

EDUCATION IN POST-COLONIAL TANZANIA

by

Seth Bertrand Todd

A Thesis

Submitted to the Department of Sociology

Haverford College

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

For Bachelor of Arts in Sociology

April 18th, 2022

Seth Todd

Education in Post-Colonial Tanzania

In the aftermath of independence of Tanganyika (1961) and Zanzibar (1963-1964) in the early 1960s, and the union of the two independent states into Tanzania in 1964, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) was conferred with the power, by the people of Tanzania by way of elections in 1965, to create a new society after the end of British rule. In 1967, when the landmark *Arusha Declaration* was produced, it served as the political document that guided nation building until the beginning of an economic downturn in the mid 1970s. The first target for societal reform after the end of colonial rule was the education system - where *de facto* segregation existed. These education systems were segregated by race and class; they had different curricula in accordance to the opportunities students had after they had finished their schooling. European students had access to the most “academic” curriculum, Indians and East Asians had a similar curriculum, while African students were mostly exposed to agricultural education as their work prospects were mostly in the agricultural economy.

As the demands and needs of the nation shifted away from colonial society, the goals of the educational system shifted in accordance to the needs of the post-colonial society. I argue that there were three significant issues with the post-colonial education system: 1. The ways the education system measured performance, were inconsistent with the post-colonial values that regulated

political activity; 2. The curriculum was not representative of socialist conscious building, it did not teach students how to be socialists; and 3. National policy and social needs or desires were constant points of contention. In conjunction with difficulty aligning motivations of the larger population in accordance with the changes that the party saw fit ideologically, resolving these issues proved to be significantly more challenging than expected, especially in the face of external pressures that appeared towards the end of this experiment.

I also explore a specific case study of a Kwamsisi community school as described in Lene Buchert's in *Education in the Development of Tanzania 1919-1990*.

Ujamaa vs. Western Values

Prior to discussing the educational system of Tanzania, it is important to situate the ideology that guided its revolution, showing how it was born out of a resistance to colonialism and the values that were seen as representative of them. The West experienced two significant social revolutions - the Agrarian revolution, and the Industrial revolution. These two significant changes in social organization laid the foundation for capitalism. However, the premise of Ujamaa hinges on the fact that these changes did not occur or were not developed enough in African society - even though colonists attempted to spur these changes - and the conditions that allowed these revolutions to occur were not present in African societies prior to colonization. As such, to have these revolutions as the goal

through which African development was to be realized was inconsistent with the social, political, and economic histories that were found on the continent. I start by characterizing these values because the party intended for them to serve as the foundation for the post-colonial society. Nyerere and TANU believed the values articulated were both innate to African people, and therefore necessary to carry out the goals the party outlined to return to a pre-colonial African society that 'socialistic' in character. The party, then, was a tool to orient national economic activity in accordance with these values, which was impossible during colonial rule due to Western values having a different economic orientation. In the following paragraphs I will characterize both "Western values" and "Ujamaa values" to explain the necessity of articulating alternative social values to guide the new nation that was not based on capitalist relations.

Nyerere speaks of Western values and their divergence from traditional African (Ujamaa) values in his essay "Ujamaa-The Basis of African Socialism," referring to Western values that they have encountered as a "capitalist attitude of mind, which colonialism brought into Africa..." (Nyerere: 7). The first point concerns the ownership of land, and he writes:

To us in Africa land was always recognized as belonging to the community. Each individual within our society had a right to the use of land, because otherwise he could not earn his living and one cannot have the right to life without also having the right to some means of maintaining life. But the African's right to land was simply the right to use it; he had no other right to it, nor did it occur to him to try and claim one. The foreigner

introduced a completely different concept-the concept of land as a marketable commodity. (Nyerere: 7)

In Africa, the colonial tendency to reserve land, either by private enterprises or the colony itself, was used to ensure the profit of the controller. Through these actions, it encouraged the development of a “parasitic” class that controlled the only way that wealth could be created, and allowed the owner to acquire wealth with little, if any, of his own labor being used (Nyerere: 7). In contrast with ‘Western values’ that deemed private property as socially acceptable, Ujamaa condemned the idea private property, since in the colonial context, was generally not socially beneficial. Private property was used to enrich the colonial state and capitalists and kept most of its African workers destitute. This type of activity seen as conflicting with the binding principles of a traditional African society, where the land could provide a living for those who worked it, which wasn’t the case under colonial rule. Furthermore, TANU was only a primary owner of the land in a legal sense and was used to give formal ownership of the land to communities that agreed with principles to guide social activity and aimed to give ownership of the

land once sufficient worker-cooperatives¹ were developed that could distribute the wealth that was created.²

The second main point associated with Western values was the tendency to acquire wealth for power. Nyerere's assumption about the Western tendency to acquire wealth for power is based on the premise that the act of acquiring wealth is a "vote of no confidence" in the social system one finds themselves in. The drive to acquire wealth is predicated on the belief that society is unconcerned with the collective whole, but only individuals. He writes, "For when a society is so organized that it cares about its individuals, then, provided he is willing to work, no individual within that society should worry about what will happen to him tomorrow if he does not hoard wealth today (Nyerere: 3)." In contrast to traditional African societies, where wealth was distributed equally to the community that produced it, colonialism brought practices of unequal distribution based on land ownership.

The third and final characterization of Western values is the practice of non-distributive wealth practices. While this is inextricably linked to the prior two

¹ Ujamaa villages were the primary social organization in the post-colonial society. They were to be the site of most social, economic, and political relationships. There were communal plots of land owned by each village that would be farmed, and had democratically elected constitutive bodies to represent them in relation to the state.

² Parts H and I of Part One in the Arusha Declaration describe the state's duties in the following way: "In order to ensure economic justice the state must have effective control over the principal means of production; and that it is the responsibility of the state to intervene actively in the economic life of the nation so as to ensure the well-being of all citizens..." (Nyerere: 15)

contentions, it is significant enough because Nyerere does not suggest that wealth was not accumulated in pre-colonial African societies. Rather, he asserts that the social relationships between man and the village, or whatever larger social unit he was part of, transcended the individual desire for acquisitive wealth practices through their socialistic practices of wealth distribution. He writes, “In tribal society, the individuals or the families within a tribe were ‘rich’ or ‘poor’ according to whether the whole tribe was rich or poor. If the tribe prospered all the members of the tribe shared in its prosperity (Nyerere: 9).” In contrast with the Western value system that he attempts to outline, the Ujamaa value system was more closely aligned to “traditional African values” that were seen as more ‘socialistic’ in character, and more concerned with the well-being of the community rather than the individual.

The most cogent characterizations of the Ujamaa value system come from the second part of the Arusha Declaration, titled “The Policy of Socialism,” which consists of four parts that serve as a guide for social relationships that are based in generally held beliefs about pre-colonial African relationships. The first point laid out is the *Absence of Exploitation*, Nyerere writes:

In a socialist country, the only people who live on the work of others, and who have a right to be dependent upon their fellows, are small children, people who are too old to support themselves, the crippled, and those whom the state at any one time cannot provide with an opportunity to work for their living. (Nyerere: 17)

Central to the first point is the idea of ‘work’, as Nyerere is greatly concerned with the ‘parasitic’ and ‘anti-social’ behaviors that colonists brought to Africa - the concept of owning land without themselves working it, or the hiring of labor at wages that were inconsistent with the value being created by the laborer.

