Self-Reliance and the State: The Multiple Meanings of Development in Early Post-Colonial Tanzania

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Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute, Volume 82, Number 2, May 2012, pp. 212-234 (Article)

Published by Cambridge University Press

Africa 82 (2) 2012: 212–34 doi:10.1017/S0001972012000022

SELF-RELIANCE AND THE STATE: THE MULTIPLE MEANINGS OF DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY POST-COLONIAL TANZANIA

Priya Lal

Self-reliance has been a key concept in development politics in Tanzania – as across much of the African continent more broadly – since the country was established in 1964.[1] In particular, the principle of self-reliance was inextricably intertwined with the philosophy of familyhood underpinning the national development programme of *ujamaa* between 1967 and 1975. Perhaps the most ambitious and sustained version of African socialism, *ujamaa* sought to organize the Tanzanian countryside into communal villages and build a self-reliant national economy upon a foundation of collective hard work and rural cooperation. Though it began in 1967 as a call for voluntary socialist villagization issued by TANU, the country's ruling party, the project morphed into a compulsory drive for rural resettlement in 1973. By the late 1970s the utopian policy of *ujamaa* had unravelled, and self-reliance increasingly became a mere condition of necessity for rural people, rather than a hallmark of Tanzanian citizenship and the basis of a concerted programme of national development. More recently, the concept of self-reliance has enjoyed a resurgence among international policy makers and new investors in Tanzania, albeit as a prescription for individual economic behaviour divorced from an older commitment to nation building and marked by the repudiation of a robust welfare state.

Tanzania's seemingly straightforward developmental trajectory – from an era of radical state-led development in the early years of independence, to a present in which developmental responsibilities have been ceded to the phantom benefactor of 'the market', international organizations, and average citizens themselves – belies the complexity of both the socialist and neo-liberal chapters of its post-colonial history. This complexity is especially evident in the case of the *ujamaa* initiative, which reflected a variety of ideological impulses and generated a wide range of material practices and experiences on the ground. During the *ujamaa* era, self-reliance could be understood as a literal developmental strategy or an idealized developmental outcome; it could refer to individuals, families, villages, regions, or the Tanzanian nation as a whole; and it could be affixed to competing constructions of national citizenship entailing substantive material rights or

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[1] Mainland Tanzania, the territory of Tanganyika, became independent from British rule in 1961. The island territory of Zanzibar gained independence from British rule in 1963, and the two territories came together to form the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964.

mandated local austerity. Rather than conforming to a single pattern of power or resistance, or being apprehended according to a single set of political subjectivities, the changing interactions between Tanzanian villagers and officials between 1967 and 1975 mirrored the dialectical character of the principle of self-reliance and the political imaginary of *ujamaa* itself.

However, much recent literature on *ujamaa* describes a far more rigid, simplistic and sinister initiative. James Scott explains villagization simply as Tanzanian leaders' attempt to 'reorganize human communities in order to make them better objects of political control' (Scott 1998: 224). In a similar vein, other scholars emphasize the Tanzanian state's 'developmentalist hubris' (Schneider 2007: 33), highlight official attempts to 'manage, control, and direct the efforts of the local populace' (Jennings 2003: 185), and underscore the 'furtive political motivations' of a state striving to 'extend government control into the most intimate domains of daily life' (Bender 2008: 843). In invoking the trope of a centralized state seeking to monitor or discipline its citizens, their approach reflects a growing suspicion of the national state as a vehicle for developmental aspirations, and a pervasive conviction that development itself may be a fundamentally tainted ambition (Weinstein 2008). This assumption has become so widespread that Paul Bjerk has pronounced that Scott's conclusion – that the 'increasingly panoptic' behaviour of the Tanzanian state during villagization confirmed the 'authoritarian implications of development theory' – 'will likely remain a permanent fixture in analysis of the era' (Bjerk 2010: 285, 299–300).

Because they locate the failings of *ujamaa* in 'something generic about the projects of the modern developmentalist state' (Scott 1998: 224), such accounts remain limited and limiting in three critical ways. First, apprehending 'developmentalism' as a politically neutral or monolithic category leads ideology and historical context to disappear as significant variables shaping the process by which *ujamaa* came to be imagined, understood, implemented and experienced. Second, this first assumption reproduces a particular version of universalism positing Euro-American or colonial political models as original ones, inevitably reducing Asian or African development projects to mere (and usually poor) copies or inheritances of Western forms (Anderson 1983; Chatterjee 1986). Third, the very category of 'state project' used to define initiatives like *ujamaa* takes the historical centrality of a reified state as a point of departure, automatically precluding attention to the actual texture of popular experiences of development, and ignoring the often fractured internal constitution of the state as a dynamic process in its own right (Askew 2002).[2]

This article tackles these conceptual and methodological problems by using a key principle of the *ujamaa* programme – self-reliance – as an analytical lever to open up the historical landscape of early post-colonial development politics in Tanzania. By focusing on the multiple ideological registers referenced by the precept of self-reliance, I expose the dialectical movement – between

[2]Askew's (2002) study is a notable exception to these trends in recent literature on *ujamaa*, though it addresses urban cultural politics rather than rural development. She highlights the performative and therefore unstable nature of nationalism, exploring popular engagements with the ideologies and institutions of the Tanzanian nation through music and dance.

centralization and decentralization, between modernization and a kind of radical anti-modernism, between planning and improvisation, and between a narrow parochialism and an expansive embrace of community – at the heart of *ujamaa* as a discursive and material formation. In doing so, I challenge categorizations of the Tanzanian state as either excessively weak or excessively strong, looking instead through the lens of local experiences at the consolidation and fragmentation of the national state as part of a single process. Most importantly, my analysis excavates the *ujamaa* case as evidence of the heterogeneity and dynamism of developmental repertoires in the post-colonial world, rather than dismissing it as confirmation of the unidimensional and static nature of 'developmentalism' in general.

