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# Rural Development and Strategies for Change

## Aspects of the East African Case

For mature capitalism in its infancy and for the underdeveloped periphery today rural transformation determines social transformation. Conversly rural stagnation will produce social stagnation. Where production is predominantly agricultural the structure of agrarian society - its internal organisation and its external relations - must decisively determine social dynamics in general. The productive and organisational potential of the countryside must be liberated and expanded to provide a progressive base for urban growth; the attempt to build a 'modern' industrial sector upon an underdeveloped agrarian system turns it into an instrument of extraction and exploitation. In the long term it becomes an inefficient instrument even for its own interests because the failure to promote agricultural productivity will inhibit the development of the surplus which it must appropriate in order to survive. In tropical Africa, as in many other areas, the factors determining the dynamics of underdevelopment are to be sought through the analysis of this question; more particularly in the analysis of the nature of the relations of production existing within the rural sector and of the processes of exchange between that sector and national and internations centres of economic control.

The search for the methodology required to understand and influence this process of social transformation is therefore no purely academic enterprise. Until the obstacles to the liberation of rural potentialities are overcome both theoretically and in practice the sum total of human misery will continue to increase at an accelerating rate. Hundreds of thousands are now dying of hunger in the African hinterland from Senegal to Ethiopia; they will soon be joined by many times that number as the ever-present imbalance between world food distribution and human needs worsens in particular places as the result of natural calamity or human failure. Hand in hand with this process the wealth and waste of those classes which feed on the surplus extracted from agraria will increase; we will be treated to the spectacle of gross wealth displaying itself to a world of starving peasants.

Confronted with the corpses which now litter the drought-stricken north of the continet it is difficult to take the question of abstract theory seriously. One might almost say that the smell is too strong; misery of such concreteness and scale produces either a sense of hopelessness or the impulse to immediate action. Immediate action is essential and a little will be forthcoming, made available through appeals to the conscience of a developed world which becomes unconfortable only at the point when the ever-present misery at the periphery breaks through its normal bounds and presents them with sufficiently macabre evidence of failure. But short term solutions can only ameliorate, not solve problems. One might even brutally argue that it would be better to allow people to die quickly than to starve them slowly by providing charity in this way. The dead and the dying, and all of those in the rest of the continent who survive by reducing their lives to little above those of the animals in their fields, are the victims not of drought but of social organisation. The failure of the rains merely exposes the true implications of a world order which has produced the technological capacity to exterminate mankind but not to feed him.

The African peasant is an integral part of this world order; his resources and his options are determined by his location in that system. More critically, his ability to intervene within that order; to act autonomously to expand the potentiality of his life depends upon his ability to understand its nature - the nature of the whole system of interaction which ties him into the world community so specifically and unequally. "Recognition is power" wrote Gramsci from a prison cell maintained to discourage his particular style of social enquiry.[1] And for the peasant this recognition must operate

1. A. Gramsci, "What is man?" in The modern prince, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1957, p.78.

at the level of the world system and must be directed against the dominant forces in that system which keep him tied so totally into his poverty. In order to incorporate the complexity of this system and provide a basis for this opposition the theory must be highly abstract and based upon 'negative reason' in Marcuse's sense.[1] Only through a comprehensive theory which takes as its starting point the need for a social order based upon the interests of the masses will it be possible to eliminate the conditions which now constantly reproduce their concrete suffering. And comprehensiveness requires abstraction in order to incorporate all of the concrete particulars which go to make up the problem of famine forthe Ethiopian tribesman or that of shortages for the Ugandan peasant. According to Lenin "abstractions reflect nature more profoundly, more faithfully, more completely. From active observation to abstract thought and from there to practical activity - such is the dialectical path of apprehending truth and objective reality."[2]

To achieve these requirements it is necessary to be able to specify the conditions which determine the present trajectory of change, to identify the resources available to the peasantry with respect to the improvement of their position and to indicate the agencies which exist or could be created to provide them with more effective control over their situation. This is substantively a gargantuan task, an undertaking for a generation of scholars; it is greatly complicated bythe need to confront an orthodoxy developed to serve different classes and interests. Orthodox theory does not emerge to serve the needs of the dispossessed but of the dispossessors. Ideas are/ themselves the concrete product of human labour and labour under capitalism is appropriate by capitalists. Hence theory characteristically rationalises the functioning of the existing system; it feels that "the stabilisation of the process of mutual orientation within complementary rules is a fundamental 'tendency' of interaction."[3] We may hope for the sake of those now dying in the relief centres of Ethiopia that this tendency to stabilise existing processes of mutual orientation (or should we say exploitation'?) is less complete than Parsons and his like believe. We can be certain, however, that the many man-hours of generously financed research devoted to this stabilisation has had a deep impact upon the consciousness of those who should concerned to evolve a counter-theory for change and liberation. Our task must therefore be to associate ourselves with the growing theoretical tendency which has fully accepted this latter task and to make what contribution we can to take it a step further.

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1. H. Marcuse, One dimensional man, London, Sphere Books, 1968
2. V.I. Lenin, Collected works, v. 38, p. 171, in J. Hoffman, David Easton and the paradox of politics, Sussex University, Ph.d, 1973.
3. T. Parsons, The social system, p.481.

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The first necessity is to locate the peasantry within the existing structure of production by specifying the nature of the internal organisation of the class and of its relations with the external world. Both orthodox and Marxist theorists[1] begin by postulating a pre-capitalist society made up of largely self sufficient, undifferentiated communal villages. Some degree of autonomous development is thought to have occurred before the colonial period, leading to the creation of the great African Empires, but even this is held to be overshadowed by the dominant impact on traditional colonial society of capitalism, coming first in the guise of slavery and subsequently of the colonial system. We find this view expressed in Redfield's image of the primitive community,[2] Marx's analysis of the primitive village community,[3] and Nyerere's view of the classlessness of traditional African society which in his view had been maintained into thepresent.[4] The lack of differentiation is taken to be associated with a high degree of equality and also with the absence of feudalism and the corresponding struggle against it which characterised the emergence of rural capitalism in Europe and Russia. For orthodox theory and for Nyerere it is assumed that the structural and cultural characteristics of traditional society have persisted without fundamental alteration into the present. Within bourgeois theory this persistence is attributed to cultural resistance to the modernising tendencies represented by western or, in Pye's phrase, "world culture;"[5] for Nyerere it represents a repository of communitarian values which can serve as a basis for defence against materialist individualism and as a foundation on which a socialist society can be built without passing through the capitalist stage.

This image of undifferentiated and traditionalistic society, whether seen through the dark shaded spectacles of post colonial technocratic theory, or the rosy ones of Tanzania socialism, seems to me to present an incorrect and dangerously misleading basis for theory and action. Although it is certainly true that the level of class differentiation was low in precolonial society because of the absence of an extensive market and the limited development of technological capacity, this society was nevertheless almost nowhere based upon simple communal equality. In some areas, for example among the Western Nilotes, rank differences were "on a primarily ritual basis, with some economic implications, but of comparatively minor importance in secular daily life;"[6] but in others social structure manifested extreme inequality taking the form of slavery or of caste or ethnic differentiation.[7] Even western assumptions about the static and undifferentiated nature of Asian society expressed in the notion of "oriental despotism," have now been almost totally demolished.[8] Marx's own model of the simple Indian village community which he took to be characteristic of its early period of development has since been shown to be "quite

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1. The distinction here is roughly that postulated by Richard Sklar in 'Political Science and National Integration,' Jnl. Modern African Studies, v.5, no.1, (1967).
2. R. Redfield, 'Peasant society and culture,' in The little community: Peasant society and culture, Chicago & London, Phoenix Books, 1st published, 1956.
3. K. Marx, Karl Marx: Pre-Capitalist economic formations, ed. E.J.Hobsbawm, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1964.
4. J. Nyerere, Socialism and rural development, Dar-es-Salaam, 1967.
5. L.W. Pye, Aspects of political development, Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1966, p.8.
6. A.W. Southall, 'Rank and stratification among the Alur and other Nilotic peoples,' in Social stratification in Africa, ed. by A. Tuden & L. Plotnicov, New York, Free Press, 1970, p.46.
7. See the other contributions in the above work; on the absence of communal ownership of land among the Jonam in West Nile cf. A.G.G. Gingyera-Pinycwa, 'Ideology and ownership in West Nile,' Transition, 35, v 7, 1968.
8. I. Habib, 'An examination of Wittfogel's theory of Oriental

exceptional."[1].