The second section of the Arusha Declaration is titled *The Major Means of Production and Exchange are under the Control of the Peasants and Workers* and Nyerere writes, “To build and maintain socialism it is essential that all the major means of production and exchange in the nation are controlled and owned by the peasants through the machinery of their Government and their co-operatives. Further, it is essential that the ruling Party should be a Party of peasants and workers (Nyerere: 17).” While this largely correlates with more mechanical workings of the government and economic planning, it also declares the power of the peasants and workers, and their ability to dictate the direction of all actions and activities of the government, insofar as the government continues to represent the interests of these forces.

The next point, titled *The Existence of Democracy* expresses similar sentiment, as Nyerere attempts to codify the dedication of the party to the will of the people, something that was absent in colonial era.

The final point, and arguably the most important for the sake of this paper and my argument, is *Socialism is a Belief*, which expresses the idea that socialism cannot exist without the dedicated practice of socialist behavior. Nyerere writes, “Socialism is a way of life, and a socialist society cannot simply come into

existence. A socialist society can only be built by those who believe in, and who themselves practise, the principles of socialism (Nyerere: 17).”

Colonial Educational History, Goals, and Workforce Composition

To understand the workings of the post-colonial Tanzanian education system, we must examine first the colonial position regarding education and the labor force of colonial Tanganyika, as it shaped the problems that were faced by the post-colonial society. Here it is most logical to start in the period from 1947-1961, as described by Lene Buchert in *Education in the Development of Tanzania 1919-1990*. After the Second World War, Britain was focused on the modernization of its colonies in the same way that it had modernized during the industrial revolution. There was an emphasis on the expansion of colonial economies through the industrialization of agriculture, which would support the development of Western political institutions and traditions.³

The primary method of socialization, through which industrialization and political development would occur, was through the expansion of education in the colonies. This, it was argued, would allow for colonial subjects to take control of their countries, and impose their own wills on their nations.⁴ By transposing the historical trajectory of most Western European countries onto their colonies, the

³ From Chapter four, “Education for Self-Government, Capitalist Development & Citizenship 1947-1961.

⁴ United Kingdom internal document? Cited in Chapter four of Buchert

same sort of historical development of institutions, civic duty, and economic relationships would occur there. As such, the industrialization of the agricultural sector, where many colonized Tanzanians worked, was the site of societal development.⁵ However, there was a stipulation in the context of “self-rule”; in Tanganyika, where the immigrant population was extremely small, of which “European and Indian communities made up 0.2 and 0.9 per cent of the total population at the end of British rule” (Buchert: 53). Buchert characterizes the labor force composition of the period right before, and at the time of independence, writing:

During 1948-1957, more than 60 per cent of the Asians, who numbered around 100,000, continued to monopolise wholesale and retail trade. Others established themselves as capitalist owners of plantations or were engaged in public and other services. Of the approximate 20,000 gainfully employed Europeans, about half were in the public and other services primarily as administrators and technicians. Approximately 20 per cent were employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing, and a small number were owners or managers of agricultural estates or engaged in commerce and industry. At independence, Europeans and Asians together constituted around 87 per cent (Africans 13 per cent) of the highest-level graduate professionals, senior administrators and senior managers in industry and commerce. They formed in all 70 per cent (Africans 20 per cent) of the next level of technicians, sub-professional grades, executive grades in the civil service, middle management in industry and commerce and teachers with secondary education but without a university degree. (Buchert: 123)

There was an expectation that the colonies were to become “multiracial” in their functioning, with respect to future changes in their political and economic

⁵ Of the 8.7 million African population in 1957, less than 0.5 million were in paid employment, of whom around 199,000 were working on agricultural estates earning approximately 38 per cent of all wages paid to Africans.

structures, but only because of continued disproportional control of these positions by the European and Asian population, and through such domination, there was the belief that this would stimulate profit extracted from the colonies. Europeans would continue to be primarily employed in highly educated professions and in high-ranking positions in the civil service; Asian and Indian people would continue to dominate the commerce industry, while African people would incrementally join middle positions in civil service and agriculture. They would have little access to the means of production in any industry, and would not hold primary control of the state, keeping them on the periphery of economic and political power. Ultimately, the British's plan for the expansion of education to the colonial subjects was not for the sake of "self-government" by the African people, but for a sort of partnership between the European, Asian, and a small percentage of African elite who found their way to significant prestige. This was seen as an acceptable compromise as Africans could "learn" to self-rule, while European, and Indian/Asian groups could continue to profit from the arrangement until it was no longer economically or politically viable. Walter Rodney, writes of the Indian and Asian groups role in the political economy of the colony:

At the same time the African petty bourgeoisie in Tanzania, as in the rest of East Africa, had an old opponent: the Asian commercial comprador element. This group had been foisted on the African people in many respects. In my opinion (and I think that the record indicates this), they had been deliberately promoted by the British government as a layer between foreign capital and Africans. They were allowed access to credit; most of them based their operations on the 90-day credit system. They were in effect sponsored by the banks and the large import-export houses – the same banks which refused to give credit to Africans. The British

government and the colonial states had sanctioned this by issuing credit restriction ordinances which made it impossible for Africans to advance as middlemen. So the experience of the so-called Asians, that is those from the Indian subcontinent, was linked with or part of British policies in East Africa. (Rodney: 1980)

The colonial position regarding education, therefore, was a method in which to raise profits in the colony for British benefit. Not only would the industrialization and education of the colonized would lead to the creation of Western political institutions and civic duty but would also create a more efficient and effective labor force⁶, which itself was a necessary precondition of Western institutions and civic responsibility.⁷ With this in mind, we can discuss the educational system that was present with reference to the social organization of the colonial and post-colonial state.

Curriculum, Motivation, and Political Power in the Pre- and Post-Colonial Periods

According to Buchert, British plans for education can be separated into two distinct goals:

Education for Adaptation advocated social improvement from the bottom of the educational pyramid, aiming at the development of the traditional rural sector in cooperation with the rurally based African leadership, in

⁶ This position was part of a larger movement in the world at the time, where economists were pushing investments in human capital to maximize profits and growth.

⁷ British memo, Buchert 51, chapter 4, footnote 6.

order to blend the existing culture with new Western elements. Education for Modernisation supported economic development at the top of the educational pyramid, aiming at an expansion of the modern urban and capitalist sector and accompanied by the introduction of Western democratic political institutions in order to establish a Western national politico-economic unit. (Buchert: 63-68)

The distinct academic content between the two educational goals was apparent in who they served. As mentioned in the introduction, there was a racially segregated education system that served European, Indian/Asian, and African students in the formal system. The education was fit for the opportunity structures that were available to each group of students, as European and Asian students had more access to capital and were expected to perform certain jobs in the labor force as constituted by the colonial labor system. They were overrepresented in commerce, government, and other high-ranking professions, while Africans were underrepresented in these same fields. Most of the European and Indian education consisted of academic and philosophical work. Through the incremental inclusion of the relatively small urban African minority that found itself in university or secondary education, the British hoped to slowly give political power to a small number of educated African elites.

The content in the African system however, aimed to develop a set of agricultural managers who were familiar with agricultural sciences that could facilitate the industrialization of the agricultural sector, in which Africans were

largely concentrated.⁸ Implicit in many of the directives issued by the British government during the period was the intention of putting an emphasis on African education was to increase profit through human capital investments. However, the content of the rural education which the relative elite of these communities found themselves in, was inadequate considering the expense that it carried.

