travel to Utengule-Usongwe, just beyond Mbeya town, and offer on the grave of his great-grandfather, the first Merere; though the local Safwa chief, Mwalyego, still held yearly celebrations in his honour. He recounted the well-known tale of

Mkwawa's skull, returned (in 1954) from a museum in Germany to the descendants of the famous Hehe chief (see Musso 1968: 64-65); an event symbolising respect for the traditions of chiefship (and a reminder of the contrasting fortunes of Alfeo and his Hehe counterpart, chief Adam Sapi Mkwawa, Speaker of the Tanzanian Parliament). On a more topical note, he complained about the Party's insistence that preventive medicines were not available to combat the spread of cholera. Then he went on to complain about the shortage of commodities in general. He talked at length of recent reports on Radio Tanzania that the Chinese were moving away from the path outlined by Mao; and, interpreting this as an admission of failure, implied that the Tanzanian variant of rural socialism was doomed to a similar fate (recalling that both the Tazara railway and (the modern) Mbarali State Farm owe their existence to co-operation between the two States).

On the evening of the 15th Alfeo was even more explicit about his own position. Chatting with a young Nyakyusa school teacher who had come by to satisfy both his curiosity and his thirst, he elaborated upon the dimensions of the 'lake' (*ziwa*) which now (and throughout the wet season) separated Utengule and Luhanga, rendering the path impassable except on foot. Declaring his preference for the latter village and the freedom from excessive government interference to be enjoyed there, he went on to talk about two cases of resistance to government-sponsored development programmes. Both were familiar to the teacher. The first concerned repeated but unsuccessful attempts to resettle peasants living in the flood-prone Rufiji delta, moving them up to villages on drier and more accessible ground (see Hyden 1980: 118-119, 131). The second was in Rukwa Region, where a Party Secretary had failed, despite receiving military assistance, to exercise political control over the uncooperative *jadi*, traditional lineages (I have no further information on this

case). The parallels were clear. There was nothing very surprising in the fact that almost as soon as the ritual was over, at four o'clock on the afternoon of 16 January, Alfeo should have left to return to Luhanga.

There is no doubt a strong element of political calculation in Alfeo's preference for Luhanga over Utengule, his traditional seat; a preference which became increasingly evident after the first decade of his rule. Ironically (intentionally?) the two villages are separated by a diversion of the river Mambi which was effected (c.1957/58) at Alfeo's command by the cutting of a deep channel, still known as *mfereji gwa mtwa* (s), 'the chief's furrow'. The main track to Luhanga and into the plains fords the Mambi just before the river is funnelled into this cut. When the level of the Mambi rises (with the first rains at its source, in the hills above Igurusi) a bottleneck rapidly forms and the river overflows, creating a large pool or 'lake' which is subsequently unfordable by vehicle. At the other end of the cut, downstream, the river opens out again on its new course (hence its name, *ilyahamile*, s, literally 'it has migrated'). This separates Alfeo's two homesteads in Luhanga; one at Ihovelo, just north of where the track from Utengule bends towards Ukwaheri, the other in Luhanga proper, doubly inaccessible during the rains because of its further separation from the main route by the Ilyahamile. Alfeo divides most of his time between the two homesteads, which are separated by finger millet plots, the river, and his large rice fields. In 1980-81 he was a rare visitor to Utengule; usually only passing through, but sometimes stopping longer for an offering or one of the dry season cattle auctions.

In Utengule it was sometimes said that Alfeo was responsible for the comparative ineffectiveness of the village administration in Luhanga; particularly for its failure to seize upon ready opportunities to improve local

amenities. The extension of the water pipeline from Utengule was, for example, said to require no more than the labour of villagers to dig and lay the line: the rest would be done by the Water Department in Mbeya. The absence of a reliable water supply made Luhanga an even less attractive prospect than it was already (recalling the effect which the pipeline has had in encouraging immigration to Utengule), and the impression was that it was Alfeo who was responsible for this situation.

Some newcomers felt this very keenly. The Nyakyusa head teacher of Luhanga primary school complained frequently to his colleagues in Utengule that nothing could be done in the village without asking Alfeo first. When he had a problem which neither the Village Chairman nor the Branch Secretary could solve then he had to beg for Alfeo's assistance "like a small child". Indeed everyone, recent Sukuma settlers included, had to "kneel before Merere". This was, needless to say, something of an exaggeration: Sukuma did challenge Alfeo's authority, not least by moving into the area in the first place. Ironically, their recent intrusion may well have bolstered Alfeo's position (as a focus for opposition to these wealthy immigrants) and strengthened his claim to represent the interests of a local (Sangu) population which presumably had already opted for comparative isolation and the more 'traditional' lifestyle of the inner plains.