The assumption that African Society entered the modern period an an undifferentiated mass is therefore empirically untenable even with respect to the its indigenous origins. But the assumption that this degree of 'traditionalistic' communalism is still an important element in social organisation also ignores the effects of four centuries of history during which this society was fully integrated into the western economy, initially through the slave system and subsequently through colonialism.[2] This integration has had a revolutionary impact upon traditional social structure everywhere since this has had to be moulded to the requirements of that economy. This process of transformation has, on the one hand, superimposed an expatriate capitalist class upon indigenous society, on the other it has produced an internal restructuring of that society, both regionally and within the context of the original ethnic units. European capitalism invariably had to make use of elements within the traditional social structure to further its objectives, although it did not necessarily always use those elements which had dominated that structure in the previous period. Thus whole tribes were used as intermediaries in the slave trade, drastically altering the territorial balance of power;[3] existing chiefs were used or new ones created from within traditional ruling clans in order to maintain the administrative apparatus at the local level. This power in the administrative sphere was usually paralleled by equivalent power in the economic, where traditional inequalitities in access to the productive resources of the indigenous economy - land, cattle and labour in the form of wives and children - were directly functional to the consolidation of superiority when they could be turned into differential access to a cash income once export crops had been established. And although it is undoubtedly true that the nature of colonial policy seriously inhibited the further evolution of this internal differentiation by discouraging Africans from moving out of the primary into secondary and tertiary activities,[4] most of the upward mobility which did occur was heavily concentrated upon the individuals whose initial advantages had been derived from their favourable location in that traditional system. Colonialism which introduced advanced social and mechanical technology and access to a virtually unlimited market greatly accelerated the speed at which differentiation occurred and intensified the inequalities in access to resources. But it did not introduce inequality and individualism into a previously communal paradise, it depended for its success on the fact that it couldtie significant elements in African society to its cause by offering them rewards as individual members of a class,[5] and, in so doing, introduced into that society additional elements of differentiation and the basis for the further evolution of the class struggle.

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1. D. Thorner, 'Marx on India and the Asiatic mode of production,' p.57, ontributions to Indian sociology, IX, (Dec. 1966).
2. For a brilliant attempt to present a systematic framework for the examination of this process of western induced change cf. S. Amin, 'Underdevelopment and dependence in Black Africa, origins and contemporary forms,' Jnl. Modern African Studies, 10, 4(1972).
3. S. Amin, The class Struggle in Africa, p. 32/2.
4. cf. Amin, "Underdevelopment and dependence....." p.523; E.A. Brett, Colonialism & Underdevelopment in East Africa, Conclusion.
5. Dan Mudoola's forthcoming study Busoga Chiefs demonstrates very clearly how this strata was ableto advance its interests at the expense of the local population by exploiting its usefulness to the colonial authorities.

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Having therefore rejected the simplifications of orthodoxy we must look for an alternative formulation, and here we cannot do better than to start with that of Samir Amin. He identifies three major types of economic system in Africa, each the outcome of the nature of the particular relationship established between the indigenous and expatriate systems of production.[1] These are the areas of the colonial trade economy, the concession-owning companies, and of the labour reserves. For purposes of an East African oriented analysis these can be seen in operation in the areas of peasant production (Southern and eastern Uganda up to the fifties, northern and western areas subsequently; the Lake and Kilimanjaro regions of Tanzania; Kikuyuland in Kenya after the Swynnerton Plan); in the areas ofplantation or settler development in Kenya and Tanzania; and in the areas without good access to transport facilities in all three countries. To the latter labour reserve areas within the East African region itself must beadded at least Rwanda and Burundi which have traditionally provided labour to the areas of developed cash crop production in Tanzania and Uganda. This formulation does slight violence to Amin's original since East African conditions do not exactly replicate those of the regions he examines, but I would argue that it does provide us with a useful starting point for the analysis of the conditions here.

If we now try to assess the relative importance and the implications of these three forms certain points immediately suggest themselves. First, the role of planter or settler development has been in a state of relative decline since the latter part of the fifties in both Kenya Tanzania. This is a reflection of its underlying inefficiency as an economic system by comparison with peasant production,[2] and, more especially, of the concessions which the colonial authorities were forced to make to African nationalism with its rich peasant base during these years. Thus we find the excision of parts of the settler domain in Kenya in the fifties and sixties and its transfer to the rich peasant class; the economic collapse of sisal production in the mid-sixties with the decline in prices associated with competition from synthetics on the world market and the transfer of these estates to the State after the Arusha declaration in 1967. In Uganda expatriate control was effectively eliminated in the Sugar and Tea Industries in 1972/3. Although the settler presence is by no means eliminated in Kenya I think it can be argued that the expatriate factor is no longer of much significance in East African agriculture. But this does not mean that the significance of the form which that enterprise assumed has also been eliminated. Although it has been in a temporary state of decline with the reduction in the strength of the expatriate sector, there are strong signs that it is reemerging very effectively in at least Kenya and Uganda, but now in the hands of the indigenous capitalist class. The large-scale capitalistic African farmer will undoubtedly play a significant role in the future evolution of key sections of those two economies so that it is essential to understand the nature of his relation to the factors of production and to society in general. This question will be taken up again in a subsequent section; it can only be formulated effectively after we have considered the other two modes of production.

For Amin the 'Africa of the labour reserves' was confined to those areas where the African population had been forced into 'small, poor regions' where they had no possibilities of modernising their farming and hence had to assume the function' of providing a migrant proletariat for the mines, farms and cities of the Europeans.[3] But he also points to the fact that the evolution of peasant export agriculture required the destruction of the domestic trade by the colonial trading houses and the diversion of internal exchanges to the coast.[4] This tendency, combined with the concentration of

1. Amin, p. 504; p. 519-24
2. Brett, op. cit., Part III.
3. Amin, p. 519
4. Ibid., p. 523.

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infrastructure in the areas of peasant development then "necessarily gave rise to a polarisation of dependent peripheral development at the regional level." In West Africa this created the inequalities between wealthy coast and underdeveloped hinterland; in East Africa those between the areas of early peasant development (South-Eastern Uganda, Lake and Kilimanjaro Regions of Tanzania) and those which gained access to these crops late or not at all. In this context, therefore, we can identify two types of gross underdevelopment within the rural economy - those derived from the labour reserve policy stemming from the need to provide labour to the Kenyan and Tanzanian estate sector, and those derived from the regional inequalities created by the emergence of the peasant economy itself.

The sociological implications of the outcome of this process of combined and unequal development on a regional scale are of such profound importance for the development of African society that they must be systematically integrated into any model which makes a serious attempt to provide explanations for that process. The conflict stemming from the effects of this process has, in fact, produced the primary motivating force within African politics itself over the past two decades. Regional inequalitities necessarily coincide with pre-colonial ethnic divisions. In certain cases regional competition in the modern context for the resources required to participate in the market economy (transport, education social services etc.) can be seen as an extension of the competition which had existed over other resources (for example slaves, territorial rights) in the pre-colonial context. Given this base in traditional culture and historical experience the regional conflict emerges into the modern period as a struggle between competing sub-nationalisms. Where the basis exists for the full development of this sub-nationalistic consciousness it takes the form of full-scale civil war (Nigeria, Sudan), more usually it provides the focus for the ongoing struggle for preferential access to the state machinery. What we are therefore confronting when we look at the manifestations of 'tribalism' in contemporary politics is not some traditionalistic survival to be ended by the more adequate diffusion of universalistic values, as orthodox theory would have it, but a particular aspect of the class struggle which is in all its important aspects an outcome of the impact of the capitalist system on African society.

The integration of this aspect of the problem into the model requires some extension of the traditional assumptions of class analysis, to incorporate the nature of the relationship between unequal regions. This raises some exceedingly complex issues which can only be hinted at here. The origins of class distinctions are to besought in the relation of particular social groups to the system of production, and in this case we can see very clearly how the life chances of the population of a given region are determined by their access to the resources required to make their agriculture profitable. The analysis of class struggle - that is of the dynamic process which relates different social groups to each other within a single system of production - requires that we understand how the actions of one group impinge upon those of another. Unless the activities of the various elements are clearly part of the <u>same</u> system, and unless they can be shown to be competing for the same resources within that system it is impossible to look at that relationship in class terms. As a complement to this, where the life chances of a particular group are in fact determined by the operation of a system in which they are competing for

must be looked at in this way if it is to be understood realistically. To try, for example, to understand the underdevelopment of a labour reserve area (for example Luoland, Kigezi, Songea) without dealing with its relationship to the other element in the whole economic system which has produced that underdevelopment, will totally nullify the value of the analysis.

The relation between the labour reserve areas and the estate sector has been extensively treated both for East African and for other areas.[1] That between these areas and those of peasant development is much less clear cut. Estate production required labour from the reserves and could only recruit it if they were not allowed to develop an independent base in the money economy which would remove the need for migration. The relationship was therefore directly competitive and the negative effects on the periphery were for the most part clearly evident to those involved. The political outcome of this situation which took the form of the attack on the settler mode was a clear response to this consciousness, and the relative decline in that sector mentioned earlier, the direct result of that attack.