In the Tanganyika/Tanzania context, the increasing access to education was expected to give Africans more political and economic power in the colonial, and post-colonial system⁹. Much in the same way that rural African students rejected the missionary schools, which were once a popular form of rural education,¹⁰ the students and their families refused to participate in any sort of education that did not afford them the chance at political or social power. A significant amount of this discontent was caused by the lack of meaningful opportunity structures through which African students could be integrated into the social system. The differing education goals between race - where Education for Adaptation was solely for Africans and Education for modernization was generally only available to Indians and Europeans¹¹ - was insufficient for many Africans. The reason for this, as Buchert says “[was] related to the fact that the modern sector was small and that fluency in English was a precondition of African participation in the

⁸ Buchert:69

⁹ Buchert: 68

¹⁰ “African education continued to be mostly provided in the missionary assisted and native authority sectors which together constituted approximately 93 per cent of all institutions in 1956 and 1961 (Buchert: 63).”

¹¹ (Buchert:68)

central political system.” (Buchert: 68) The customs of a Western democratic institution discriminated by forcing its participants to speak English, a non-native language, which resulted in a disparate impact on the African population, which did not have the opportunities to develop a fluency of English that would be required for academic study. Tanzania is an ethnically diverse country, and has over a hundred local languages, but Kiswahili became more popular in the same way English did - a common language of exchange. However, it was more closely related to local languages than English.¹² Kiswahili would prove to be important pursuance of a Tanzanian identity, as the post-colonial state attempted to reconstruct formerly British institutions for African benefit.

The first policy that was taken by the post-colonial state was the creation of an identity, which was developed in a two-fold process, first through *Africanization*, then through education they were to build *Socialism*. In the colonial era, identity was constituted on racial lines due to the nature of colonial capitalist organization, resulting in many indigenous Africans to have little access to positions of political or economic importance. Furthermore, the number of Africans who had significant influence on the workings of the country was not proportional to their population size. At the time of independence, the number of employees at the two highest employment levels¹³ was 17, 142, of which Africans

¹² (Nicholson: 44)

¹³ The two highest employment levels included “highest level graduate professionals, senior administrators and senior managers in industry and commerce, technicians, sub-professional grades, executive grades in the civil

made up 4,468, Europeans 4,309, and Indians 8,365.¹⁴ This was recognized as racialism, both by TANU and Julius Nyerere, and the response to this was the Africanization of the country's civil and administrative services. Julius Nyerere writes:

At the same time a deliberate policy of 'Africanization' of the public services was being pursued in the full recognition that this was itself discriminatory. For before all citizens could be treated equally, it was necessary to rectify the position in which the nation's civil service was dominated by non-Africans, and to make it reflect in some measure the composition of the society. Therefore until January 1964, Africans were appointed and promoted in preference to anyone else, and many of their promotions were very rapid and involved the suspension of normal qualification requirements about experience and education. (Nyerere: 1973)

In accordance with the goals of self-determination that were codified later in the Arusha Declaration of 1967, Africanization was essential to the creation of a resolutely African state. To be clear, Africanization concerned indigenous Black Africans to give them the proportional power according to their population size. Buchert writes, "In the urban sector, Africans were rapidly replacing Europeans in the middle and senior ranks of the civil service. By 1966, they constituted approximately three quarters of the total, compared with roughly one quarter at independence." (Buchert: 291)

service, middle management in industry and commerce, and teachers with secondary education but without a university degree (Buchert: 53)

¹⁴ (Buchert:68)

The policy of Africanization caused values to be shifted, both on an institutional level, and a psychological level, as systemic racial discrimination was alleviated, and the public acknowledged that Africans had access to social power that had been denied to them during the colonial period. This process ultimately was not restricted to the civil and administrative spheres, but also included the educational sphere as Tanzania recognized that the creation of a national identity required a way in which these values could be effectively transmitted and reproduced. Around this same time, the national government issued heavily subsidized bus and train vouchers for secondary school students to attend institutions outside of their region of origin. In an interview with Timothy Nicholson in 2007, Mary Theresa, a missionary educator, reflected, ““These girls, some of them traveled for seven days. From the time they’d leave their village, they’d get a bus, then a boat, go through the lake, and then get a third class ticket on the train.” Students of different ethnic groups and religions mixed together and, ideally, taught their fellow students about their cultures. “They learned how to get along. This was one of the big things, getting to know others from other tribes and finding out what their customs were. We’d have a campfire and they’d do those group dances. And then they would learn from others. And they’d enjoy that very much (Nicholson:116).”” This mandate was done to break down regional, ethnic,

and tribal barriers that existed, and was extremely effective in promoting national unity and a pan-Tanzanian identity.¹⁵

Through the *Africanization* process the state and party recognized that the next problem to tackle was the lack of educated people in the country, though there was a particular need to educate those in rural areas. Buchert notes the enrollment rates of African, Indian, and European students at different education levels in 1956, writing “[between] 80 and 95 per cent of the European and Indian age groups were enrolled in primary and secondary education in 1956, whereas African enrollment in primary and middle schools... represented only 8.5 per cent of the age group (Buchert:68).”

The shift in educational goals was largely a response to the growing discontent of the rural population, who saw independence as a chance for a new society. As such, Education for Self Reliance was centered around participation and equality, particularly at the local level, where Ujamaa villages were implemented to create community control that was akin to traditional African social organization.¹⁶

Education for Adaptation and Modernisation contributed to the problems that those in the country saw - there was a continued centralization of power, by way of educational attainment, economic opportunity, and political influence, and

¹⁵ This mandate was issued by the Ministry of Education that required secondary school students to attend schools in different regions of the country (Nicholson: 116)

¹⁶ (Burchert:90)

an ever widening rural/urban divide. To deal with these issues, the turn to make the village - rather than the urban city - as the center of social, political, and economic power, was crucial to giving Tanzanians the power that they desired. However, it was hoped that the new educational directive worked to give Tanzanians such power without furthering the social stratification that would come with increased educational attainment in the previous economic organization.

Education for Self-Reliance was articulated within the Arusha Declaration, which centered on the rejection of the Western value system that was associated with colonial capitalist organization. The document called for a return for traditional African values of reciprocity, moral obligation, and redistribution as the foundation for African Socialism. *Ujamaa*, as it was called, centered the African village as the site of profound social transformation through which individuals, acting for the common good and benefit of all, would be able to create a socialist society. Although Education for Self-Reliance was different from Education for Adaptation by being cognizant of the political and cultural purposes of education, they were similar in their long-term goals of promoting mass education for the rural communities of the country to improve its productive capacities. However, instead of the end goal of industrialization of the rural agricultural economy, the end goal for Education for Self Reliance was African Socialism, which was centered on principles of social commitment and well-being.

The first set of reforms outlined by the national government took place prior to the issuance of the Arusha Declaration, as in 1961, TANU officially

dismantled the tripartite education system that existed, where European, Indian/Asian, and African students were racially segregated, and access to all educational institutions as permitted, without regard to race or ethnicity (Buchert: 107). They also standardized a national curriculum, extended government oversight to all voluntary agency schools - ones that were publicly supported by communities - and private schools (granted they eliminated the racial barriers to admission).