The ensuing discussion is divided into three parts. The first provides an overview of competing meanings and genealogies of self-reliance at the level of Tanzanian national policy, drawing primarily from official statements and excerpts from *The Nationalist* and the *Daily News*, national newspapers respectively operated by TANU and the state. The second part examines rural people's understandings and uses of self-reliance in their accounts of *ujamaa* villagization, drawing from interviews with elderly villagers in the south-eastern region of Mtwara. The third part disaggregates the national state spatially and examines the changing position of self-reliance in debates about and dynamics of regional development in Mtwara, drawing on official archives and newspaper reports.

CONTEXTUALIZING OFFICIAL DISCOURSE

The concept of *ujamaa* first entered Tanzanian political discourse in 1962, shortly after mainland Tanganyika's independence. Sketching the founding principles of *ujamaa* philosophy, President Julius Nyerere explained that 'in a socialist society it is the socialist attitude of mind, and not the rigid adherence to a standard political pattern, which is needed' (Nyerere 1966: 162). This foundational 'attitude of mind' was to be simultaneously rooted in indigenous tradition and a humanistic universalism; Nyerere's idealized construction of the harmonious African extended family would provide a model for a politics of national, and even transnational socialist kinship. In 1967, Nyerere's Arusha Declaration further clarified the contours of this socialist attitude by affixing the communitarian impulse of *ujamaa* to the ethical and strategic imperative of self-reliance, outlining a code of conduct for Tanzanian life at the micro-political and macro-political levels.

In one sense, the term self-reliance (*kujitegemea*) had a literal meaning – the productivity of each individual Tanzanian was linked to national prosperity by a chain of self-sufficiency extending through the various political scales of the spatial imaginary at the heart of *ujamaa* villagization. Villages were to be organized according to the established structure of TANU; each individual would be incorporated into a household (*kaya*) which would be collected into a unit with nine other *kaya*. An aggregation of these ten-cell units comprised a village, a cluster of villages comprised a ward, a grouping of wards comprised a district, and a combination of districts comprised a region. According to the Arusha Declaration, 'if every individual is self-reliant the ten-house cell will be

self-reliant, if all the cells are self-reliant the whole ward will be self-reliant, and if the wards are self-reliant the District will be self-reliant. If the Districts are self-reliant, then the Region is self-reliant, and if the Regions are self-reliant, then the whole nation is self-reliant and this is our aim' (Nyerere 1968: 248). Yet Nyerere also pointed out the limits to self-reliance as an absolute precept. *Ujamaa* held that self-reliance was critical 'both as an instrument and goal of development',[3] thus comprising a desired outcome and not just a prescribed mode of conduct – at the personal level, in the sense of individual self-sufficiency, and at the national one, in the sense of political and economic sovereignty.

On the one hand, the principle of self-reliance was woven together with the Arusha Declaration's call for socialist community – at the levels of each *ujamaa* village, the Tanzanian nation, the African continent, and even the Third World broadly conceived. Nyerere's celebration of the romanticized model of the traditional African extended family indicated that a shared commitment to the ideal of self-reliance was to form a basis for deep interpersonal bonds at the local and national level, rather than end with crude individualism. Furthermore, a common preoccupation with the threats to ideological and geopolitical autonomy inherent in the global structures of the Cold War and the capitalist world economy linked the Tanzanian national community to other Non-Aligned or Third World nations; the metaphor of socialist kinship and the collective aspiration of self-reliance discursively grounded experiments with transnational federation, regionalism, and internationalism extending well beyond Tanzanian and even African borders.[4]

On the other hand, a construction of national citizenship that emphasized the redistributive, modernizing mechanism of a welfare state, and not simply an injunction towards communitarian fellowship, motivated the policy of villagization at the heart of the *ujamaa* project. Nyerere's call for a reorganization of the countryside into distinct but cognate *ujamaa* villages reflected a conception of Tanzanian rural space as parcelled into cellular units that were nonetheless universally linked through membership in the new nation; these villages would facilitate increased access between rural populations and state services in the form of schools, health facilities and agricultural infrastructure, as well as encourage economic cooperation and modes of sociability conforming to the spirit of socialist nationalism. In this sense, material self-sufficiency at the local or individual level would be qualified by the dissemination of the institutional trappings of a modern welfare state throughout the countryside.

The elastic field of *ujamaa* discourse was characterized by a layering of developmental referents rather than deriving from a single ideological essence. First, the official maxim of self-reliance resonated with local idioms stigmatizing dependency as a form of exploitation. In the wake of the Arusha Declaration, political leaders and public voices throughout the country spoke a language grounded in indigenous metaphors of parasitism to describe anti-*ujamaa* behaviour both within and beyond Tanzanian borders, equally targeting laziness and capitalist activity (Brennan 2006; Hunter 2008; Ivaska 2011). An editorial in *The Nationalist* published early in 1967 announced: 'the war is on against the

[3]Editorial: 'Second Plan', *The Nationalist*, 29 May 1969.
[4]Such as the East African Community linking Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, *c*. 1967–77.

spirit of dependence in our society'.[5] Months later, the President's Office pronounced that 'the policy of self-reliance teaches that it is undesirable, indeed shameful for a healthy adult to be fed and looked after by others without himself working for his own welfare. . . . A person of this kind is an enemy of the country's development.'[6] At the regional level, officials echoed the national position; in Mtwara, the Regional Commissioner insisted in 1968 that 'in order to stop exploitation in the region, every adult person should work and live by their own sweat' and avoid 'being like a parasite'.[7]