The relationship between the peasant sector and the labour reserve is less clear cut but it is nevertheless of crucial importance to the nature of the development of both. Peasant development is principally based upon family labour (a point to be discussed below) and does not depend upon migration like the estate sector. It is true that the rich peasant element does make use of hired labour in amounts which I suspect are very large. But this labour is essential only for the further evolution of the system not for its maintenance. Whereas hired labour provides the peasant farmer with additional resources at key points in the crop year, it provides the estate farmer with his life blood. Further, although the peasantry also regularly depends on the migrant system (for example of Rwandese into Buganda and Busoga) it does not necessarily have to do so. In Teso, for example, an area of relative land surplus, the bulk of short term labour appears to be recruited from local sources. It seems to me incontrovertible that the present demographic trends, combined with changes in the structure of landownership, are going to force more and more individuals inside the existing areas of peasant development into the labour market thus providing the rich peasantry of the area concerned with internal source for recruitment. This process will shift the locus of class conflict from one between labour supplying and labour utilizing regions/one of internal /to conflict between landed and landless elements. This process is now accelerating within the peasant regions and will be discussed extensively below. Over the long term it must transform the nature of the political struggle in East Africa, but for the moment it is insufficiently developed to provide the primary focus for that struggle which is still dominated by the regional issue. Regional struggle for resources other than labour, however, is as intense in the areas of peasant as of estate development. Roads, social services and agricultural facilities are financed from the taxation extracted from the society as a whole; their subsequent allocation has to occur on a geographically specific basis. Colin Leys' study of Acholi politics has clearly shown how the actions of the local elite were directly determined by the need to secure maximum access to these through effective intervention in national politics.[2]

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1. Literature cited in Brett, op.cit., Chapters 6 & 7; G.L. Beckford, persistent poverty, New York, O.U.P, 1972.

2. C.T. Leys, Politicians and Policies, Nairobi, E.A.P.H, 1967.

Equally, the centralised administrative and economic structure of the post-colonial state has also influenced the evolution of this conflict. The indigenous bourgeoisie emerged initially on a regional basis; within each area this group was recruited from the rich peasant families which had been able to afford secondary education; this generation was then able to move into positions in the bureaucracy, the co-operative movement and petty trade. It then became the leadership of the nationalist movement and, through the system of patron-client linkages with the rural mass, was able to gain access to political and economic power at the centre.[1]

The regional conflict had necessarily to be fought out at the centre because that was where power was concentrated. Here it assumed two principal forms. There was first the conflict to secure priveledged access to resources for the region represented. In this respect the M.P., Minister or senior Civil Servant was being expected to come through on his promises to his constituents and could be successful only to the extent to which he could limit the success of other regional representatives in getting access to the same limited stock of resources. Secondly, the local bourgeoisie came to the centre and were able to use their power there to build up their own position both locally and nationally. They could use patronage to promote their kin within the civil service; they could use their access to political power to raise the resources necessary to develop their business activities at the local level (land, bank loans, trade licences) and they could be tied into the sphere of the expatriate bourgeoisie by being given lucrative jobs or seats on the boards of the large corporations. The long term effects of this process are both complex and ambiguous. For as long as their regional links were the most important the underlying conflict between the advanced and the backward regions ensured that this issue would exist as a powerfully divisive element in national politics. But the longer that the more successful politicians operated in national politics, the more powerful became the interests linking them to the other elements which controlled power at the centre. The scramble for jobs, loans, contracts etc. took up more and more of their efforts and the concern with local problems and contact with local constituencies declined. In Tanzania and Kenya this divorce from the locality showed itself very clearly in the widespread failure of incumbent politicians in the elections of 1965 and 1969 respectively; in Uganda my own interviews with peasants in 1966/67 indicated a high degree of dissatisfaction with representatives who apparently never came back to their constituencies and were often held to have 'sold themselves to the Indians.' This divorce from local pressures made it easier to produce the semblance of unity at the centre, but it did not remove the underlying inequalities, nor the possibility that these could be exploited by other sections of the local elite who had not been successful in the initial competition for power. It should also be noted that the conflict was not simply the product of pressure from the poorer areas to 'catch up' with the richer ones; it also stemmed from the desire of the richer ones to retain their priveledged position. Thus the situation of combined and unequal development on the regional level can be seen as a primary source of instability within the national political elite. From the point of view of rural development it has to be seen as a primary factor to be taken into account in evaluating the long term implications of capital accumulation at the local level, whether this is the outcome of government programmes or of private investment.

Discussion of the third major type of rural development, that of the regions of the 'colonial trade economy' based upon the small

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1. On patron - client relations of J.C. Scott, Comparative Political Corruption.

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family farm, has been left till last since it constitutes the primary mode of production and accumulation in the region at the present time. In this respect it is clear that the bulk of agricultural production in the region stems from the "peasant family household", and that the dominance of this mode of production in the total economy of the region enables us to look on that economy as belonging to the "peasant" type. In this respect the economy as a whole meets Thorner's requirement that it be predominantly rural, controlled through a territorial state, divided between towns and countryside and with production predominantly controlled by the peasant family, defined as follows:

> We define a peasant family household as a socio-economic unit which grows crops primarily by the physical efforts of the members of the family. The principal activity of the peasant households is the cultivation of their own lands..... The households may also engage in other activities: for example, in handicrafts, processing or even petty trade. Some members of the family may work perhaps be forced to work, outside the household from time to time. The household may include one or more slaves, domestic servants or hired hands. But the total contribution of these non-family members to actual crop production will be much less than that of the family members.[1]

Equally, the East African peasant conforms to Redfield's characterisation of peasants as people who treat agriculture as a way of life rather than as a business,[2] who are integrated into the local community both socially and through subsistence production, but who are also integrated into the wider world through access to the market "that pulls out from the compact social relations of self-contained primitive communities some parts of men's doings and puts people into fields of economic activity that are increasingly independent of the rest of what goes on in the local life."[3] I would also agree, although with some reservations which should become clear later, with Chayanov's assertion that the peasant economy is qualitatively different from the capitalist because of its inner structure and the nature of its relationship to the market. As he put it:

> On the family farm, the family equipped with means of production uses its labour power to cultivate the soil and receives, as the result of a year's work a certain amount of goods. A single glance at the inner structure of the labour unity is enough to realise that it is impossible, without the category of wages, to impose on its structure net profit, rent and interest on capital as real economic categories in the capitalist meaning of the word..... Thus it is impossible to apply the capitalist profit calculation.[4]

One must also add that this also rules out one aspect of the class struggle - that between wage labour and capital - which Marxists see as a manifestation of the maturity of the development of capitalism and which therefore does not exist in a society in which the mass of

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1. Daniel Thorner, "Peasant economy as a category in economic history," in T. Shanin, Peasants and peasant societies, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1971, p.203-5.
2. Redfield, op. cit., p.18
3. Ibid., p.28
4. A.V. Chayanov, The Theory of the peasant economy, cited by B.Kerblay, "Chayanov and the theory of the peasantry as a specific type of economy," in Shanin, op. cit., p.152.

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producers have not yet been separated from the land.[1] This therefore also means that the political categories which can be applied to mature capitalist society must be modified to take into account the differences stemming from the nature of peasant society.

It can be argued that the peasant form is the dominant form in East Africa not only because thegreat bulk of the region's crops are produced in this way, but also because it has proved itself the most efficient means of production given the present stage of social and economic development. Apart from certain crops requiring large capital investments (sisal, tea, exotic cattle) peasant production has fully justified the faith shown in it by the more enlightened of the early colonial administrators in terms of expansion, stability in the face of adverse prices and low costs. Equally important, its labour intensity and the prevailing availability of land has ensured that this expansion of productive capacity has occurred in a relatively equalitarian way and the gross inequalities characteristic of much of Asian agriculture avoided. On the other hand, a large percentage of estate agriculture can be shown to have required massive support from the state to maintain itself in the form of subsidies from other sectors, protected markets and priveledged access to agricultural services.[2] Ath the same time it must be noted that this efficiency of the sector does not derive from access to advanced technology. For the great bulk of peasants the basic tool is the hand hoe, a slightly improved version of the tool available in the region in the iron age. In a few areas animal power has been harnessed for ploughing, in most the bicycle serves as a labour intensive means of short-distance transport. Machine power has been introduced to link the farmer to the market through the provision of processing and transport facilities, but production itself has been left to the unaided strength of the human frame. This fact, of course, is the primary source of underdevelopment in East Africa; the task of equipping the rural population with an appropriate technology to break out of the limits which their present situation imposes on them is clearly the most importart task facing the society over the coming generation.

This then brings us to thecentral issue of rural development for contemporary East Africa. What are the conditions which must be created if the capacity of thepeasantry is to be liberated? What are the conditions which will ensure continued stagnation or even regression? Although the problem is to raise the technological level of their system of production, these questions are not simply technical questions since access to technology is itself a function of social, economic and political organisation. Technology is the dependent variable, any attempt to treat it as a determining factor necessarily distorts the nature of the process. Once technology has been brought into existence it will influence social and political structure by changing the composition of the work force, the distribution of profits, the location of population etc. But the coice of technology is dependent on access to capital, that is upon control over surplus determined either through control over the state or over private enterprise. Thus the decision to invest

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1. Simply defend against philistine argument that Marxism does not incorporate an understanding of this category and cannot be used in this context I would refer to Capital vol. I, part VIII and to Pre-capitalist formations, op. cit.