The national curriculum pushed ideas of national unity, nation building, and integration that were of particular interest to the independence movement, as Buchert summarizes:

The outlook of students, and the population in general, was to be directed towards a nation-state promoting national integration and nationhood instead of ethnic or tribal affiliation. Subjects such as history, geography and general science were to become relevant to Tanzanian society, i.e. to reflect a proper African and Tanzanian perspective and to include material on local conditions and problems. Kiswahili was designated in 1964 as the national language. It was introduced in 1967 as the medium of instruction in all primary schools, thereby eliminating the immediate barrier to integrated education. Specific subjects, such as civics, current affairs and political education, as well as extra-curricular activities, such as the participation in local development projects and in TANU Youth League branches, which were to be established in all schools, were used to promote understanding and support for the national political process, the national party and its ideology. (Buchert: 115)

The curriculum represented a very intentional effort by the government to create people who were products of the society they grew up within and had a vested interest in bettering it. Furthermore, the teaching of material in such a way that

directly related to, and included the community surrounding the school, aimed to decrease the flight of students from rural areas to the cities, which were not considered to be the site of nation building. It included manual labor or national service, as one year's of national service was required by the end of form VI, two years of work experience as basis for admission to university, and a subsequent five years of work in the country sanctioned by the government as recompense for their education.¹⁷ While the social values that guided education were drastically different than those of the Modernisation and Adaptation programs, the actual structure of the education system did not change in terms of how outcomes were measured (i.e. examinations), which worked against the goals of Education for Self Reliance, as they represented a conflicting goal. The primary goal of examinations was to further one's education or assign a grade, while the primary goal of Education for Self Reliance was to give students the skills to contribute to a socialist society based on African traditions.¹⁸

¹⁷ (Buchert: 171)

¹⁸ "We have said that we want to create a socialist society which is based on three principles: equality and respect for human dignity; sharing of the resources which are produced by our efforts; work by everyone and exploitation by none (Nyerere: 50)."

Measuring of Outcomes and Other Institutional Problems

In this section I argue that a significant oversight of the educational changes that were enacted in Tanzania was partly a result of institutional failure to change in accordance with the values that were attempted to be cultivated in the country. I outline three areas that proved to complicate the attainment of ESR's goals. 1. National policy and social needs (as defined by the communities) were sometimes oppositional; 2. The usage of British exams was marker of inconsistent and unclear organizational goals; and 3. The curriculum did not provide them with the skills necessary to move beyond colonial organization.

From 1967 to 1976, agriculture was the primary method of economic development as outlined by the national government. Because of the social importance placed on the Ujamaa villages, it was envisioned that these villages would modernize through improvements to standards of living and agricultural methods that would come from the increasingly educated population. Through this, the villages would become more productive, and able to sell surplus crops for funding of social necessities such as healthcare facilities, community run public schools, roads, or machinery for agricultural use. The syllabus of primary and middle school education attempted to mandate some type of agricultural vocational training to both prepare students for their future in these villages and to offset some of the school fees that students had to pay. Buchert notes, "After the Arusha Declaration in 1967, vocational activities were reintroduced in the form of

Education for Self-Reliance. They mostly materialized as very basic agricultural work on the school farm (shamba) in the afternoon, as was the case before independence (Buchert: 115).”

Dramatic decreases in global cash crop prices complicated this, as many local communities immediately saw the need to steer their children away from agricultural work and to strive for more lucrative opportunities in the state bureaucracy or urban centers. Nicholson writes, “...parents in the Kilimanjaro region, located in the coffee growing north, experienced exactly this type of financial stress as the price of coffee collapsed while school fees increased. All over the country, people sold cattle and land to educate their children, risking their economic future in the hope their children would get a non-agricultural job. Some parents wrote to local newspapers protesting the new Ujamaa policies; parents, and sometimes teachers increasingly became embittered as they viewed education as a means of advancement and not as a return to farming as Nyerere envisioned (Nicholson: 145).”

The articulation of the Ujamaa as a “return to farming” is a poor representation of the ideology, but the tension gives insight to the sort of disconnect that could be found between the national government and local communities. The reality was that parents did not want their children to have anything to do with the villages when the primary method of financing agricultural production was constantly fluctuating by powers out of their control. Buchert writes:

The trends for most export cash crops and marketed food crops were declining during the implementation of ujamaa and its redirection into the basic industry strategy. This was partly caused by deteriorating world market prices (affecting sisal, pyrethrum, coffee and cotton), the drought in 1973-74 (affecting wheat, rice, and maize), and the general dislocation and disruption in production related to the nationalisation policy (affecting cashew nut production), which led to an escalation of food imports in order to support the non-agricultural population. This situation was followed by an overall imbalance in foreign and local investment in favour of industry and infrastructure and away from agriculture. During 1976-81, of the export cash crops only tea, tobacco and coffee expanded. The output of marketed maize, wheat and rice, on the other hand, increased slightly seen in relation to the 1967 output figures and to the average of 1969-71 production figures. (Buchert: 101-102)

While the Ujamaa villages meant to give much of the population access to decision making and power that they had previously been kept out of, many learned that their power was not as significant as the global markets that paid for their labor and crop production nor was it strong enough to stop ecological events that could hinder economic activities. The educational curricula were not developed in accordance with the political economy of the future, where agriculture was seen as the primary work in which students would be engaged. Furthermore, the actual work that these students did was not significant enough to give them expertise in the field.

Another example of the difficulties of imposing policies from a top-down perspective can be seen in the lack of participation in the democratic decision making that the ideology called for. Buchert writes, “The implementation of ujamaa involved the concentration of the major part of the population from

scattered homesteads into villages. Due to lack of peasant response to the idea during 1967-69, when implementation relied on voluntary participation, the movement in 1970-71 was undertaken as government 'operations' and, during 1973-76, by the use of coercive measures (Buchert: 100)." The uneven development of the Tanzanian countryside was largely a result of the colonial capitalist system causing certain regions of the country to be underdeveloped agriculturally because of their lack of environmental conditions to efficiently produce cash crops. The majority of Ujamaa villages were concentrated in these areas, and due to their uneven development, generally had less access to surplus profit selling activities. In the short term, these villages faced uneven barriers in the universal education goals because their villages were unable to contribute to the farming activities that would allow the village to become wealthier. The inability to finance more advanced education for their children where they could contribute to them with different skills that were not focused on agricultural activities, caused rural flight to cities, as students had to look where opportunities were available. Considering these poorer villages made up a significant portion of Ujamaa villages in the first place, this oversight was particularly damaging.

In the colonial era, the opportunity structures that were generally available to the African population, were in the agricultural field. Since independence however, when racial discrimination was eradicated, there was no perceived barrier to alternative opportunity. However, the positing of Ujamaa villages and the agricultural industry as the primary method of development imposed an

artificial job ceiling on rural students, since their realistic opportunity structures, continued to be situated within these poorer villages that could not realistically develop only through their agricultural activities.

If we take a step back to the period prior to independence, another significant barrier that was faced later started to develop. As the people of Tanzania saw independence becoming a reality with the advent of TANU and the growing political power it had, community schools were built en-masse to circumvent the colonial public education system and the private missionary schools. This continued well after independence. Buchert writes of the phenomenon:

Residents, with support from their local district councils, worked together to construct new school buildings, including houses for teachers, kitchens, and latrines. Individuals and local governments, in the form of district and town councils, controlled the comprehensive primary education system. They possessed the responsibility and ability to finance primary schools, planned the development of local primary education, controlled the expansion and management of new schools, obtained grants from the national government, and enforced school attendance. TANU party members, hoping to increase popular support for the party, worked to bring education to as many people as possible and began building new schools throughout the country. (Nicholson: 96)

Much of the enthusiasm that came with independence was for the chance for the future generations of Tanzanian children to have the opportunity to attend quality schools - and the building of community schools showed this. These schools were built across the country at a staggering rate, so much so that the national

government struggled at times with oversight of them.¹⁹ While this fervor was readily accepted by TANU because their support for these projects secured popular support of the party. However, the rapid building of these schools later proved to exacerbate the problem that lack of adequate infrastructure the country had in a variety of areas - specifically sufficient teachers, funding, supplies, or transportation services. This paradox - the public's desire to educate themselves, but not having enough infrastructure or manpower to fulfill these needs - represented a significant problem that created a negative feedback loop, where students were missing opportunities to get educated and solve some of these problems, which continued to exacerbate the original problem. In response, the national government lowered the qualifications necessary to become a primary school teacher, and attempted to consolidate teachers who were teaching to small classrooms by moving them to areas in the country with more acute needs.²⁰ Furthermore, given the stressful nature of the teaching profession at the time, there were fewer students who chose to become teachers, instead continuing their studies for other occupations.²¹ While the government and communities were in dire need of educators, individuals acted in their own interests instead of the

¹⁹ Nicholson:96

²⁰ "The expansion of schools and scarcity of teachers led to a massive reduction in the requirements to become a teacher. Now, those with an upper primary, Std. VIII education could take training classes at a nearby teachers' college and then easily become primary school teachers."
(Nicholson:120)

²¹ Ibid

interests of the people, although this could have been at the behest of parents who wanted them to be paid more. Regardless, this hindered both the communities and the government in achieving their short- and long-term goals.