Though self-reliance as a cornerstone of *ujamaa* policy drew upon popular conceptions of exploitation previously directed towards colonial power, it also recalled the very ideological vision of the late-colonial state itself. Particularly evident was the overlap between British officials' promotion of 'self-help' in rural development (Jennings 2003) in the 1950s and Nyerere's endorsement of self-reliance at the local level in the wake of the Arusha Declaration. The former echoed a missionary ethic of voluntarism-as-uplift, but also served a practical purpose of legitimizing uncompensated labour and low state capital expenditure on local-level development – especially in the construction and maintenance of infrastructure. In the years following independence, 'self-help schemes' – increasingly dubbed 'nation-building schemes' to signal their reconfigured objectives – continued to form a staple of official rural improvement strategies as administered by the state's Community Development arm. Nyerere explained their logic in 1965, stating that since 'work is money', 'people give to the nation their hands and brains instead of money, and the result is that we have roads, classrooms and so on, which we would not otherwise be able to afford'.[8]

In 1967, the Minister for Local Government and Rural Development applauded the presumed success of this self-help strategy, announcing that 'the people's own efforts' over the previous five years had saved the government a huge sum of money during that period.[9] Yet the following year the President passed an order 'empower[ing] Village Development Committees to impose traditional sentences on idlers who do not participate in national "endeavours for self-reliance" agreed upon by the people'.[10] The Presidential Circular noted that 'for a community, self-reliance means that the people will use the resources and the skills they jointly possess for their own welfare and their own development' without taking 'the attitude that the Government, or the Local Council, or anyone else must come and do this or that before they can make any progress'. Furthermore, the Circular naturalized community self-help work – the building of

[5]Editorial: 'Enemy number four', *The Nationalist*, 6 February 1967.

[6]'Parasitism must go – Namata', *The Nationalist*, 11 April 1967.

[7]Prime Minister's Office Records (PMO), Tanzania National Archives (TNA), CDR/12/14/4 (IV), Mtwara Region Rural Development, *Maongozi na Utaratibu wa Kutekeleza Azimio la Arusha Katika Mkoa wa Mtwara* (Ndanda Press, March 1968). All Swahili translations are the author's own.

[8]'New Year message to the nation: President applauds people's progress', *The Nationalist*, 2 January 1965.

[9]'Self-help saves over Shs. 67m', *The Nationalist*, 14 July 1967.

[10]'Power to peasants: Village Dev. Committees to punish idlers', *The Nationalist*, 16 October 1968.

'new roads, drains, wells, schools, dispensaries, etc.' as an 'example of the way in which our traditional life is being adapted to modern needs'.[11]

Thus national citizenship appeared to be enacted and claimed precisely through rural communities' lack of material engagement with, or independence from, the Tanzanian state, rather than comprising a position affording substantive rights to resources from the state. However, in practice, self-help policies entailed considerable qualification of the principle of absolute local self-sufficiency. Early on, for instance, a national Self-Help (or 'Nation-Building') Fund was established in response to the discovery that 'some of the projects undertaken called for materials not available in villages such as cement, iron sheets, nails etc. ... but essentially needed'; it was intended to 'supplement people's efforts when they have contributed, to the maximum, their efforts, energies, initiative and resources'.[12]

In the early 1960s Tanzanian national officials, like their counterparts in neighbouring countries such as Kenya and Zambia, experimented with and eventually abandoned a number of state-sponsored settlement schemes. In Tanzania, the infusion of villagization with a socialist ethos beginning in 1967 lent new force to official censure of rural dependence on government assistance that had seemingly caused earlier capital-intensive pilot schemes to fail. A 1970 editorial in *The Nationalist* commented that 'in the past we sometimes spent huge sums of money on establishing a settlement, and supplying it with modern equipment, and social services, as well as often providing it with a management hierarchy'. The piece cautioned against 'speeches putting out such material promises as inducements to *ujamaa* village settlement', encouraging officials to advertise instead 'the way of life in an *ujamaa* community, the dignity and freedom which this brings about, and the benefits of cooperative production'.[13]

Such admonitions, however, hardly resolved widespread equivocation over the proposed nature of rural Tanzanians' relationship to the national state based in Dar es Salaam, in terms of popular rights to the developmental staples of a modernizing welfare state. This internal tension of the *ujamaa* project resonated with another developmental field that emerged in and across post-colonial sites on a global scale in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. During this time, development programmes in countries ranging from India and Cuba to Ghana and Mali exhibited similar ideological tendencies and structural contradictions; these patterns arose from common historical trajectories but also grew out of new forms of transnational engagement (Prashad 2007). Third World imaginaries overlapped with and borrowed from the ideologies of Euro-American modernization and Soviet communism, yet exhibited their own defining characteristics. Though many of these young countries followed policies of industrialization, worked around five-year plans, and pursued new agricultural technologies, they often simultaneously romanticized the older site of the village as a model for the ideal

[11]PMO Part VIII, Self-Help Crash Dev. Plan (5) #3. Presidential Circular No. 2 of 1968, 24 August 1968.

[12]PMO CD/R/14/2 Mtwara Region Rural Development, 'Basic Course – Mzumbe (Proposed Discussions with Trainees and Trainers)' (Basic course for Rural Development Workers). Paper #2 – Nation Building (Self-Help) Fund.