Alfeo's personal wealth was acknowledged to be considerable. In Luhanga he ran the only grinding machine, owned a Landrover (the only non-Baluchi vehicle in either village), cultivated some 16 hectares (40 acres) of paddy, and supervised a large herd of cattle (700-800 head on a conservative estimate, possibly thousands), divided and distributed across Usangu. His properties included the four homesteads in which his wives were installed; at Luhanga,

Ihovel, Utengule and Chimala. In Utengule he was preparing to sell another building, which housed the village shop and other tenants, for some Sh.40,000. His main income was from the sale of cattle and rice; this alone was sufficient to rank him among the wealthiest inhabitants of the plains. In this respect his position in Luhanga was similar to that of other 'rulers' (as they were sometimes called) living in the inner plains (these included Maswata, the Sangu Chairman of Mawale village, whose influence extended over a large part of Unyamande east to Ilamba; and the wealthy Chairman of Mwanawala, a Baraguyu settlement on the east bank of the river Mbarali).

In Utengule, however, Alfeo's authority was certainly nowhere near as extensive as it had been. Again, the offering provides an illustration. Attendance at the ritual was noticeably low, scarcely twice the number that might squeeze into a hut to drink *pombe*, out of sight of visiting officials (this was, in fact, what many of the potential audience were doing at the time; refusing to be lured to Alfeo's by the promise of free *pombe*, what for many would have been a rare share of meat, and the knowledge that these could be enjoyed quite openly without fear of fine or other punishment). Attendance was similarly low at all the other public offerings which were held on the royal graves in Utengule that year, namely two which ran consecutively on 7-8 and 9-10 September, and one before the rains on 12-13 November 1981. But most mourning and inheritance ceremonies, at which *pombe* and food were also provided free (accompanying their own *mafunyo*, s), commanded much larger numbers, on occasion almost the entire adult population of Utengule (regardless of religious affiliation) plus relatives and friends from the surrounding villages. The clubs would be all but empty, most of the *pombe* brewed in the village for that day diverted to the scene of the celebration. Nothing of the sort happened at Alfeo's residence. The largest gathering there

was at the October 1980 offering, when the *malenjela* (s, see above) were brought out and many villagers came to pay their respects to Alfeo's recently deceased mother.

These rituals did, at least, go ahead. But Alfeo was finding it increasingly difficult to raise the necessary support for offerings which were scheduled to take place elsewhere. At a packed Village Assembly on 25 June 1981 Mfumbulwa stood up and requested that a fund (to which every villager should contribute) be set up to purchase the necessary paraphernalia - a black cow and black cloth - and cover the travelling and other expenses of a small party which was to be sent up into the hills of Usafwa, to Malema's chiefdom. This trip had once been part of an annual ritual of renewal when villagers were required to extinguish their fires, sweep out, clean and replaster their homes while new fire was brought down from Malema's (as smouldering dung) to be rekindled and distributed by the sub-chiefs and headmen. These practices fell into disuse in the late 1950s, but the ritual at Malema's had not been entirely forgotten. However, Mfumbulwa's proposal created an uproar. Opposition was mobilised along the lines of religious allegiance. The catechist (*mwelimu*) of Utengule's Roman Catholic church declared that members of the local Christian community could not support this 'pagan' venture. The self-appointed spokesman of the local Muslims, a ten-cell leader and long standing political activist, argued similarly. After a heated debate the proposal was quashed, leaving only a vague suggestion that the money might be drawn direct from the Village Treasury. The journey to Malema's was postponed indefinitely: by the end of the year it had still not been made.

Before independence appeals of this kind were hardly necessary. The ritual paraphernalia were provided voluntarily, while a special tribute, *ibeme* (s),

was levied on the villagers. This consisted mainly of finger millet, destined to be brewed and drunk at Merere's (the last collector of the *ibeme*, *munjajila mhangusi-ibeme*, s, is still alive, but the office survives only in name). *Pombe* production was channeled towards the offerings and forbidden on the days when they were being held. Attendance at Merere's was compulsory and the penalties for not turning up severe. "*Mugoda muxali kwa Melele!*" (s), "Strong medicine at Merere's!", goes a women's *shinsenga* (s) song; the 'medicine' in question being, on one interpretation, corporal punishment. In the days before Utengule had any clubs (and was, in some respects, like modern Luhanga) it is said that the chief's subjects had little choice but to participate in the rituals of chiefship, contributing to considerably more impressive displays than those which now take place.