Conflict between the national government and local communities did not only affect the rural areas. As mentioned earlier, private educational institutions were able to continue if they followed the national curriculum and removed all barriers to entry, which were usually based on *de jure* racial segregation or *de facto* class segregation. However, many of these institutions and communities refused to collectivize their wealth through the village system and were often more skeptical of the effectiveness of socialist transformation. Naturally, these were communities that were already producing at a surplus and had significantly more wealth than much of the nation, and in similar fashion to other attempts around the world historically to equalize access and opportunity to deprived social groups, they saw these changes as damaging to their already socially advantaged position. Buchert writes, “This expressed conflict of interest questions one of the core assumptions of the self-reliant socialist strategy, namely whether the Tanzanian population was traditionally collectivist and whether common goals could be successfully enacted by way of the educational system (Buchert:120).”

Unfortunately, changing social formations that started to exist with the start of colonization, must be more far reaching than changing social attitudes and providing access that did not exist previously. The conflict that exists between the national government, which outlined specific guidelines in hopes of achieving

economic goals, and the people of the country, who had their own guiding principles and goals, can be summarized rather concisely by John Ogbu in

Minority Education and Caste:

Implicit, and sometimes explicit, in the work of these scholars [Aberle and Naegele 1952; Aberle 1961; Y.A. Cohen 1971; Inkeles 1955; 1968b; Kohn 1969; LeVine 1967; Levine *et al.* 1967; Miller and Swanson 1958] is the notion that socialization or child training is the preparation of the child for adult life as his or her society or segment of society conceives it. That is, socialization is the process by which individuals acquire the skills (cognitive, manual, etc.), motives, knowledge, and attitudes which will enable them to perform typical social and economic roles available to adult members of their society and be fully integrated into the society. (Ogbu: 16)

The tension between the national and the people is significant - it speaks to the differing outlooks between the party and the people. The tension being that each group had a different outlook on the future. The people saw the end of colonization as the end of all visible discrimination and the realization of goals and dreams that had been previously denied but were at the forefront of micro-economic changes that most likely shifted their orientation towards education. The party saw the end of colonization as a step forward in a long process of creating a more equitable society. In the colonial era, the opportunity structures that were generally available to the African population, were in the agricultural field. Since independence however, when racial discrimination was eradicated, there was no perceived barrier to alternative opportunity. However, the positing of Ujamaa villages and the agricultural industry as the primary method of development imposed an artificial job ceiling on rural students, since their realistic opportunity

structures, continued to be situated within the village given certain economic constraints. Since opportunity structures were widely perceived as available to all because of the alleviation of racial discrimination, rural people wanted to find success in the extant structure that existed prior to independence (i.e they wanted to be hired outside of agriculture), while the government's attempt to center the village was incorrectly seen as *only* constituting agricultural work, even though the work opportunities could very well not have been agricultural work, but rather other skills that would permit the improvement of standards of living for the rural population, while those who did not complete higher levels of education would be integrated into the agriculture industry. The inability of the party to more clearly and effectively transmit this to the larger population, while listening to the issues that the peasants faced, is part of the enormous challenge that is faced by revolutionary formations.

While the education system in Tanzania was greatly expanded, and socially deprived groups were given increasing access, the ways in which students interacted with the institutions themselves did not change much. African students had participated in these institutions before and succeeded before, creating a relatively small African elite in the colonial system, so not much was thought of when education was expanded to those from less economically privileged backgrounds. These newly included students, who came from backgrounds with considerably fewer financial resources, were expected to perform just as well as White and Indian students during the colonial era. In the early period of this

process, the national government realized that most of these students were not, in fact, performing in ways that they had expected. This represented a significant barrier for the new nation - how were schools supposed to process these students in a way that contributed to their learning in ways that the colonial period could not. Furthermore, what did it mean to alter institutional functioning from the colonial period, where it was obvious that they were incapable and unwilling to support students in meaningful ways that prepared them for their environment, while providing excellent education.

This issue is not a new phenomenon - in the same way that the social movements of the 1950s-80s in the United States highlighted organizational failures to include African American students – the same difficulties were being faced in Tanzania. How are these institutions, which were organized in a particular way to facilitate preferred outcomes, supposed to operate in different ways to achieve different ends? This point will focus specifically on the usage of British examinations, classroom organization, and other institutional practices that served as barriers to goals that the TANU and the Tanzanian people hoped to achieve.

Classroom Organization, British Examinations, Insufficient Curriculum

As part of the Arusha Declaration, it was posited that the political economy for the foreseeable future would revolve around the agricultural sector, as it was

the major industry in Tanzania at the time. However, this was never to be in perpetuity, as Nyerere states:

Pursuing this path means that Tanzania will continue to have a predominantly rural economy for a long time to come. And as it is in the rural areas that people live and work, so it is in the rural areas that life must be improved. This is not to say that we shall have no industries and factories in the near future. We have some now and they will continue to expand. But it would be grossly unrealistic to imagine that in the near future more than a small proportion of our people will live in towns and work in modern industrial enterprises. It is therefore the villages which must be made into places where people live a good life; it is in the rural areas that people must be able to find their material well-being and their satisfactions. (Nyerere: 51)

The education system never aligned itself in accordance with the economic goals that were envisioned. While there were some changes to the curriculum that positively oriented students to rural life, education was still hierarchal and authoritarian in practice and the curriculum was insufficient in a few major ways. Firstly, the organization of classrooms were hierarchal, and such organization was incongruent with the goals that the party outlined for village function. Second, the actual content of the education was insufficient for work in agricultural villages when many were expected to work in. Finally, the curriculum continued to resemble the British system, and had no real basis in African social conditions – much less Tanzanian ones - outside of history and was not concerned with creating students who could build a socialist society. Finally, the actual content of the education was insufficient for work in agricultural villages when many were expected to work in. While Nyerere describes the transmission of knowledge and

the cultivation of informal relationships in traditional African societies, actual classrooms under Education for Self Reliance continued to replicate Western education, with a normatively defined teacher and students. The relationships cultivated in the classroom were not representative of the traditional African relationships that Nyerere had outlined in other parts of the Arusha Declaration, neither were they representative of the cooperative economic relationships that would be found in the Ujamaa village. Furthermore, success was measured through completion of arbitrary examinations that were representative of academic knowledge but were not based on success in a village or community setting, nor how students should respond to their environment in socialist society building. We can imagine that the educational system was meant to achieve at least two distinct goals: 1. Educate the population to perform jobs that they would most likely be working; and 2. Give them the skills necessary to build a socialist society. The British education system was unsatisfactory in both respects, so processes had to be developed to do train these skills.