[13]Editorial: 'Fancy and fact', *The Nationalist*, 2 September 1970.

polity, and celebrated traditional practices located in the realm of family life. Furthermore, they shared an anxiety about national sovereignty and an ambivalence about the role of the state in rural development, and promoted self-reliance as a strategy and ambition.

In particular, the conflicting impulses of the political logic of self-reliance in Tanzania paralleled the internal tensions characterizing development discourse and policy in the People's Republic of China during the Maoist era. The Chinese link with Tanzania was the strongest of its numerous relationships with African countries at the time; in 1964 alone China provided $45.5 million in aid to Tanzania, comprising nearly half of its total annual aid on the African continent (Ismael 1971: 515; Monson 2009). In subsequent years this economic assistance would expand, while diplomatic, cultural and ideological exchanges between the two countries deepened the relationship. In addition to selectively incorporating Maoist revolutionary symbolism into Tanzanian political life, TANU leaders repeatedly pointed to China as both a model of the correct path of self-reliance and an illustration of the concrete benefits of following such a developmental path.

After visiting Beijing and southern China as part of a Tanzanian friendship delegation in 1967, the Executive Secretary of TANU pronounced that 'China has set an excellent example for us in taking the road of self-reliance ... Tanzania must take this road too. It's the only road to make our country strong and prosperous.'[14] Two years earlier, Nyerere contrasted a Chinese ethos of discipline and austerity with the 'list of needs and requests for assistance' he had encountered in pre-*ujamaa* rural settlement schemes, noting that the Chinese 'husband their resources very carefully indeed, and only spend money on things which are absolutely essential'. 'This attitude we have to adopt too,' he insisted.[15] To reinforce this call and boost diplomatic relations, TANU leaders often referred to 'the similar past experience' and 'common fighting tasks'[16] of the two countries – a narrative also cultivated by Chinese officials to substantiate Mao's Three Worlds theory[17] in the wake of the Soviet–Sino split. At the start of 1967, Nyerere invoked China's independence struggle by embarking on a 'Long March' across the Tanzanian countryside – a six-week tour of half of the regions in the country, which culminated in a series of long-distance walks by Nyerere, TANU Youth League members,[18] and other young people in support of the Arusha Declaration later that year.[19] The symbolism was clear: in *ujamaa*'s 'war on poverty', the Chinese revolutionary spirit of self-reliance, exemplified by the physical endurance evident in 'the Long March which the beleaguered Red Army

[14]'TANU team flies to S. China', *The Nationalist*, 22 December 1967.

[15]'Union being cemented, says Mwalimu: Union making great progress', *The Nationalist*, 27 April 1965.

[16]'US imperialism sure to fail: Chou tells Isle rally', *The Nationalist*, 7 June 1965.

[17]The Maoist Three Worlds theory held that the First World comprised the competing Cold War superpowers of the US and the USSR; the Second World comprised their satellites; and the Third World comprised the neutral and non-aligned countries.

[18]The Youth League, established in 1956 and comprised mostly of young men, was a loosely controlled wing of TANU entrusted with policing and 'nation-building' responsibilities.

[19]These 'marches' were widely reported upon in the Tanzanian press during this time – for example, 'Editorial: On the march', *The Nationalist*, 4 October 1967.

undertook in 1934/5',[20] would comprise the most effective weapon in the Tanzanian arsenal.

Despite China and Tanzania's mutual commitment to self-reliance as a developmental strategy for their rural populations, however, their very relationship was premised upon a recognition that national self-reliance could only realistically comprise a developmental goal for a poor country like Tanzania. Faced with the disadvantages of its colonial history and threatened by 'the great clanking gears' (Watts 2003: 29) of global capitalism, independent Tanzania – like its African Socialist counterparts – hardly followed a course of absolute autarky and self-sufficiency during the *ujamaa* era. In the realm of foreign policy and trade relations, self-reliance constituted an aspiration rather than a prescription for a literal course of action; instead of rejecting all international aid, Tanzania practised strategic diversification by borrowing heavily from a multitude of donors (Rugumamu 1997).

SELF-RELIANCE ON THE GROUND

How did these contradictory conceptions of self-reliance translate into development policy and practice among officials and rural citizens on the ground? Elders' memories of *ujamaa* in three villages in Mtwara, considered alongside first-hand reports on these same villages completed by students of TANU's Kivukoni College in 1976,[21] indicate that the trajectory of political, economic and social change during the *ujamaa* era was quite varied at the local level.[22] Interviews with village residents born roughly between 1920 and 1950 were conducted by this author and a research assistant in 2008; such conversations took place in individual and group settings, in a mix of Kiswahili and Kimakonde. Just as the three villages selected encompass a range of sizes and levels of access to state services, the men and women interviewed represent the spectrum of social, political and economic status within each settlement. Reflecting the demographic composition of the surrounding area, the elders consulted share a Makonde, largely Muslim background,[23] and derive their livelihood from smallholder agriculture supplemented by temporary or informal wage labour. Their narratives index a great diversity of expectations, experiences and evaluations of villagization, paralleling the plurality of political visions motivating Tanzanian development policy in both kind and scope.

During the late-colonial period and the early years of independence, Mtwara had earned a reputation in official circles and local communities as a backward periphery within the larger colony of Tanganyika and national space of Tanzania.

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[20]'We admire people of Tanzania – Chou', *The Nationalist*, 5 June 1965.

[21]Chuo cha TANU Kivukoni (1976) 'Taarifa ya Vijiji vya Mkoa ya Mtwara'. Kivukoni College is now the Mwalimu Nyerere Academy.