2. I.L.O., Employment, incomes and equality, 1972, p.166/7 for Kenya data

in large-scale farms rather than small, in mechanisation rather than animal implements cannot simply be assessed in terms of their relative 'efficiency' but must be seen as the outcome of a particular organisation of power. At the same time, the decision to invest in one sort of technology rather than another does have long term implications for social and political change in the sense that it will change the life chances of particular groups (for example access to tractors rather than ox-ploughs will enable the large-scale farmer to develop at the expense of the small-scale) and hence alter the relationship between classes and their relationship to the state. Thus while we cannot talk of technological determinism with respect to the original decision to follow one strategy rather than the other, we can and must think of it in this way with respect to the consequences of that choice. Given that the coice of technology is directly related to the scale of economic organisation, and hence to economic and social structure, any strategy for rural development must take this fact into account by relating the investment in technology to the kind of structure which it is wishing to promote. Extensive agriculture requires different machines and organisational skills from intensive; capital intensive activities require different inputs from labour intensive ones. Until the social and political implications of these choices are clearly grasped the development process will be at the mercy of the institutions with the most highly developed capacity to promote their wares - in the East African case the international companies principally involved in the production of technology for the capital and skill intensive Western agricultural industry.[1]

A strategy for rural development must start with a model of a developed agricultural system. Such a model must be both related to the specific local conditions and must provide for realistic possibilities for change and improvement. It must therefore be rooted in an understanding of the present, but must provide a basis for choices about the future (the essential quality of all investment decisions) by clearly specifying the kind of future which these decisions are intended to create.[2] It must be both technically feasable in relation to the region's current resource base and level of access to external sources of innovation, and politically feasable in the sense that it must be capable of generating the support and efforts of a significant sector of the society which recognise the validity of the strategy in relation to the further development of their interests. This also implies the possibility that such a group will actually be able to penetrate thestate apparatus and ensure that resources are allocated to their programme. If they cannot do this no strategy will have any practical relevance no matter how 'rational' it may appear in purely technical terms. Much current development literature assumes that it is addressing itself to a state apparatus which takes economic decisions through the rational application of social scientific theory. It sees political 'interference' with planning decisions as essentially 'irrational' and continues to believe that this is to be combatted by the ever more sophisticated evolution of scientific evidence in support of its case. It does not wish, for quite understandable

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1. Theoretical problems involved in the formulation of this problem are clearly expressed in recent research papers by David Burch, University of Sussex, Overseas aid and the transfer of technology, cf. also I.L.O. Reprot, op. cit., Ch.9

2. This problem is dealt with at length, Brett, op. cit., p. 3ff.

reasons given the dependent nature of the relationship between the technocracy and the state and corporate structure, to deal with the "political pre-requisites" for the implementation of a particular programme, that is with the action needed to ensure that it will receive favourable consideration from the authorities. In some cases this might simply require no more than presenting the results of scientific investigation to the appropriate officials; in many others it will require the destruction of the power of entrenched and reactionary social groups through the development of a political movement of the dispossessed. Thus the conditions required to create the degree of political consciousness and organisation required to ensure self-activation of the class involved in a particular developmental strategy - for example the African peasantry - must be accepted as an integral part of any investigation concerned to produce the theoretical basis for that strategy.[1]

Given the present conditions of rural society in East Africa, one can postulate three alternative models for long term development - the estate, peasant and collective strategies respectively. Each of these has been given some degree of support and exists as a going concern in different places and at different levels of development. What has been said already makes it unnecessary to spend too much time on difinitions, the most important problem will be to consider some of the implications of the choice of one alternative rather than another. The model of estate agriculture is derived from the history of western development where a rapid growth in mechanical and chemical technology made possible a progressive expansion in the size of agricultural units and a reduction in the size of the work force. The corresponding expansion of the industrial/urban sector then absorbed both the displaced labour and provided a market for the growth in output which the rationalisation of production secured. Peasant development, on the other hand, is based upon the small family farm and more especially on creating the conditions which will enable it to produce a larger and larger percentage of its output for the market rather than for subsistence, and to intensify its degree of exploitation of the soil through the application of appropriate technique - improved varieties, increased fertilizers, more efficient farm management and the progressive introduction of animal and small-scale mechanical implements. The assumption is that the system will remain relatively labour-intensive, thus retaining a significant percentage of the population in the rural sector. Historically the most successful manifestation of this strategy is to be found in Japan whose experience has been extensively examined in this regard.[2] Finally, agriculture can be collectivised to provide a basis for economies of scale yet at the same time avoiding the process of class formation and the exploitation of labour associated with the full development of capitalistic exploitation of the land. This form exists in a developed form in the socialist bloc, more especially, from the African point of view, in the relatively underdeveloped sections of the bloc in China, North Korea and North Vietnam. For the East African context, of course, its relevance is determined by the developed formulation of a strategy of collective production in Tanzania since 1967.[3]

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1. Despite the welcome shift in the I.L.O. Report away from the large-scale and formal sector to the small-scale sector, there appears to be no attempt to look at these accompanying political pre-requisites for the implementation of their recommendations.

2. An interesting account is to be found in T. Ogura, Agricultural development in rural Japan.

3. Documentation in J. Nyerere, Freedom & socialism, Dar es Salaam, O.U.P., 1969.

The historical experience of these developed systems has demonstrated that these organisational forms all provide at least the potentiality for advanced agriculture since each one of them has produced massive increases in output which has provided both the surplus for investment in the urban sector and an improved standard of living for those who remined on the land. On the other hand we should also note that each of these forms can and does exist in a corrupted and underdeveloped way. Plantation agriculture of an exceedingly inefficient kind exists in many areas of Latin America where its keeps the mass of the population locked into conditions of servitude, under-exploits the vast areas of land at its disposal and secures monopoly profits for the hereditary elite. Equally, in vast areas of Africa we see peasant agriculture operating with the technology of the iron age and generating almost no surplus either for industrialisation or improved standards of living. Finally, the experience of collectivisation in the Soviet Union, while it certainly enabled a much larger relative surplus to be extracted from the rural population did so at the cost of massive reductions in rural standards of living and of stagnation in productivity which still serves to inhibit the overall growth of the economy. So when we examine theimplication of these models for the future of East Africa we must take into account not only those conditions which will serve to produce positive results, but also those which will lead to the replication of one or other of the degenerate or regressive forms which can only serve to lock rural populations into poverty and dependence.

To begin with estate development. The evolution of this mode in East Africa is inextricably linked with colonial penetration and the expatriate presence on the land. This factor has already receeded in importance as I have already said, but it is rapidly being replaced by an indigenous variant which has either taken over some of the large holdings vacated by the settlers, usually with financial assistance from the state, or it is expanding existing holdings of landor taking over new holdings in under-populated areas. This process is primarily based upon private enterprise, but also takes the form of state farms managed by public corporations like the Uganda Development Company or by the Department of Agriculture. This has occurred either where a decision has been taken to appropriate existing expatriate owned estates and to keep them intact as large units - for example with regard to sisal in Tanzania and sugar and tea in Uganda- or to develop new plantations from scratch. The current rapid expansion of large-scale private development of the land appears to be confined to Kenya and Uganda since policy in Tanzania is based on the assumption that extension of scale should only be achieved through the evolution of collective forms of organisation; on the other hand the continued existence of a state controlled estate sector there implies the necessity for a continued examination of the relationship between this form of development and of rural change in general.