The first problem that I bring up concerning hierarchy, is extremely important given some issues that were discussed by Nyerere in *Ujamaa – Essays on Socialism*, on which he writes, “This means that the educational system of Tanzania must emphasize co-operative endeavour, not individual advancement; it must stress concepts of equality and the responsibility to give service which goes with any special ability, whether it be in carpentry, in animal husbandry, or in academic pursuits (Nyerere: 53).” The hierarchy in the educational structure

encouraged students to individually advance, specifically through lack of cooperative behaviors in the classroom, and didn't prioritize cooperation that would be for the benefit of all. The villages, which were based on collective agriculture and cooperative behaviors, were not hierarchal in organization. An organization of classrooms that might be more like the village would be horizontal organization of classrooms, where teachers presented material that needed to be learned, and encouraged students who had a firm grasp on the material, to teach and assist other students with it. This would de-emphasize the need for a teacher or 'academic' that would facilitate students' abilities and emphasize cooperative behaviors that were necessary for social relationships in the village.

The second point, concerning the curriculum was important considering that the political base of the country was in the rural area. To build a revolutionary consciousness, the curriculum of these secondary schools should have been based in teaching around their economic roles (agricultural) and how students should orient themselves to such work in a revolutionary system, particularly with respect to political education or other social development studies. Buchert writes, "While not occupying as predominant a part of the educational activities at the primary level, the subjects probably developed among the students the specific understanding of one particular ideological framework rather than the selection from different alternatives which would seem to have been desirable in order to develop the capability for critical thinking and strategic choice-making which was central to the philosophy of Education for Self-Reliance (Buchert: 116)." In

practice, this education might have more closely related to the British Education for Adaptation, which prepared students for agricultural work, but emphasized the role in society those agricultural workers were to occupy as outlined by the Arusha Declaration. This, in addition to emphasis on writing and analytical skills relating to social problems that students found in their village, the country, or even the entire continent, of political, economic, or social importance, would facilitate the creation of a political consciousness that was necessary to agitate for social transformation.

As mentioned earlier, the social landscape of Tanzanian society was largely unequal - there were urban areas and wealthy, surplus producing segments, and there was much of the country that was acutely poor. As national policy does, there was a tendency for all-encompassing changes that would have generally positive benefits - such as the changing of primary language instruction to Kiswahili rather than English, the adoption of a national curriculum that created a cohesive Tanzanian identity, and the inclusion of basic agricultural work. These changes were made regarding much of the Tanzanian population speaking Kiswahili, the hope to develop a pan-Tanzanian identity that was defined through the colonial system, and a significant segment of the population being part of the agricultural sector, respectively. Naturally, different segments of the population faced different opportunity structures, and this meant the reality of future work for the majority at the time, would also be in agricultural work, especially when considering the economic goals outlined by TANU - the measures of educational

attainment would have some basis in student's ability to solve problems relevant to their future occupations. However, the entirety of the education system continued to use the British 742 educational structure. Buchert writes of the structure the following way:

The specific activities intended to implement the Education for Self-Reliance idea, however, never replaced the traditional academic subjects as the primary focus of formal education. The maintenance of the British 742 educational structure with examination points to select the few who could proceed to further education. Largely assessed on their academic achievement, reinforced a concern and interest for the ensuing level of education, rather than a primary orientation towards the quality and outcome of the educational process at each terminal state. The very structure, in effect, mitigated against the basic notion of mass education. (Buchert:119)

The academic structure that was already in place was favorable for those who would continue education and become part of the educated elite that already existed within the country. Paradoxically, the aim of the people was to succeed in this structure with the absence of racial discrimination that previously impeded their success, while the government attempted to reconstruct the education system in a way that didn't economically reward those who worked outside of agriculture. However, by keeping the British educational system, the party did not recognize that its very structure was antithetical to their goals of creating a more economically homogenous population. This revealed itself through a few ways in the existing academic structure through the continued usage of British examinations.

While it was expected that higher levels of education (particularly post-secondary) would not be widely available to much of the population for the foreseeable future,²² the British testing apparatus should have been removed much earlier for most of the population in favor for examinations that more accurately reflected the skills that would have been required for the largely agrarian population that would drive social transformation. Examinations that assessed students' abilities to deal with social disagreements, economic difficulties concerning production, or other problem-based exercises may have facilitated the cognitive skills that would have been required for sufficient civic participation in the Ujamaa villages.

However, the primary method of measuring a student's aptitude was through the usage of academic examinations, which, if we are to take the party's economic goals seriously, made little sense. The party used mass education to give skills to much of the population, which would, in turn, increase the productive capabilities of the Ujamaa villages that were supposed to be the site of socialization. Distinct skills, ranging from literacy and fluency in Kiswahili, to more complex ones such as professional knowledge (notably in the medical and engineering fields), were to be transmitted to the rural populations that these students came from to achieve these goals. However, unless students were

²² Nyerere writes, "Although only about 13 per cent of our primary school children will get a place in a secondary school, the basis of our primary school education is the preparation of pupils for secondary schools. Thus 87 per cent of the children who finished primary school last year -- and a similar proportion of those who will finish this year -- do so with a sense of failure, of a legitimate aspiration having been denied to them (Nyerere: 55)."

educated in the agricultural sciences as part of their academic training, there was little understanding of the field. While the purpose of the basic agricultural training was to promote more positive attitudes toward agricultural work, it was rather difficult to quantify attitudes toward such work,²³ and it was never certain how significant these changes in attitude might have affected relationships between people. While the shift in these attitudes were unarguably important, as it would have been significantly harder for this social interface to occur if the educated segments of the population held prejudiced attitudes towards the peasantry - the education system failed them by not grounding their knowledge in real life experiences that they would have to deal with. While this was the larger social transformation that TANU hoped to prime, the way the education system was structured failed to do this with its insistence on continuing to use markers of success that were necessarily situated away from the realities of a rural society. Perhaps an alternative function of the community schools, in addition to providing primary and secondary education to students, would include quasi-secondary education similar in fashion to the Mississippi Freedom Schools in 1964. The educators could be significant figures in the villages, university students, or government officials who guided politicized education regarding civic duty in the villages. They could present issues facing specific regions in the country and cooperatively generate solutions to the issues in a variety of different ways and

²³ Ibsd Footnote 12

give villagers and students the channels to think critically about the consequences of policy decisions and how they might affect people. This would give students and villagers opportunities to both participate in decision making, while continuing to develop some of the values that were deemed socially beneficial by the party. A concrete example of this could be projects dedicated to achieving specific goals for social benefit, such as raising the literacy rate of their village by a specific percentage. The skills required to do this would be much more relevant to the students given they represent actual goals that both the country and its people wanted, while reaffirming cooperative, problem solving behaviors.

The Kwamsisi Case Study

An important question that remained unanswered by the national government, or their policy initiatives was - What does it mean for structures to facilitate success in a precise way when those structures are biased? Not coincidentally, this is the same issue that plagued many of the “primary school leavers” that were widespread in Tanzania during this period. Buchert writes:

The incorporation of work-related activities in the curriculum seemed not to have directed the choice of future occupations among the students or to have improved the quality of their basic skills. Instead, rural-urban migration of primary school leavers increased and job opportunities for secondary school leavers were determined by the job market, not created by the school system. While both may indicate an underlying disagreement concerning the area of work which was defined beforehand by the government, there was also an obvious connection to declining investments in the agricultural sector and infrastructure from the mid-1970s to 1981, which prevented the expansion of opportunities and incentives to become

employed or self-employed in the village economy. This lack of an integrated approach in the implementation of economic and educational policies underlined the underlying moralistic aspect of the policy, i.e. the obligation of the people to participate in national development as defined for them by the leadership. (Buchert:119)

As time progressed, and the economic opportunity structures and incentives were shifted away from the Ujamaa village, by both the party and global commodity markets, the education system failed to align its priorities and goals with the changing conditions.