[22]Tapes and transcripts of fieldwork are in the author's possession. Interviews in Mdui, Rwelu, and Nanguruwe in Mtwara District (and some subsequent transcriptions and translations) were conducted with the assistance of Issa Chilindima. The term 'elder' refers to individuals roughly over the age of 55 at the time of interviewing, rather than indicating social status.

[23]With some exceptions, most notably among predominantly Catholic Mozambican immigrants.

Nonetheless, despite its impoverishment, lack of infrastructure, and relatively decentralized rural political structures (Liebenow 1971; Seppälä and Koda 1998; Becker 2008), Mtwara ultimately came to be celebrated as the site where villagization was most thoroughly implemented in the wake of the Arusha Declaration. By 1969 the region alone was responsible for 333 of the 476 villages throughout the 18 regions of mainland Tanzania;[24] by 1972 the number of villages in the region had reportedly risen to over 1,000 (Schneider 2003: 213). These figures reflected a significant reordering of the countryside, but of a type that hardly accorded with the ideals set forth by national policy.

Between 1967 and 1972, local officials travelled throughout the Mtwara countryside, encouraging rural people to live together. Rural people both heeded and ignored this call; those who resettled usually did so at short distances from their original homes and private farms, and built new houses in small villages (*vijiji vidogo vidogo*) comprised of anywhere from ten to a hundred households. In other cases, officials merely recorded already existing settlements (*vijiji vya zamani*) as new *ujamaa* villages, without asking residents to shift their homes at all. These two types of villages made varying degrees of progress towards the practice of true *ujamaa*, but men and women throughout the south-eastern countryside continued to work on their older private farms – especially their permanent cashew plots.[25] Later, between 1973 and 1975, TANU Youth League and People's Militia members throughout Mtwara forcefully resettled those who had initially refused to move, or who were living in small villages, into large settlements of at least 250 *kaya* each, in compliance with the strict guidelines of Operation Vijiji (the compulsory villagization programme). In each of the three villages surveyed this process occurred differently, and in each village *ujamaa* policy yielded different results.

The pluralistic and sometimes contradictory quality of local interpretations of the official principle of self-reliance captures the diverse and ambivalent character of rural experiences of villagization and *ujamaa* policy as a whole. One recurring definition of self-reliance (*kujitegemea*) among elderly villagers is highly literal, implying an almost complete sense of detachment from the Tanzanian nation state. Some villagers accordingly explain self-reliance as 'depending on yourself, for agriculture . . . for yourself along with your children',[26] 'having enough food to feed yourself',[27] and 'doing your own work'.[28] In perhaps the clearest articulation of this position, one group of women in their sixties and seventies – an approximation based on the year of their initiation (*unyago*) rather than birthdates they could not recall – responded to my inquiry about the definition of self-reliance with the matter-of-fact statement that 'we rely upon ourselves' (*tunajitegemea*). One of them added, as if to humour an outsider's ignorance of

[24]'476 Ujamaa villages established – Kisumo', *The Nationalist*, 15 July 1969.

[25]Cashew became a popular cash crop and the region's economic base beginning in the 1940s. TNA Dar es Salaam, Accession 116: 15/52 1933–47 Cashew Nuts, Southern Province; 15/110 Cashew Nuts Industry, Southern Province.

[26]Interview with S. Chiupa, H. B. Saloum and S. Rashidi, Mdui village (January 2008).

[27]Interview with A. S. Nanguo, Mdui village (January 2008).

[28]Interview with M. H. Mpaka, H. A. Chinkaweni and S. A. Mnatosa, Nanguruwe village (February 2008).

the realities of life in rural Mtwara: 'Self-reliance is this: you farm, you grow cassava, you take it inside, you eat it.'[29]

Such narratives often depict self-reliance as a fundamental component of local tradition, rather than emphasizing its function within state policy. 'That is our tradition, that when you are mature after you get married you live your own life independently,' said one man, describing the process by which he became an adult and moved out of his parents' household – a personal transition that coincided with his experience of villagization. 'It was self-reliance,' he clarified; 'I preferred living apart.'[30] For men like him, in their late teens and twenties during the *ujamaa* era, the enduring connotation of the concept of *kujitegemea* was the promise of social independence that came with marriage, rather than a status associated with political citizenship. Women, too, emphasized the local roots of self-reliance, albeit as a collective condition. 'No one came to tell us. We just rely on ourselves,' insisted one of a group of women who laughed off further questions about the official language of *ujamaa*. 'We're surprised,' they responded. 'We don't know!'[31] Yet these apparently vernacular configurations of self-sufficiency often betray the imprint of official discourse. Some elders, for instance, specify the unit of self-reliance as the patriarchal nuclear family, rather than the individual or the extended kin group. One man, who served on a village committee in the 1970s but was otherwise not especially active in TANU or local government politics, offered: 'The meaning of self-reliance is to live with your family – like three or four people, together with yourself. You rely on yourself to direct them, care for them, etc.'[32] This description reflects the fact that *ujamaa* – the Kiswahili term for 'familyhood', in the broadest sense – usually reached rural populations through a set of policies that, paradoxically, normalized the nuclear family as a foundational developmental entity (Lal 2010).