We have already shown how this form of rural organisation grew in response to one particular aspect of colonial penetration in East Africa, and how it represented the weakest and most reactionary element in the colonial strategy. We have therefore to ask now whether Africanising this stragery, either through state or private ownership, will add a progressive dimension to an institution with so poor a historical record. When one examines the social forces which are now creating this transition from expatriate to locally dominate estate agriculture, it is

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difficult to see how its performance could be improved in any way. In certain cases, notably in wheat production, it can be argued that economies of scale are of such importance that the advantages of large-scale production greatly outweigh those of small scale. But in most crops now dominated by large-scale production, and notably in the case of sugar and tea, there are no technological advantages to scale of production although there are significant advantages to scale of processing. In the past the need for a large investment in the factory has been used to justify an investment in estate sufficiently large to provide the requisite raw materials, since the supposed 'unreliability' of the small peasant producer was supposed to preclude reliance on his efforts to perform this

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function. But the now long-standing experience with small outgrowers in tea, sugar and, less successfully, sisal, shows conclusively that these arguments have no validity provided that the relatively simple problems of linking the otgrower with the factory on mutually advantageous terms can be arranged. And even with wheat, where the advantages occruing from scale are at their greatest, the I.L.O Report argued that it "is successfully and profitably grown intensively on small holdings in many parts of Europe and Asia," and therefore recommended "an intensive programme of research into methods of growing wheat on small farms."[1]

Given these facts we have to ask ourselves why the strategy is being promoted at all and the answer to this question requires a discussion of the dynamics of both internal class formation in the relavant countries, and of its relation to external capital. Estate agriculture depends on capital-intensive technology imported from abroad. This is even true in the case of exotic dairy and meat production, where the improvement in the quality of the individual animals, which are themselves imported, combined with improvements in range management (based on imports of fencing, water tanks, dips etc.) and disease control (based on imported drugs) greatly reduces the labour required to produce a given level of output. This technology has been made available on a large scale by the Western countries, notably Britain, America and West Germany, and constitutes a net drain on the foreign exchange earnings of the recipient countries thus intensifying the problem of financing the imports of the equipment required for a more productive and equitable strategy. At the same time, the problems of large scale organisation and the technical problems associated with the use of this technology in local conditions (tractor maintenance, disease control etc,) ensures that the productivity of the new investment is significantly lower than it would be in the area of origin. In most cases it can be shown that the investment requires a significant degree of subsidy (usually rationalised in terms of the'demonstration effects' on the much more efficient small producers in the area) and therefore involves a net transfer of resources from the efficient small-scale sector to the inefficient large scale one, and, given the external source of the investment, from the East African peasant to metropolitan industry as well. Because of the sophisticated nature of the technology, it cannot be produced locally so that the development does not create the possibility for local industrialisation, and this in turn means that the jobs are not created in the urban sector to absorb the labour displaced by the process. Since the positive development of the strategy in the West depended upon the possibility of labour absorption by the industrial sector it is therefore impossible for it to develop in the same way in countries in which the rural sector will have to absorb a rapid expansion in population. What is more likely to happen is an intensification of the division between the 'labour supplying regions' and the estate sector, with a growing population being maintained at ever worsening standards of subsistence in the former and being forced out to work at ever decreasing levels of real income in the latter. The increasing competition for jobs resulting from population pressure will therefore enable the owners to intensify the exploitation of labour so that profitability will rise, although probably without an equivalent increase in output and hence of surplus generation for industry.[2]

Although the external role in the creation of the technological basis for this process of exploitation is of the greatest importance in the evolution of the system, it cannot be considered

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1. Op. cit., p. 168.

2. Further documentation of this argument will be found in G.L. Beckford, Persistent poverty, New York, O.U.P. 1972, esp. Ch. 7.

in isolation from the local class forces which have now moved into the forefront in its promotion. Given the inefficiency of the form in purely productive terms, we have to understand how it is possible for it to evolve in competition with the more efficient small-scale sector. During the colonial period its development required either the existence of substantial external sources of capital (for example in sisal, tea), or direct intervention of the state to transfer resources from the peasant to the estate sector to provide the initial capital for settlers, and to create a sufficient degree of rural improverishment in the African population to force them out to work on these farms.[1] Given that the new African bourgeoisie does not have direct access to significant accumulations of private capital their movement into large scale agriculture must also depend upon the use of the state as an instrument of primary accumulation. Here we find that access to the state apparatus (including, one must add, the cooperative structure as well) has also played a crucial role. In Kenya it has been the senior civil servants and politicians who have had access to Land Bank loans for obtaining vacated farms in the large-farm sector; in Uganda it is the same group which has been most successful in applications for vacant land to the Land Board, and in buying up existing land from small-farmers forced to sell to meet growing financial comitments. The group has also been most successful in getting access to the range of subsidised services privided by the relevant Departments normally the capital-intensive technology provided by the various 'aid' programmes. Most notable in this regard are mechanical cultivation and the very large investment in exotic cattle. Thus the development of this section can be seen as the direct outcome of the political power of the new bureaucratic/political class at the centre which takes the form of its ability to use the resources extracted from the society in general to finance its access to land and capital intensive technology.

We can turn now to the problem of communal or collective development, and more especially to the issues raised by contemporary policies in Tanzania. Discussion of this question is inhibited by an absence of hard information about the actual progress of the policy in the field. Impressive statistics exist showing significant growth in the most underdeveloped areas of the country, and negligible growth in the most developed. But the actual degree of success of the on-going collectives, the extent of communal as opposed to private production, the effectiveness of the organisation, the levels of productivity do not appear to have been subjected to close observation and analysis. Individuals who have been in the field also report that in some areas villages are set up as fronts to ensure receipts of government assistance although the basis of production remains firmly private. Thus little can yet be said on the basis of the actual experience of the past six years about prospects, but it is at least possible to formulate some of the theoretical and practical issues involved.

The evolution of a collective agricultural strategy has, in other countries, invariably been associated with a successful socialist revolution. Revolutionary struggle was a precondition for its establishment because it involved the dispossession of the large landowning class, whether this was a feudal remnant (Russia or China) or a plantation sector based on metropolitan capital and technology (Cuba). In Tanzania, on the other hand, it is argued that the evolution of rural class has not reached the

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1. Documented in Brett, op. cit., Ch.6.

point where this will be necessary because of the 'classnessness' of the society. The preponderance of the family farm, combined with relative land surplus make it possible to bring individuals into collectives, thereby securing useful economics of scale, without the necessity of dispossessing an intrenced political and economic class. The motivation for this strategy cannot be questioned, if it is feasable the creation of highly productive and genuinely socialistic structures would be an achievement of overwhelming importance. But it is essential that our commitment to its success does not blind us to an awareness of the difficulties involved, difficulties which stem directly from the social and political structure in which it is being introduced and which in my view have been greatly underestimated by its proponents.

For success collective agriculture must be productively superior to the alternatives, rooted in the interests of the dominant class in the rural sector, and correspond organisationally to the level of consciousness of the leading elements in that class. If the system does not produce increases in productivity it will not sustain the support of its members and it will not generate a surplus for reinvestment in industry unless this can be done in the manner of the Soviet Union where an increased surplus was extracted from a reduced rural productivity through terror. Even if one were willing to accept the moral implications of this method, it is clear that the East African state does not have the coercive capacity to use it successfully. Therefore the case for collectivisation depends upon the economy of scale arguments, and these, in turn, suffer from the same weaknesses as they do in the case of estate production. The only advantages of the method in this respect is the possibility that the motivation of labour will be far higher, given the absence of exploitation which militated against this in the capitalist sector. But on the other hand, the organisation of the large scale unit itself involves investments of skills and these are only to be justified where it can be shown that the marginal returns to scale are significant. And since the evidence at present suggests that balance of advantage lies with the small scale producer it is difficult to make this case. Again, the illusion of economy of scale is created by the example of developed agriculture in the west and possibly the Soviet Union but this depends, as we have already shown, upon the application of advanced technology in a situation where the bulk of the population have left the land. The attempt to apply this technology in the different social conditions of East Africa is bound to fail. The argument that the provision of other services (health, education water etc.) can be rationalised by bringing people into villages does not depend upon the creation of socialised production and could occur without the additional attempt in that direction. It should also be noted, however, that close settlement itself will involve heavy administrative costs and can also worsen people's conditions by creating health and other social problems. This is particularly true with formerly nomadic peoples like the Wagogo whose previous social system was evolved over many generations to meet the conditions of a very hostile environment. A radical change in this pattern is likely either to involve massive expenditure on services and research or to create serious ecological and social problems in the short run.[1]

But these problems of relating a new technology to a new and larger scale form of social organisation could perhaps be solved given a sufficiently strong effort to evolve theappropriate equipment and organisational structures. What is more critical in this field are the political questions associated with the

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1. The dangers implicit in the close settlement approach are clear in Peter Rigby, Pastorilism and prejudice, Nkanga Editions.

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evolution of the strategy, the identification of the classes which can be expected to bring it into existence and of the conditions required to run it on a progressively expanding scale. Which class elements in rural society, then, stand to benefit from collectivisation? We can see very clearly how the landless labourers, poor peasants and the weaker elements among the middle peasantry stood to gain from the reallocation of land in China and from the subsequent process of expanding the scale of social organisation which occurred as a part of the revolutionary process. We can also see how it was necessary for the landlord and rich peasant class to oppose this process and therefore why it could only occur after a revolutionary struggle in which the former elements, organised by the Communist Party, displaced the latter organised within the Kuomintang, from power.[1] The fact that class differentiation is not as marked in rural Tanzania as it is in China does not mean that it does not exist or politically insignificant as Shivji implies in his generally penetrating analysis.[2] Differences in access to land, animals and capital assets are very large and by all accounts have been intensified in the areas which have been integrated into the cash economy. Iliffe documents the emergence of these sharp differentials in virtually all of the main cash-crop producing regions of Tanzania where the wealthy minority were doing very well from cash crops, although often "only at the expense of the landlessness of growing sections of the population or a deterioration of other aspects of the agricultural system."[3] Further:

> A study of a small area of Bulambia in Rungwe District in the late 1960s showed that 10% of the households owned 45% of the most desirable riverine land, and 34% of the households owned none, while the wealthiest 20% of peasant families held 67% of the government and party offices in the area.[4]

These findings correlate closely with Lamb's work among Kenyan coffee growers where 14% of the members of a Cooperative Society received 54% of the payout, and 75% of the farmers in the area did not even grow enough coffee to make membership worth their while. He too, sees this group "dominating.....social and political institutions in many areas,"[5] and my own field work, as yet inadequately quantified, gives precisely the same impression for Uganda. The fact that these 'rich' peasants may be poor in terms of urban standards of income should not blind us to the power which their relative wealth provides them with in relation to the poor and near landless peasantry in their own areas. Now the evolution of communal agriculture involves the equalisation of access to resources and, more especially, the socialisation of land. Where large inequalities

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1. For rural social structure cf. Mao Tse-tung, "Analysis of classes in Chinese society," Selected Works, vol. I; for the rural struggle, W. Hinton, Fanshen.