The social system that Ujamaa hoped to promote in the villages was centered on goals of universal participation in community decision making and collective action, but the organization of classrooms was not exemplary of this. In chapter seven of her book, “Societal Innovation through Education: The community School Movement 1971-1982”, Buchert writes of the establishment of ‘community schools’ that were developed in conjunction with the Education for Self-Reliance document that was published in 1967:

The particular purposes of the community school as defined in the Education for Self-Reliance document in 1967 were to contribute to village development by breaking down the barrier between the school and the surrounding society between academic and manual skills, in other words to ‘integrate’ the school with village life and theoretical learning with practical work. Through the cooperation or ‘participation’ of village members in school life and school members in village life, the community school was seen as an important means of forming the ‘relevant’ skills and attitudes which were needed to further socialist and self-reliant development. Being regarded as an educational and economic unit in the context of the village society, the school was to be a centre for basic educational activities for the young and for adults, whereas the village economy was to provide subsequent opportunities for young people in order that they would remain in the village after having finished school. (Buchert:123)

The chapter speaks of an initial experiment in the context of Tanzanian public education - only 80 total schools mirrored the organization of the school in Kwamsisi, where this case study takes place (though the basic structure was replicated all throughout the country as the blueprint for Education for Self Reliance). It provides an isolated situation for us to analyze the structural issues of the education system that was faced when replicated elsewhere.

As I have established, a major problem of Tanzanian public schools was their inability to provide meaningful mirrors to the opportunity structures students would face after they complete their studies. Ogbu writes:

Formal education, like socialization, is future oriented. A given society may expect its schools, for instance, to train its children to become literate, informed citizens who can participate effectively in a democracy (citizenship goal), to prepare children for the labor market (certification function), and to keep children out of the labor market until they have attained a legally specified age. It may also, at least in principle, expect its schools to provide all children with equal opportunities to participate in adult life by equipping them with similar skills. Parents may send their children to school so that, among other things, they will acquire the skills and credentials with which to compete for desirable social and economic roles when they grow up. As children become older, they too learn to associate their school activities with future goals and opportunities in adult life. (Ogbu:19)

The goals of the community school, as outlined by the Mpango wa Tanzania/UNICEF/UNESCO Primary Education Reform Project (MTUU) and Colleges of National Education was to create “a prototype for the community school movement, it was to further the creation of the self-supporting communal villages through the establishment of a formal cooperation between the school and village, and through a reform of the curriculum to promote the skills and attitudes

of relevance to the village economy and the declared political philosophy (Buchert:125-126).” As part of the curriculum restructuring for this school, the MTUU included, in addition to standards V-VII, an integration of traditional primary school subjects into four main areas: literacy and numeracy; political education; community studies; and cultural studies and skills related to village life.²⁴ The community studies and skills related to village life emphasized the active participation of the school in village affairs and vice versa. Some tasks that students participated in included “diversify[ing] the crop production pattern, generate additional income and alleviate shortages were successfully established, such as the cultivation of tobacco and cotton, the production of desks for the school and the serving of midday meals for the students based on the output from the newly established school farm. The students taught the villagers ‘modern’ farming techniques on the communal farm, for instance row-planting and spacing of maize, the use of manure and the selection of proper seeds, which helped to increase the output. Students were also assistants in the adult literacy classes. Villagers, on the other hand, taught some of the subjects in the curriculum in which they had a special expertise, such as basketweaving, local dancing and local history.” (Buchert:128) The skills these students learned through these reciprocal activities had lasting effects, not only from a skills-based perspective, but also

²⁴ See p. 128 of Buchert for more in-depth discussion of subjects

through behaviors observed by parents and village officials.²⁵ Furthermore, most of these students stayed in these villages after they had finished their education.²⁶

However, even though the curriculum was altered specifically for this case study, the examinations that students faced were still the same British 742 exams, which were mostly academic subjects that had no measurement of the skills the school had hoped to promote. This was likely because of the control that the MTUU had over the experiment, which overrode the control of the representatives of the community school and the village it was part of. Furthermore, when asked how these students related to the alternative skills that they learned regarding the new academic clusters that were developed, “former students mentioned that they probably did not think of such activities when they were asked, because the activities were not important in the context of their examinations.” (Buchert:137) In the long run, while such organization might have contributed to more positive feelings toward agricultural or community work, these were not primary skills that students, nor education structures, measured student aptitude or achievement and could not be quantified enough to represent a change in economic or social relationships to the village and community that Ujamaa hoped to foster.

In many of Nyerere’s and others analysis of Ujamaa era education was the lack of adequate teachers to fulfill their roles in the context of instruction. While

²⁵ Buchert writes, “The establishment of Kwamsisi as a community school seems to have furthered the application of new farming skills, which the former students indicated they had continued to practise after they left school.” (Buchert:129)

²⁶ (Buchert:129)

this might have been necessary for more academic skills that students would learn, such as literacy, history, etc., it is not clear why many of these teachers would have been necessary considering that the goal was to facilitate the inclusion of students in a traditional village system. If there was a desire to create a more traditional African village, where students were not necessarily formally educated, but most of their learning was informal through elders and others more senior in relation to the students, then the primary focus of the Ujamaa system would have been representative of this, and more academic learning would have been seen as supplemental to their education. Supplemental in the sense that it would have allowed them to learn the skills and knowledge necessary to improve productive capacities, quality of life improving behaviors, or analytical skills that would give them the tools to critically assess their political status in respect to the villages and the nation state. Rather, it seems that relationships between students and teachers were still very much based in authoritarian relationships that came with “Western” education. Although attitudes towards work and character assessments were incorporated into performance assessments in standards V, VI, and VII, there seemed to be little importance placed on these skills anyways, as few students failed due to low scores in these areas.²⁷ Buchert writes, “It is, however, doubtful not only how widespread such attitudes were and whether they were sustained in the medium and long run, but whether they were simply indications of the

²⁷ (Buchert:116)

expected correct answers to questions set in the context of a still authoritarian school system (Buchert:116).”

The final issue that was particularly concerning, was the inability of the community school to effectively integrate social ‘others’. Tanzania is an ethnically diverse country, and such failure would have significant ramifications for educational success. After 1975, the Zigua people moved from a nearby homestead and attempted to integrate themselves into the Kwamsisi community, and ultimately into the school itself. The head of the village, Msisi, seemed to have been reluctant to extend the cooperative activities to outsiders who were not part of the extended family. The Zigua people, at first, seemed to have supported the village functioning when explained, but were not included in decision making and had relatively little control over the process.²⁸ When they failed to integrate into the project, both MTUU officials and village officials lamented that “Zigua people are reluctant to change” (Buchert:131). Given that this structure was replicated across the country, it is not hard to see, especially since tribalism was a problem that the national government recognized and hoped to eradicate - that such tension was probably widespread. Here, Ogbu’s discussion on “castelike minorities” seems sufficient to describe the tension, given the inferior abilities that were projected on the Zigua group by local and national authorities. The relationship between the castelike group and the dominant group in a society are

²⁸Buchert:131

usually represented by inferior social standings of the castelike group in reference to the dominant group (i.e they usually occupy less desirable jobs, social roles, or other positions in a given society)²⁹. When incorporated within an authoritarian education system, primarily based on punishment-reward and other exclusive, but facially neutral façades, the castelike minorities will be disadvantaged considerably, as the facilitation of success is necessarily dependent on behaviors that are consistent with the dominant group.