In 1980-81 punishment ranked high on the list of grievances invoked by villagers to explain their preference for company other than Alfeo's. His prescription of the lash (*viboko*) in handing out court judgements some twenty years earlier had not been forgotten. In Utengule Alfeo's quick temper and fierceness, particularly when under the influence of alcohol, were legendary. Stories circulated of his striking people in anger, even in their own homes (in Luhanga), an act severely frowned upon. His tongue was certainly sharp. In the gatherings on his residence verandah breaches of etiquette - a failure to greet Alfeo immediately upon arrival, stepping over or in front of someone he was talking to - were met with a severe, sometimes humiliating, verbal reprimand. A similar fate awaited anyone else who had otherwise incurred Alfeo's displeasure. On the first day of the January offering, for example, he roundly abused a Nyakyusa man (married to a local Sangu woman) for his Baluchi connections (he worked on the bus when it was running); telling him bluntly that he must choose between 'African' and 'Pakistani' ways -

preferably the former if he was to be worthy of the present company.

Complaints of serious misconduct had also been made against Mtenjela and later against his son, Shalula, who had failed to wrest the succession from Alfeo after Mkanuwoga's death (see above). Whether any substance attaches to these charges and those now levelled against Alfeo is difficult to determine: more significant is the fact that such accusations have been made at all. In the case of Mtenjela's line their political implications are now clear (Walsh 1984: 54-57), while their more recent (and frequent) application to Alfeo can be taken as some measure of the comparative weakness of his position in Utengule.

Informants traced their disaffection back to the circumstances of Alfeo's succession. Mkanuwoga died suddenly on 6 December 1950, allegedly poisoned by one of his wives. Alfeo, a mere schoolboy, was sent away by the British administration to complete his education and Myotishuma, his father's brother, was appointed regent until his return (in 1953). From the outset Alfeo was placed in the dilemma shared by many colonial chiefs, balancing precariously between opposing sources of legitimation (see Abrahams 1981: 30). Conflict, it is said, developed along (now) familiar lines: tradition pitted against modernity; pagan against Christian against Muslim (perhaps the most widespread idiom of conflict in Tanzanian village politics).

Alfeo's youthfulness put him at an immediate disadvantage. Members of his father's generation complained that he failed to show traditional, including ritual, practices the respect they were due.⁵ Some informants concede that the rot may have set in during Myotishuma's regency, but no one finds similar fault with Mkanuwoga's rule. Certainly many of the customs of chiefship have since fallen into disuse. Where Mkanuwoga kept a large body of retainers and

their wives, swelling the chief's compound in Utengule to three or four times its present size; Alfeo has none, neither in Utengule nor Luhanga, save the occasional odd-job man (and in 1981 the last of these had left after an argument). His personal indifference to ritual is still a matter of concern to members of the older generation. In September 1981, after two consecutive offerings (which meant that Alfeo had to 'hold court' in Utengule four days running), he was so impatient to return to Luhanga that when the key participants appeared on his verandah on the final afternoon to offer their formal thanks he had already gone, and his head wife had to take his place instead. More seriously, Alfeo stood accused (in private conversation) of neglecting what some judged to be the most important event on the ritual calendar: a dry season offering on the graves of the Mereres' predecessors at Ilamba, deep in the plains. In 1981, as with the planned expedition to Malema's, none took place.

Alfeo's age peers are also said to have resented his elevation to high office and (alleged) assumption of superior airs. Particularly vocal in this respect was a group of Muslim youths. Some of these were to play an important part in the local organisation of TANU, and now hold positions of importance in village government: the most noted of them was, in 1980-81, the elected Chairman of Mahango Mswiswi village. Christian sentiment was similarly articulated after the establishment of the Roman Catholic church in Utengule in the 1960s. In 1980-81 the village government was led, appropriately, by a (comparatively ineffective) Muslim Chairman and a (rather stronger) Roman Catholic Party Secretary; both Sangu, and both members of Alfeo's generation.

Informants tend to make rather less of straightforward political relations than they do of religious and cultural factors (age, generation, respect...) in

explaining the erosion of Alfeo's authority. Little is said, for example, of relations between the chief and TANU as they developed from the late 1950s onwards. As a result, many of the details of this history are (to me) still far from clear. But there can be no doubting the role and importance of decisions made by the Party and government at national level. Since the abolition of chiefship as a political office, perhaps the most important development has been the creation of village authorities, or at least of the legal conditions under which these can be established and registered as multi-purpose co-operatives (following the provisions of the Village and *Ujamaa* Villages Act of 1975). In Utengule many of the powers which used to be Alfeo's are now vested in the village government, the contemporary agent of the State. For example: where villagers were once compelled to perform a variety of services for their chief, they are now obliged to work for the village and, by extension, for national development (*kazi ya maendeleo, ya kujenga taifa*); farming, fashioning bricks and mending roads on pain of paying fines to cover the cost of labour to substitute for their own. Significantly, the word *mukwila* (s), originally referring to the plot worked by a chief's subjects, is now used in everyday conversation to designate the collective village field, *shamba la maendeleo*.