2. I.G. Shivji, Tanzania: the silent class struggle, Zenit reprint, Lund, p.6.

3. J. Iliffe, Agricultural change in modern Tanganyika, Nairobi, EAPH, 1971, p.39.

4. Ibid., p.41.

5. C.B. Lamb, "Peasants, capitalists and agricultural development in Kenya," E.A. Universities Soc. Science Council, 8th Conference, 1972, paper 39, p.10.

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exist in the existing pattern of ownership we can understand how the poor peasantry could be expected to support sucha a policy, but it is inconceivable that the rich peasants should. They might be told that the long term benefits stemming from economies of scale will eventually make them better off, but these are, as we have seen, technologically problematical, and in any event a poor substitute for the very concrete profits to be made out of the successful exploitation of their private acres. The Ishmani assassination is a clear indication of the degree of resistance which any attempt to impinge on these private rights is likely to provoke.[1] There appears to be no serious analysis of the class composition of TANU in the rural sector, perhaps the outcome of the urban location of the intellectual class in Tanzania, perhaps because this is felt to be too 'sensitive' an issue to be taken up at present.[2] But Iliffe's work, together with Saul's study of rural cooperatives,[3] clearly suggest what one would expect from the situation operating in many other areas of the world, that it is this rich peasant class which has most to loose from communalisation of land, which is in fact the nucleus of the TANU leadership at the local level and therefore the main instrument which the government will have to rely on to bring the policy into existence. The dominant class in the villages in the more developed parts of the country is therefore completely out of sympathy with the policy and this, given the government's commitment to voluntary implementation, explains its almost complete failure in those areas.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the strategy is more relevant in the former underdeveloped regions; in the old labour supplying areas and those in which absence of infrastructure precluded significant integration into themonetary sector. It was in this type of area that the Ruvuma settlement scheme developed in the sixties, and which apparently served as a model for official thinking in the evolution of the Ujamaa strategy; it is also in these areas that the most rapid growth is now taking place. In such areas we may assume that the differentials between rich and poor peasant may not be so great (though this too should be subjected to close examination), and, more important, that the benefits to the richer elements to be obtained from being incorporated in the programme may outweigh the losses stemming from the communalisation of production. What this amounts to is that the state should make available the infrastructure hitherto denied these areas in exchange for a local commitment to communal rather than private enterprise development. There is a great deal to be said for this given that our ultimate objective must be the establishment of socialism, but we have again to be careful to subject even these successes to close examination in order to avoid easy optimism and to take account of possible problems. Firstly, the future of the programme depends on the degree to which the new programme does in fact serve to expand the productivity of the areas in question, andthis, in turn, depends on the ability to evolve organisational structures which are capable of providing the framework for this expansion. This point will be taken up in more detail in a moment. Secondly, it has been argued that there is a strong tendency to individualisation in areas where agriculture becomes commercialised even where the original resources for the commercialisation were provided to cooperative

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1. I.G. Shivji, "Tanzania: the class struggle continues," (mimeo) p.100.

2. This gap is still clear in both Shivji's intesting paper just cited, and in W.Rodney, "Tanzanian Ujamaa and scientific socialism", The African Review.

3. J. Saul, "Marketing cooperatives in a developing country: The Tanzanian case," in P. Worsley, ed. Two blades of grass, London, Machester University Press, 1970.

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groups.[1] Feldman's work also suggests that the authoritarian nature of the "traditional system of rights and obligations" can serve to "hamper the achievemet of commercial profit and at the same time work against the maintenance or creation of ujamaa relationships."[2] In this his analysis coincides with that of Amin who also places no empasis on the use of primitive communism as the basis for modern communal development arguing:

> So long as the traditional family structures have not been broken, modern socialist structures (cooperatives, etc.) can only remain empty of content and serve to reinforce the traditional powers: they are ineffective and can only lead to more profound class differences, even when these remain masked.3

Thus there isa danger that these elements in the less developed areas may use a commitment to ujamaa as a mean of getting access to central resources, but will then revert increasingly to the individualistic exploitation of their land once the basic infrastructure has been established. And given the present permissive attitude by the authorities with respect to the degree of communal cultivation necessary to qualify for classification under the scheme, it is difficult to see how this could be avoided. Thirdly, the present strategy of stimulating ujamaa by providing the supporting services involves some diversion of resources away from the traditional agricultural exporting areas. This is, of course, to be welcomed in terms of the need to rectify the regional inequalities already discussed, but this is not necessarily an argument which will appeal to those in the more developed areas which are no longer as highly favoured as they were in the past. The possibility of implementing this strategy depends upon the independence of the central bureautic class (to use Shivji's formulation) from grass roots pressures from these areas. This independence can be seen in part as the outcome of the conditions which he examines in the two papers already cited; it can also perhaps be attributed to the relative prosperity which economic conditions have created in those areas both in the past and more recently with the growth in production of cotton and a range of other crops, and the stabilized prices for coffee. But if the imbalance in investment goes on too long, or if there could be a crisis in these areas, it is not certain that the rich peasant class could not moblise support at the centre from their relatives in the bureaucracy, Parliament and Army to change the situation. At some point, it seems to me, the long term development of the socialist strategy will have to confront the intrenched power of this group although the weak linkages between centre and periphery may pospone this for some to come.

The final set of questions associated with communal production relate to thorganisational structure of the new units. Socialist theory requires that they be internally democratic, and this is very much the view of the Tanzanian leadership This means that the level of consciousness of the people must correspond to the organisational requirements; if it does not they will not be able to carry out the complex tasks involved in large-scale production with modern methods. In other socialist cases this consciousness was

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1. D. Feldman, "The economics of ideology: some problems of achieving rural socialism in Tanzania," in C.T. Leys, Politics and change in developing countries, Cambridge, University Press, 1969.

2. Ibid., p. 107.

3. S. Amin, The class struggle in Africa, p. 42.

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formed out of a long experience of contact with the capitalist sector arising out of their relationship with the landlords, merchants, money-lenders and the state and party apparatus. More especially, it was developed during the revolutionary struggle both within the revolutionary army and in the distribution of land and subsequent collectivisation in the liberated areas.[1] But in Tanzania it is precisely those areas which have had least contact with the cash sector, which have been politically least developed and where experience in running modern organisations is at its lowest which have become the growth points for the strategy which requires the highest degree of consciousness in order to succeed. In these circumstances one can only see the new principle being introduced from the outside by the bureaucratic class and the new structures depending on continued subventions of capital and skill in order to maintain its viability. The gap between visiting bureaucrat and farmer will be very large and the programme couldbecome simply an extension of the old system in which colonial populations were taught to rely on assistance from the state rather than upon their own efforts. If this is the case ujamaa could serve to increase rather than to decrease dependence.

This is a very persimistic prognosis, and it is put forward in the hope that it will be disproved by events since success in this area could provide a massively significant model for peaceful evolution towards socialism for many regions of Africa. The alternative to this will undoubtedly involve a great deal of exploitation, inequality and conflict even in the unlikely eventuality of its being carried out in the most favourable circumstances possible. But the difficulties implicit in the socialist strategy as this is being applied even in the very favourable circumstances of Tanzania suggest that the capitalist alternatives have also got to be considered very seriously, especially given thepresent levels of political and economic development in the rural sector. Even so committed a socialist as Amin recommends the "reinforcement of small merchant production at the expense of collective forms," and feels that:-

> ....the task of a progressive government would not be to maintain the relationships of precapitalist production (content to give them "socialist" form) which would be even more reactionary than openly favouring the development of salaried exploitation because it could only lead to stagnation and failure. Its task is to favourise development in the framework of small merchant production and prepare the way for a future socialism, being careful that the breakdown of traditional structures does not bring about serious class differences.[2]

This, then, brings us to the third of our developmental models formulated earlier. "Small merchant production" we take to correspond to the full development of what Chayanov calls the "peasant family farm" and more especially to the most evolved examples of this type of agricultural organisation now visible in East Africa. The advantages of this form of organisation have been manifest both during the pre-colonial period when it served as the principle means of securing a living in a massively hostile environment, and to the more progressive of the British administrators who were expected to produce a massive growth in exports with almost no real investments of imported capital.[3]

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1. Hinton, op. cit., G. Chailand, The peasants on North Vietnam, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1969.