Though such strict definitions of self-reliance as a *de facto* condition of 'using one's own sweat'[33] suggest a kind of social atomization at the village level, at least with regard to matters of economic sustenance and food security, elders also insist that '*ujamaa* is cooperation, not considering where the person is from'.[34] When explaining the meaning of *ujamaa*, many villagers highlight a local understanding of community without attaching it to a larger national one. This move is particularly common among female elders, such as one woman who could not recall her birth year or much about her early life, conceding that 'sometimes I don't remember. Because I was a small child.' She was nonetheless able to confidently explain that '*ujamaa* is like in a village like here, meaning here is your brother, your *ndugu* (comrade), all necessarily cooperating. If there is any problem at night they will help you, even if your house catches fire.'[35] During the late-colonial period, given the primacy of male migration for wage labour within the region – to work on sisal plantations or construction projects in order to meet

[29]Interview with S. I. Mbaruku, E. A. Luhumbe, E. I. Mtama, S. S. Issa Ulende and F. S. Ngome, Mdui village (January 2008).
[30]Interview with H. A. Mkaula, Mdui village (January 2008).
[31]Interview with L. Rilanga, L. Mkenerere and Z. Amri, Mdui village (January 2008).
[32]Interview with A. Suleiman, Mdui village (January 2008).
[33]Interview with M. S. Yusufu, Mdui village (January 2008).
[34]Interview with L. Rilanga, L. Mkenerere and Z. Amri, Mdui village (January 2008).
[35]Interview with F. I. Nampembe, Mdui village (January 2008).

tax payments – many women would live without their husbands for prolonged periods. Concerns about their own safety and the safety of their children litter their memories of life by their farms (*mashambani*) before villagization; conversely, gratitude about the security offered by residential proximity accordingly permeates their accounts of post-villagization life. 'If you lived in the forest (*porini*) you were alone,' a woman in another village pointed out, while her other female companions agreed: 'but here if you had a problem – like if a thief came to steal something, you'd shout – and everyone came to help.'[36] This type of narrative suggests that *ujamaa* merely entailed a spirit of mutual assistance at the village level, even though many villagers remember learning about *ujamaa* from government officials before or after they moved into concentrated settlements, and thus also associate it with 'nation building'.

Even among this latter group, though, popular mappings of the 'nation' vary greatly. Elders whose political subjectivities revolve around the event of villagization rather than the process of decolonization refer to moving into villages as moving into nations (*mataifa*), or beginning to live nationally (*kitaifa*) – conflating their village with the nation, or defining the nation as their village. In a revealing example of this tendency, one woman who grew up in the interior district of Newala stated – in a mix of Kiswahili and Kimakonde – that 'the matter of the nation is about Nyerere', but then went on to describe nation building simply as 'participating in *ngoma* (ceremonial drumming)'. Of villagization, she commented that 'the operation was hard, they forced us [to move] whether you liked or not'. Perhaps because of this negative experience, she admitted that she 'did not build the nation. I was lazy, others were active.'[37] Others echo her strikingly parochial construction of national citizenship. Another woman with more neutral memories of resettlement defined nation building as 'helping if someone dies, you attend their funeral',[38] and agreed with the aforementioned woman from Newala, who identified 'farming, *mkumi*, you help someone farm' as another aspect of nation building.[39] Cooperative farming – a key component of *ujamaa* policy – could therefore resonate with the older local practice of *mkumi*, in which groups of rural people offered their agricultural labour to an individual or family in exchange for food and drink.

In general, elders with a deeper personal history of participation in TANU's independence struggle in the late 1950s identify *ujamaa* as explicitly attached to a condition of national citizenship distinct from older rural practices and local social formations. Those who signed TANU cards or joined the TANU Youth League in the years before villagization demonstrate a particular commitment and sense of belonging to the Tanzanian national family – understood as a translocal, historically grounded community, rather than an arbitrary concentration of individuals into a rural settlement. In turn, the Youth League as an institution appears frequently in the accounts of villagers less invested in TANU prior to the *ujamaa* era, since, despite an abundance of detailed spatial plans and procedural regulations generated by the central government and regional

[36]Interview with E. M. Namituli, Rwelu village (February 2008).
[37]Interview with S. I. Ismaili, Mdui village (January 2008).
[38]Interview with H. A. Chilimi, Mdui village (January 2008).
[39]Interview with F. I. Nampembe, Mdui village (January 2008).

administrations, it was ultimately a handful of local officials and young militants who presided over the actual implementation of villagization across the countryside. Although some of the narratives cited above highlight the complete absence of the Tanzanian state from rural people's lives, and some refer to it as a discrete political unit associated with specific local officials or Nyerere himself, others present a story in which 'the state' was inextricable from 'the people' in the Mtwara countryside.

More broadly, the diversity of villagers' conceptualizations of the state, or government (*serikali*), reflects the range of their expectations of villagization and corresponds to the multivalence of the developmental principle of self-reliance itself. Understood as a policy introduced to – or imposed upon – the Mtwara countryside, *ujamaa* could be taken either to mandate a kind of austere, premodern practice of self-sufficiency, or to represent the efforts of a benevolent state seeking to provide material goods and services to rural populations. The first interpretation is most apparent in a common explanation of the Arusha Declaration, which centres upon the physical act of Nyerere's long-distance march of 1967. One man accustomed to travelling extensively in his youth – he left his home in northern Mozambique in the early 1960s as a *manamba* recruit to work for several years on a sisal plantation in Tanga before moving to Mtwara – affirmed that he 'had heard of' the Arusha Declaration. It referred, he claimed, to the act of 'leaving here and walking on foot until Mtwara [town, over 10 kilometres away], and returning here to our place, depending on oneself'.[40] In a separate conversation, another resident of his village – a native of the region who was an active member of the TANU Youth League during the *ujamaa* years – declared: 'The meaning of the Arusha Declaration is due to Julius K. Nyerere leaving on his feet to go to Arusha. Its meaning is that . . . by walking you can travel more than ten miles.'[41] It seems, therefore, that the Arusha Declaration – the first articulation of the national policy of *ujamaa* and self-reliance – reached rural people in this corner of Mtwara through local officials' instructions that peasants follow the example of their President's 'Long March' and walk on foot from their homes to the regional capital. The policy of self-reliance, in this respect, was entirely divorced from national citizenship as a condition entailing certain material rights; instead, rural people were called upon – using the symbolism of Chinese struggle – to endure physical hardship to strengthen themselves and thus 'build' an abstract entity called 'the nation'.