There are, however, important differences. In 1980-81, the village government exercised its authority with nothing like the force which Alfeo and his predecessors are reputed to have done. Nor did it function as effectively as the Ward and Divisional authorities would have liked and District and Regional officials were led to believe. Where Alfeo was once able to enforce attendance at his residence, the village authorities had considerable difficulty in promoting their own functions. For example, the Village Assembly which heard proposals for the trip to Malema's had originally been scheduled three

days earlier, for 22 June (the date on which Assemblies were held every month). But a mere handful of people had turned up and the meeting, important in view of announcements about collective labour which were to be made, had to be postponed. Enthusiasm for collective labour itself was no more marked; despite the threat of fines the turnout for village work was, on occasion, pathetic. Not surprisingly, the most successful collective enterprises in Utengule were those which employed the captive labour of pupils at the village school.

The village government was only as effective as local interests would allow. This was amply demonstrated during the cholera outbreak of early 1981 (when, for example, the local Branch Secretary continued to drink the *pombe* clandestinely brewed by his wife, her neighbours and other women in Utengule). The Divisional Secretary's mistake was to assume (or at least act as though) Alfeo had more influence over the political and economic (under)development of the area than he did. But even in Luhanga, where Alfeo was rather better placed to manipulate the embryonic village government, he could no longer claim the labour of villagers in his paddy fields (in December 1981 he was making do with a hired tractor plus driver, and a work force picked from among his 56 children).

I visited, but did not live in Luhanga. I cannot guarantee that my interpretation of Alfeo's greater authority there is any different in status from external perceptions of his position in Utengule, where I lived for 15 months. Certainly some outsiders, including the Nyakyusa head teacher and Sukuma settlers, tended to exaggerate the traditional aspects of his power in the local community. Ironically, their apparent respect for the former paramount may well have had the effect of increasing his standing among local Sangu as a

focus for opposition to the large number of wealthy immigrants, mainly Sukuma, now living within the administrative boundaries of the village.

Effects of this kind can never be ruled out. Shortly after I left Alfeo was elected Village Chairman in Utengule (he took up office on 24 July 1982). Although I was aware that his predecessor stood little chance of re-election, the news that Alfeo had been adopted in his stead (no doubt as a more effective counterweight to the local Branch Secretary) came as something of a surprise. It is possible that the Divisional Secretary's recognition of Alfeo's 'traditional' role (an aspect of chiefship which many Sangu were keen to see revived) and the events of early 1981 helped (re)generate respect for him in the village, or at least made villagers aware of his potential value as a political figurehead (and/or scapegoat). Unfortunately I have no further evidence for this, or other information on the circumstances in which Alfeo was elected. But I have argued elsewhere (Walsh 1984) that the general possibility - that power can be reproduced through its misinterpretation - has a more certain application to the Sangu case.

Conclusion

It is difficult to assess how anomalous or otherwise the case of Utengule is. Comparatively few detailed accounts of Tanzanian village politics have appeared over the last two decades, and even less information is available on the contemporary role of chiefs. In the 1960s Miller found that many Nyamwezi chiefs remained (or appeared to remain) powerful in their local areas, and attempted to account for this in terms of the persistence of customary practices, specific techniques employed by chiefs (including their

control and manipulation of ritual), and the reluctance of others to take on administrative duties in the countryside (Miller 1968). In this paper I have tried to show that such a simple explanation is inappropriate to the Sangu case. Where government and Party officials assumed that the former paramount was an important, potentially obstructive, force in local politics, it is clear that in his former capital village he did not command such an obvious authority. If tradition and traditional leadership had a grip upon anyone, then it was as important as a convenient explanation and excuse for the local administration as it was as a concern for villagers themselves. And it may well be that the chief's external image lent him an authority in the local community which he might otherwise not have had.

NOTES

- ¹ It should be noted that centralised chiefship has an ancient history in Usangu and pre-dates the imposition of colonial rule. Since the 1860s the Sangu have been ruled by a line of chiefs sharing the name of the dynasty's founder, Merere. Thus: (Tovelamahamba) Merere (reigned c.1860-1893); Mgandilwa (Pambalu) Merere (1893-1906); Tunduhwago Merere (1906-1910, when he was deposed by the German administration); Mtenjela Merere (1911-1937); Mkanuwoga Merere (1937-1950); and Alfeo Merere (1950-).
- ² This was Mulla Abdulrahim Pil'mohamed. From small beginnings in the 1920s he succeeded in establishing an extensive network of kin and dependants which dominated trade in Usangu from the mid-1930s on.
- ³ See also MARTI 1971; Chale 1973; Jespersen 1973; Mwakipesile n.d; 1976; Pipping 1976; Hazlewood and Livingstone 1982.
- ⁴ 's' denotes a *shisango* (Sangu) word or string. All adult *shisango*-speakers are at least bilingual and speak Swahili, the national language.
- ⁵ This complaint was heard by Alison Redmayne when she worked in Usangu in the mid-1960s (personal communication).

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