2. Amin, op. cit., p. 43.

3. See, for example, Sir Hugh Clifford's assessment, given in R.L. Buell, The native problem in Africa, New York, Macmillan, 1928, v.I, p.766-77

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This form is the repository of the developed experience of the indigenous population, it corresponds to existing levels of social and political consciousness and therefore does not require large inputs of organisational capacity from the outside. Its low costs and stability in the face of adverse circumstances have been proven over and over again, and the massive expansions in production which it has created have sustained all of the development which has taken place in the regions which have not had access to mineral resources. It is the peasants of Africa who carry the bureaucratic and intellectual classes on their backs; who provide the surplus to be transformed into the delights of city life and the leisure for intellectual debate on the campus. They have received little credit or return for their efforts. The bureaucrats still somehow feel that they must be able to solve agricultural problems better than these ignorant people, while the intellectuals either consider them the victims of 'traditiona values (read 'supersitition and barbarism', more politely expressed), or potential or actual capitalists to be diverted into socialistic institutions before they manage to break out of their isolation and gain control over power. It therefore seems to be imperative that we look more closely at the developmental potential implicit in this class since I would argue that its neglect has been the major cause for the continuing stagnation both in the rural and in other sections of the economy.

What, then, are the most important issues raised with regard to the peasant strategy? We are again dealing with a question where issues relating to the choice of technique lead directly to issues of productivity, social stratification and political control, and it is essential that we make an attempt to incorporate all of these interrelated variables into the analysis. We have therefore to ask ourselves how far the family farm can serve as a base for increased production and, more especially, productivity; how far the development of its productive resources will modify the existing class structure both inside the rural sector and between the rural and the urban and overseas centres; and how the evolution of a prosperous peasantry will influence subsequent political change at the centre. Each of these issues must be considered in relation to any long term commitment towards the eventual emergence of a socialist social structure.

With respect to productivity, it is clear that the gains in output, especially in the export sector, which occurred during the colonial period resulted from an extension in acreage secured through rapid population growth and a more intense exploitation of family labour. Yields have not risen significantly, with the possible exception of some gains resulting from improvements in strains in the crops given special attention in the research stations. But iron age technology remains the basis of the vast bulk of farming operations and the main effort on the part of the state has gone into the promotion of largely inappropriate efforts to [illegible] mechanical cultivation in response to pressures from the/subsequent increase in inequality has been immense. The problem now, therefore, is to evolve an appropriate technology for this form of development; one which will be functionally related to size of the unit and to the present capacity of both the farmer and the supporting agricultural services. Given the low level of the existing units there is little doubt that massive increases in productivity could be ensured by a combined strategy involving the evolution of animal implements (possibly with the provision of an ox-cultivation hire units for farmers which cannot afford a unit of their own); improved farm management including better use of fertilizers and animal manures; the introduction of improved varieties and more especially the introduction of crops which will maximise the economic return rather than minimise the strain placed upon the agricultural

/foreign manufacturers and aid agencies. The loss in resources and the damage resulting from the

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extension agent. In this respect the returns on cotton in Uganda at least have always been very low in relation to the costs in terms of land and labour but no effort has been made to eliminate it from the crop programme. The improvements on the farm must be supported by a mass oriented extension strategy and, perhaps most important of all, an efficient, low cost and flexible marketing and processing sector. It has been the rigidity and high cost nature of this sector, originally the result of the monopoly privileges given to the expatriate capitalist class, which has probably represented the most important single obstacle to the development of peasant farming.[1] None of these recommendations are in any way exceptional or revolutionary; they all feature in the current plans of the various Departments of Agriculture. But the real problem is that too little has been done about them because of the diversion of resources into the large farm sector and especially into the attempt to acquire imported technology. The commitment to the ox rather than to the tractor is to be seen as preparatory to a subsequent introduction of more advanced technology when conditions allow. But this transition, as Amin says:

> can only occur when machinery can be locally produced and no longer imported from industrialised countries where wages are high.[2]

/ the evolution of the class system. It was argued earlier that the peasant

But if the conditions for a dynamic process of peasant development are established, we have also to attempt to estimate the likely effects upon/economy is qualitatively different from the capitalist because of its labour and its only partial reliance upon family integration into the market because of its heavey reliance on subsistence production. This is a proposition of considerable social and political significance which requires further development, especially in the light of the view of ultra-left theorists like Frank that the whole of the third world economy is equally incorporated into the international capitalist economy.[3] My own position is that peasant sector is in but not of the capitalist system; it is organically linked to and dependent upon it but is not itself characterised by capitalistic structures. This case has been most persuasively argued by Ernesto Laclau where he shows that capitalist production is based upon full scale and not partial commodity production and more especially upon the exploitation of wage labour.[4] The capitalist system, therefore, is based upon the development of this relationship between capitalist and working classes within the context of commodity production for profit. Peasant production, on the other had does not produce the relationship between capitalist and working classes, it does not involve a full commitment to commodity production, and it therefore differs in significant respects from that system. And this difference is neither abstract nor purely academic as anyone who compares a fully developed system of capitalist agriculture like that prevailing in most parts of South Africa, with that prevailing in a peasant economy like Uganda will immediately discover. The crucial difference, as Marx shows in his discussion of primitive accumulation, is that in peasant economies the family labouring unit has not yet been separated from control

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1. Cf. Brett, op. cit., Ch.8.
2. Amin, op. cit., p. 44
3. A.G. Frank, Latin America: Underdevelopment or revolution, New York, M.R., 1969.
4. E. Laclau, "Feudalism and capitalism in Latin America," New Left Review, 67 May-June 1971.

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over the means of production and that it is this process which creates the social and economic preconditions for the evolution of capitalism.[1] And it is precisely because this process has not gone very far in countries like most of East Africa that it is premature to talk about the evolution of a full-scale socialist strategy. The class base for this strategy does not exist and will only come into existence as the process of social differentiation under capitalism gathers momentum. And it is in the light of this necessity that the peasant strategy must be examined and its implications for the future spelled out.

Although this line of reasoning follows that of Chayanov with respect to the evolution of the peasant system under the present conditions of backward technology and dependence, I would probably wish to depart from it with respect to the likely effects of an effective programme of investment into it. In my view the most likely results of such an approach would be to lead to the emergence of a small capitalist class within that sector, and that this would probably lead to a more and more developed system of differentiation in the future. It is already clear that the rich peasant in East Africa relies heavily upon hired labour; it is also clear that more and more areas will come to produce individuals who will have to emigrate in order to work because of a lack of land. This is likely to happen even without a growth in the larger purely capitalist farm sector; if that sector is encouraged as is now the case in Kenya and Uganda this process will be massively speeded up. Now it is possible that inheritance systems will slow down this process of building up a heriditary large farming class since large units will be broken up and parceled out to large numbers of heirs unless primogeniture applies which does not seem to be commonly the case. Alternatively the state could intervene to limit land accumulation to the level required by the single family unit (though of course this can vary enormously in size and over time where poligamy is common) and attempt to stop the hire of labour altogether. It seems likely that there will be a cyclical tendency with respect to the accumulation of land given present inheritance patterns and large family units. On the other hand the advantages accruing to the larger operator, especially where he has access to outside finance as is bound to happen in many cases, are such that the differentials are almost bound to grow and to be passed on from one generation to the next. Although many large landlord families did disintegrate in China, this did not preclude the maintenance of the large farmer and their dominance in the local society. Limits imposed upon individual landholdings are difficult to apply, especially given the political power of the large landowning class at the local level. Attempts to enforce such regulations in India have constantly been undermined by the combined efforts of landowners and local bureaucrats in this regard. And in the East African situation an attempt of this kind would require in the first instance the expropriation of existing large holdings under customary tenure, and would also in all probability reduce the productivity of some of the most efficient units in the system at present. This would also be extremely difficult to accomplish politically and would massively reduce incentives and the surplus available for reinvestment. Although this system would do away with the subsidy at present given to the inefficient gentleman/bureaucrat farmer, it would not preclude the emergence of something akin to Mao's rich peasant class with a surplus of land and money and therefore the need and ability to exploit labour. Every effort should be made, as Amin says in the passage already mentioned, to ensure that the development occurs as equitably as possible by

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1. K. Marx, Capital, vol. I, London, Allen & Unwin, 1946; also R. Luxemburg, The accumulation of capital, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963, esp. section three.