In this context, the Zigua people were committed to ‘mainstream’ values of the community that they were a part of, given that they were rather accepting of the structure of the school. However, in response to their exclusion from democratic processes within the village, they subsequently occupied a lesser position within the social structure, and were probably subject to lesser economic, social, or political roles in the village. In *Race and Theory: Culture, Poverty, and Adaptation to Discrimination in Wilson and Ogbu*, Mark Gould explains the cognitive expectations that African Americans have developed in the context of racial and structural discrimination. He writes:

The differences that separate them [Inner-city African Americans] from the white community center on cultural symbols, which help to constitute their identity. If blacks sometimes do not succeed, even when they appear to be given a fair chance, this may be due to the fact that facially neutral organizations often have an adverse impact on blacks. Such organizations implicitly privilege white cultural attributes and devalue the cultural performances blacks bring to them. Black “failure” in such organizations is overdetermined by whites who are committed to egalitarian values of equal opportunity, who believe that blacks have equal opportunity, and who conclude from the fact black performances often do

²⁹ Ogbu:26

not measure up to white performances that blacks are lazy and/or dumb. (Gould: 172-73)

In the same way, the Zigua people faced similar reactions from government officials and village people, and their outsider status caused them to be devalued from a structural standpoint, and they were kept out of mechanisms of control based on their “reluctance” to change. African Americans are often perceived as incapable of the behaviors that would enable for them to succeed within American structures, even though they have the same value commitments as other groups. This, in addition to other history that has shaped their cultural orientations and performances, were developed in accordance with the opportunity structures that were available to them. Although the Kwamsisi community school ended and was eventually replaced, if similar behaviors were exhibited by social ‘others’ in other Tanzanian contexts, it is not hard to see how their respective behaviors would be seen the same way as African Americans in America - especially considering that most of the Ujamaa homesteads were primarily created by incorporating scattered peasantry onto more fertile land where more integrated communities were already found.³⁰ Ultimately, the Zigua will be unable to effectively contribute to the organizational structure due to their disadvantaged status within the system, as the Msimbazi had regarded them as deviant with respect to the village function. The lack of community standing and control that the Zigua had over the education system

³⁰ “The implementation of ujamaa involved the concentration of the major part of the population from scattered homesteads into villages.... In all, around 8,000 so-called ujamaa villages with approximately 13,140,229 members, which represented approximately 85 per cent of the population, were registered in 1976 (Buchert:100).”

did not allow them to integrate their cultural performances in ways that would have been additive to the existing structure, and as such, was rendered inferior by the dominant group in the system.

Concluding Thoughts

The Ujamaa experiment provided many interesting ideas for the achievement of social transformation of the global periphery and raises many questions for social organization that exists outside of the proliferation of Western and modern values. The successes and failures of the period also confirm many questions that have been raised in the West as to how we should orient structures towards more inclusive and equitable organization. Perhaps the global south more largely is deserving of more attention in educational and political studies because the break from colonization required a significant rethinking of social and economic relations.

Nyerere was exceptionally aware of the challenges that Tanzania was faced with, and even more acutely aware of the position that it occupied at the time. He writes:

First, the most central thing about the education we are at present providing is that is basically an elitist education designed to meet the interests and needs of a very small proportion of those who enter the school system.... Equally important is the second point; the fact that Tanzania's education is such as to divorce its participants from the society it is supposed to be preparing them for.... The third point is that our present system encourages school pupils in the idea that all knowledge which is worthwhile is acquired from books or from 'educated people'—meaning those who have been through a formal education.... Finally, and in some ways most importantly, our young and poor nation is taking out of

productive work some of its healthiest and strongest young men and women. (Nyerere: 55-59)

Sadly, the Ujamaa experiment would later end in the mid 1980s as stipulation for IMF relief in response to the global crash in commodity prices that were described prior. This came with a larger restructuring of the political economy, as the IMF emphasized “domestic policy errors as the main cause of Tanzania’s problems (Buchert:145)”. Much like other revolutionary states, their placement in a global capitalist economy was intricately tied to their eventual demise, as their acute underdevelopment that came with colonization rendered them deficient in capital and other necessities to fund these changes. Other challenges that developed, were explained rather cogently by Guyanese historian Walter Rodney, who spent time as a visiting lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam from 1966-67 and 1969-74 amid these changes. He writes:

Once the factories were nationalized, once an institution fell under the NDC [National Development Corporation] and was either government-owned or partially government-owned, the petty bourgeoisie imagined that was the end of the process. It was now a Tanzanian enterprise and, as a Tanzanian enterprise run by Tanzanian managers, it was enough for the workers to fall in line and behave more or less as they had behaved previously. But this did not turn out to be the case. Workers began to raise questions that the nationalization of those industries meant that they had to be run by Tanzanians in a new kind of way consonant with the interests, the self images, etc., of the Tanzanian working people. One of the consequences of this was that the party agreed to issue the party guidelines of *Mwongozo* which in effect addressed itself to the whole problem of bureaucratic management. It was saying, ‘Well, bureaucrats cannot behave in the same fashion as the colonialists or the imperialists [we] used to have,’ or they said that the nationalization implies a whole new way of organizing production and change, a qualitative change in the relationship between the

workers and the management during the period immediately following the proclamation of *Mwongozo* in 1971. But an interesting thing which occurred after the acceptance of the guidelines was that the petty bourgeoisie themselves recognized that this was too dangerous a weapon. The workers used to move around with a very small version of the guidelines, a document printed up into a very tiny booklet, which could be stuffed into a top pocket or any pocket. Workers had a habit of moving around with the *Mwongozo* and taking it out - as we understand the Chinese take out their little red book - and opening it to the appropriate page, and confronting bureaucrats and saying, "Well, look, according to paragraph 14 so, and so; this is what it says and now what you are saying there and doing is quite different from what is going on here. And then they would move on to paragraph 15 and so on and so forth, and this was becoming very dangerous. Workers were presuming to educate the educated. In other words, it was threatening to become a revolution. (Rodney: 1980)

He eventually concludes that although there were very clear problems that were developing in Tanzania - particularly through the enlargement of the petty-bourgeoisie elements that occupied the government and civil service, that often worked against the generally progressive attitudes of Tanzanian workers - there were favorable elements also being developed among the working class by carrying out Ujamaa politically. It would be very interesting to see what would have been said by the Tanzanian people with respect to the community schools, as I'm sure they would have plenty of views that would have been much more substantive than some of the information I worked with, and perhaps given different perspectives on the workings of the community schools. Nevertheless, the significant tension between the bureaucratic state and the people that I explain earlier in the paper seems to have been present in all facets of the society, not only

in the educational system. Given all of this, the Ujamaa experiment serves as an incredibly important guide for structural challenges that will be faced with revolutionary transformation and should be given more consideration by contemporary analyses of educational integration, inclusion, and organization. The social context it was situated in – the immediate break in colonial relations – will be most like drastic social changes that might be seen in the future.

Works Cited

- Buchert, L. (1994). *Education in the development of Tanzania: 1919-90*. James Currey.
- Gould, M. (n.d.). *Race and Theory: Culture, Poverty and Adaptation in Wilson and Ogbu*.
- Nicholson, T. A. (2012). *Teaching Tanzania: Education and the Creation of Tanzania in a Cold War World*
- Nyerere, J. K. (1973). *Freedom and Development: A selection from writings and speeches 1968-1973 = Uhuru na maendeleo = Uhuru na maendeleo*. Oxford University Press.
- Nyerere, J. K. (1977). *Ujamaa - Essays on Socialism*. Oxford University Press.
- Ogbu, J. U. (1979). *Minority education and caste: The American system in cross-cultural perspective*. Academic Press.
- Rodney, W. (n.d.). *Class Contradictions in Tanzania*. Rodney - class contradictions in Tanzania. Retrieved May 2, 2022, from <https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/rodney-walter/works/classcontradictions.htm>