Yet a number of elders also identify the policy of *ujamaa* as attached to a more robust version of national citizenship entailing concrete rewards from the Tanzanian *serikali*. Though national officials cautioned local officials against inducing rural people to resettle into concentrated settlements in exchange for goods and services from the state, it is common for elders to recall villagization as proceeding exactly along those lines. One former Youth League member, who boasted of taking part in the first wave of voluntary resettlement to his current village, recalled: 'when we lived in the countryside, we listened in the meetings, and heard the news from the radio'. In such meetings with local officials, he continued, 'they said you shouldn't live by yourself in the forest; it's better for you

[40]Interview with A. S. Nanguo, Mdui village (January 2008).
[41]Interview with M. S. Yusufu, Mdui village (January 2008).

to join the nations. To stay together so that when there is some *msaada* (assistance, or services), you will all be assisted together.' He then went on to detail the Youth League's initiative in seizing this opportunity, proudly remarking that 'after hearing this call, we had to be the first people to come here, then we were followed by our whole family, our parents'.[42] Another man who had been a card-carrying TANU member since 1955, and voluntarily resettled into a *kijiji kidogo* (small village) during the first wave of villagization, confirmed: 'if we were brought *msaada*, we would receive it together; if you stayed alone you would miss it ... there were schools, health centres, likewise water'.[43]

In practice, he admitted to disappointment with the *msaada* offered by the government after the second wave of compulsory villagization. For example, he pointed out, 'they brought fertilizer here, that's it'. This aid was of little practical utility, since 'when we were put here we didn't understand the matter of fertilizer'. Likewise, while most rural people remember being promised government assistance in new villages, many of them do not remember receiving anything substantial. In an illustrative discussion, one group of women expounded: 'The meaning of *ujamaa* is this: if I have a problem, they call my kin, they call my family, they call the government.' When questioned about what assistance the government had provided, they countered: 'they have not yet helped us, because ... we ourselves, we can practise self-reliance ourselves'.[44] Rather than explaining the state's failure to deliver material assistance in terms of the policy of self-reliance, alternatively, other elders blame their peers in the village government for appropriating such goods for themselves. 'Our leaders were thieves,'[45] some stated sharply; others mentioned more elliptically that after *ujamaa*, 'some were full'.[46] In one settlement, a separationist movement even developed after a few local leaders were accused of stealing money from the village fund in the mid-1970s.

Villagers' memories of the national policy of *ujamaa* and self-reliance are thus influenced by the respective positions they occupied within shifting local configurations of power between the late 1950s and late 1970s. Rural people's contemporary assessments of *ujamaa* are also heavily inflected by their prior experiences of colonial rule and subsequent experiences of life under structural adjustment policies since the 1980s. In particular, the latter have an impact on popular evaluations of the quality and availability of state services in the countryside since resettlement. While some villages possess schools, health centres and water infrastructure, others are several miles away from such amenities. Throughout the region, roads are unpaved and difficult – even impossible – to navigate during the rainy season, and motor transportation is infrequent and, for many, expensive. Even those who live in settlements with schools and dispensaries lament the prohibitive cost of secondary education and medical care in recent years. When asked about the local level of development, one representatively

[42]Interview with M. S. Chimbando, Mdui village (January 2008).
[43]Interview with A. H. Nahembe, Rwelu village (February 2008).
[44]Interview with S. I. Mbaruku, E. A. Luhumbe, E. I. Mtama, S. S. Issa Ulende and F. S. Ngome, Mdui village (January 2008).
[45]Interview with H. I. Muraja, Rwelu village (February 2008).
[46]Interview with S. Athman, Mdui village (January 2008).

disillusioned man sighed, 'Development? There is no development.'[47] In a conversation among a small group of outspoken elders comparing the *ujamaa*-era *serikali* to its present-day counterpart, another man scoffed, 'the government of back then and the government of now? Now it has failed. We have a government in name. Meaning we don't really have a government.'[48]

In the present, thus, national citizenship has come to indicate to many a negative condition of material self-reliance – albeit within a village community – and an absent state. Accordingly, nostalgia often pervades elders' assessments of the government of the *ujamaa* era, especially among those who saw *ujamaa* as linked to a benevolent state and felt that they belonged to a meaningful national community (Kamat 2008). Two close friends, former Youth League members whose spirited dispositions belied their old age, remembered the early period of *uhuru* (independence) fondly and with great emotion. 'Nyerere taught us politics (*siasa*) – to have the politics of citizenship (*raia*) in our TANU,' one of them ruminated, while his companion confided: 'Even now when I hear his speeches on the radio, I just want to cry.'[49]

However, others who experienced villagization as a violent disruption of their lives identify a fundamental continuity between the colonial state and the post-colonial Tanzanian state in general, and dismiss the 'politics' of *ujamaa* as another example of both state invasiveness and neglect. These elders, many of whom were forcibly relocated – losing property and access to their permanent farms in the process – lament that moving to the village 'made us poor; our plans and expectations were destroyed',[50] and describe villagization as an episode of destruction (*kubomolesha*). One especially critical man even spoke of a 'new colonialism' characterized by a frequent 'changing of the discussion (*mazungumzo*)' – or a kind of political arbitrariness perhaps exemplified by local officials' alternating between various versions of national development policy. Though his frustration was clearly informed by his more recent experiences as a cashew farmer – local problems with cashew marketing have led to widespread denunciations of the current Tanzanian government's failure to protect vulnerable peasants from predatory traders – he specifically targeted the *ujamaa* period. 'After independence, yes, we had independence . . . but after about five, six, seven years passed, a new colonialism returned,' he contended. 'When the destruction of the villages came, or the destruction of the area of people's settlements, they used force,' he elaborated. 'That was a mistake.'[51]