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evolving a framework of regulations and of social and mechanical technology which will be available to the largest possible percentage of the rural population. This would include a land system which would not encourage large appropriations at the expense of future expansion potentialities for expanding populations; an extension service devoted to the needs of the average and not the large farmer; cooperative institutions to provide marketing and credit facilities (it being especially important to avoid the emergence of a parasitic money-lending class of the Asian type); and more efficient implements and seeds of the kind discussed in the previous paragraph. The aggressive promotion of this line would coincide with the interest of the bulk of the existing small farmers who still make up the majority of the population and would require no major restructuring of society involving the importation of imported technology. Where possible it could be carried out cooperatively, as in the case of some tobacco development in West Nile in Uganda and possibly somewhat less successfully in the case of the development of group work projects (Alea Groups) in Teso. But there should be no ideological objection to the subsequent individualisation of these activities where the internal development of the people involved appears to lead in this direction. More especially, no attempt should be made to preclude the use of labour and the expansion of the unit where this is not based upon the subsidised access to technology, capital and other resources now characteristic of the capitalistic farming sector. Lenin, whose contribution to the analysis of the rural question seems to be greatly neglected, clearly recognised this necessity to build upon the strong claiming that land allocation was:

> ... a matter of dividing the land among a given number of farmers, of "sorting out" the real farmers who are capable of "cherishing" the land (with both labour and capital) from the inefficient farmers who must not be retained in agriculture - and to attempt to retain them in it would be reactionary.[1]

And he too recognised that the inevitable outcome of a process of free peasant development was the creation of capitalistic relation on the land:

> Peasant farming also evolves in a capitalistic way and gives rise to a rural bourgeoisie and a rural proletariat. The better the condition of the "village commune" and the greater the prosperity of the peasantry in general, the more rapid is the process of differentiation among the peasantry into the antagonistic classes of capitalistic agriculture.[2]

But this process could be related to an organic evolution of industry based upon the market created by growing peasant exports to the urban sector both at home and abroad. Food and the raw materials for agro-industries would be exchanged for farm inputs and consumer goods, thus providing the basis for a process of development organically related to the needs of the indigenous society.

This model therefore appears to meet the requirements of East African society at this stage of its development. But as

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1. V.I. Lenin, "The agrarian programme of Social Democracy," collected Works vol. 13, Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962, p. 393.

2. Ibid., p.241/2, Emphasis in original.

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soon as we consider it in relation to the actual structure of political control we find ourselves confronting a number of contradictions which severely limit the possibility of its being effectively implemented in practice. And the analysis of these contradictions should help to identify the likely course of the next stage of the development of underdevelopment in the region.

The central problem for those who support the peasant strategy at this stage is the lack of a developed political consciousness and organisation structure among the class itself. This is an inheritance from the colonial period when the class was deliberately kept from central decision-making in carefully manufactured and sustained 'traditional' institutions, and this tendency has been extended into the present through the maintenance of the power of the dominant bureaucratic structures. The power of this bureaucracy stems from its inheritance of the control over the technological gap introduced by colonialism:- it understands, in however second-hand a way, the usefulness of large-scale organisation, and it has access to machines and to weapons. Faced with the overwhelming superiority of these the peasant is still reduced to dependency and impotence despite the fact that it is his contribution which is the productive base for this infrastructure.[1] And given the fact that the bureaucratic class depends on western technology to be able to continue to extract the surplus, we can see how their interests coincide with those of western (and I would add, in many cases, Soviet) imperialist penetration. This unholy alliance leads in the rural sector to emphasis on capital intensive farming whether this takes the form of the expansion of the large capitalist sector already examined, or to the provision of high cost state controlled facilities like tractor hire schemes, state farms, group farms etc. These services then monopolise investment funds, generate no surplus and hence reinforce stagnation and structural underdevelopment. Unable to conceptualise an alternative strategy, isolated from each other and from the developed centres, the peasantry has been totally unable to evolve the organisation required to confront this situation and to wrest concessions from it. Marx's brilliant and often quoted analysis of the conditions of the French peasantry applies very precisely to this case:

> in so far as there is merely local interconnection among these smallholding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond and no political organisation among them, they do not form a class. They are consequently incapable of enforcing their class interests in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, as an unlimited governmental power that protects them against the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. The political influence of the small holding peasants, therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power sub-ordinating society to itself.[2]

We can therefore see how the dominance of the bureaucracy is itself a function of the organisation of the class and how this in turn creates the contradiction which arises from the fact that the ... .

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1. On the relation between technology and political dependence cf. J. McDermott, "Technology: the opiate of the intellectuals," N.Y. Rev. of Books, 31 July 1969.

2. Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonapart, Selected works, vol.I, p.344.

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interests of this bureaucracy do not lead it to provide the peasantry with the resources which it requires for its productive development.

A further contradiction derives from the nature of the development of class relations within the peasantry when growth does occur. We have seen that growth leads to an increase in differentiation within the peasantry; it serves, in other words, to draw the stratum out of the "peasant economy" into the capitalistic system proper and, in so doing, serves to dissolve the links which had previously held that community together. Rich peasants become capitalists, poor peasants become landless labourers. And this process is inevitably characterised by antagonism since the rich peasant acquires his wealth by appropriating both the land and the labour of the group which has been dispossessed. And this process, too, cannot be dissociated from the evolution of the large capitalist and capital intensive sector since the bureaucratic class itself is recruited from the rich peasant class and provides them with some services through their control over technology. Thus the full evolution of the peasant class destroys it as a class. And because this process is itself internally contradictory with respect to the interests of different strata with the class we can see how difficult it must be to retain the ideological coherence and organisational solidarity of its leading institutions. It is in this context that we must place Lukacs' assertion that the peasantry will never be able to achieve full class consciousness:

> ... for a full consciousness of their situation would reveal to them the hopelessness of their particularistic strivings in the face of the inevitable course of events. Consciousness and self-interest then are mutually incompatible in this instance.[1]

We have therefore reached an impasse. The most productive agrarian strategy is blocked by the weakness of the class on which it would depend and by the corresponding strength of the vested interests which it would have to break down, in order to develop its full potentiality.

Progressive change in this area is therefore unlikely in the short term, but it is nevertheless essential that we make the attempt to recognise all of the implications of this situation so that we can be in a position to take advantages of whatever favourable eventualities do emerge. For Lenin the agrarian problem could be resolved into the need to promote the development of capitalism under the control of the free peasants and in opposition to the interests of the feudal classes. He saw two possible tendencies in agrarian change in his society, what he called "the Prussian path and the American path respectively." The first of these involved the dominannce of a "Junker landlord economy, which condemns the peasants to decades of most harrowing expropriation and bondage;" the second the dominance of the peasant who "becomes the sole agent of agriculture, and evolves into a capitalist farmer."[2] In the East African situation we also see two similar tendencies in conflict, the large state subsidised sector and the peasant

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1. G. Lukacs, History and class consciousness, London, Merlin Press, 1971, p.61.
2. Lenin, op. cit., p.239.

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sector, the former likely to play the same reactionary role, the latter capable of producing "the most rapid development of p productive forces, the best conditions of labour for the mass of the population, and the most rapid development of capitalism, with the conversion of the free peasants into farmers."[1] All that can be done at present, given the lack of differentiation and consciousness in the peasant class is to point out the contradictions involved in the choice of the "Prussian" path. This is hopefully not entirely without purpose because it is clear that although the short term interests of neo-colonialism are best served by the unproductive introduction of capital intensive technology, the long term interests of the international economy as a whole (and including within that important sectors of industry outside East Africa) would be best served by the "American" path. This fact is already visible to the more sophisticated elements in the metropolis, for example the group responsible for the production of the ILO Report on Kenya. As the bankruptcy of the alternative model becomes increasingly exposed, and as the economic base of the bureaucratic class therefore becomes progressively weakened, it is possible that the present tendency could be modified if not reversed. And one might hope that this could eventually produce the consciousness and organisation now missing among the peasantry and render at least capable of some limited short run defence of their interests, Small scale capitalism, after all, is not incompatible with international capitalism, only with some of its more regressive and monopolistic features.

On the other hand we have also to consider the subsequent implications of the full development of the "Prussian" model. This, it seems to me, would produce the juxtaposition of a wealthy and unproductive planter class with an increasingly impoverished poor peasant and landless labouring class. The failure to generate surplus would confine the mass of the population on the land thus continously driving down living standards for the masses and increasing profits for the minority.[2] This process would require ever-increasing repression andhence growing investment in unproductive military expenditure; in other words authoritarianism of the most backward Latin American type. Ultimately this polarisation might be expected to give rise to a revolutionary consciousness of the Asian type; once this conjunction of forces had been established only a revolutionary transformation based upon the rural dispossessed would suffice to destroy the vested interests of the rural bourgeoisie and what Amin calls their "neo-colonial money lenders."[3]

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1. Ibid., p.254/5.

2. Barrington Moore sets out some of the historical conditions which secured this combination in India and China in Social Origin of democracy and dictatorship, Boston, Beacon Press, 1966.

3. Amin, op. cit., p.46.