For many rural people, nonetheless, villagization was an episode of government by force as well as government by politics – a time of hardship as well as opportunity. Villagers routinely proclaim that *ujamaa* persists into the present, and that they continue to benefit from the spirit of community and 'living together, cooperating in our work',[52] even while sometimes criticizing the policy

[47]Interview with S. Abdallaha, Rwelu village (February 2008).
[48]Interview with S. H. Chinankwili, Rwelu village (February 2008).
[49]Interview with M. H. Namnomba, H. H. Mawila Mohammed and M. M. Mfaume, Nanguruwe village (February 2008).
[50]Interview with S. H. Chinankwili, Rwelu village (February 2008).
[51]Interview with A. A. Kitenge, Rwelu village (January 2008).
[52]Interview with H. S. Mkumbange, S. Y. Chembeya, H. S. Nampungila and M. S. Malenga, Mdui village (January 2008).

of resettlement in the past. A long tradition of rural diversification and flexibility in the decades before independence helps contextualize these assessments and the ability of some elders to elegantly resolve any apparent discrepancies between a policy of self-reliance and a policy of cooperation and assistance. 'Self-reliance has its levels,' pronounced one man whose close ties to TANU and its successor, CCM – which still dominates local politics throughout much of the Tanzanian countryside – lent him an authoritative manner as he spoke.[53] 'You can be self-reliant in food but there is no medicine. But it's not that when you say self-reliance, it means that your friends leave you. They give you more strength.'[54]

REGIONAL REFRACTIONS

Rather than describing their experiences of *ujamaa* in language that one would expect from either the disciplined subjects of national 'developmentalist' governmentality (Foucault 2008) or resistant, 'uncaptured' rural traditionalists (Hyden 1980), Mtwara elders exhibit a wide range of attitudes towards matters of national citizenship and development. Upon cursory examination, therefore, the undifferentiated category of 'the peasantry' lurking in the shadows of so many analyses of *ujamaa* breaks down into a plurality of subjectivities and positions – just as the category of the 'developmentalist state' behind this policy also reveals its internal heterogeneity. Indeed, during the late 1960s and early 1970s, the internal tensions of *ujamaa* policy outlined above led some south-easterners to use official discourse to question the priorities of decision makers in Dar es Salaam, and particularly to expose the uneven production of national space and the uneven constitution of the national state itself. In doing so, government officials and citizens in regions like Mtwara often deployed competing versions of *ujamaa* and self-reliance within public or administrative channels to make claims on national resources.

The administrative unit of the region occupied an ambiguous place within the larger entity of the Tanzanian nation during the *ujamaa* era. On the one hand, during this time the Tanzanian nation itself was a work in progress. Nyerere intended the policy of self-reliance to consolidate Tanzania as a self-sufficient, autonomous and sovereign political unit *vis-à-vis* the international stage, but also to eradicate exploitation and inequality within Tanzanian borders, and therefore eliminate the uneven development of national space inflicted by decades of colonial rule. On the other hand, the policy of *ujamaa* sanctioned a decentralization of the national polity by calling for sub-levels of the Tanzanian nation to practise self-reliance as a developmental strategy – a tactic that threatened to intensify developmental fragmentation rather than build a coherent, durable nation.

In 1968, interpreting the Arusha Declaration for citizens of south-eastern Tanzania, the Mtwara Regional Commissioner announced that 'the meaning of the politics of self-reliance is that development in the region will be brought about

[53]In 1977, TANU joined with Zanzibar's Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) to form the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) – or 'Party of the Revolution'.

[54]Interview with S. A. Jamali, Rwelu village (January 2008).

by people's effort, especially in agriculture, without depending on money from outside the region or from foreign countries'.[55] Yet the cause of regional self-reliance collapsed when confronted with the overall lack of funds and functional infrastructure in Mtwara. In the context of Mtwara's historical underdevelopment, the need for central support for the region seemed especially pressing, but local officials consistently complained that the national government ignored this imperative. In a 1967 meeting with representatives from the national Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development Planning, the Mtwara Regional Development Committee asserted that 'most of the Mtwara Regional development projects in the present Five Year Development Plan were either not funded or perhaps not received due priority among other Regions' projects'. The chairman declared that the region had largely been excluded from the existing Five Year Plan since 'most of this Region's projects have not been implemented so far'.[56]

Regional reports in the wake of the Arusha Declaration persistently identified poor transportation infrastructure as one of Mtwara's main developmental priorities. In 1968, the Mtwara Regional Development Officer noted that 'the major developmental tasks of Mtwara Region, which has begun to awaken developmentally especially after leaving colonialism behind, are building transportation infrastructure (that is, roads and bridges) and water infrastructure (wells or agricultural dams)'.[57] His assessment echoed that of the Mtwara Development Committee a year earlier,[58] and by 1970 the complaints had not changed; in a report that year the Regional Development Officer decried 'the lack of cars and means of transportation' and pleaded, 'I hope help will arrive quickly. Meaning there are many *ujamaa* villages that need these important services.'[59] Indeed, the transportation problem comprised a fundamental dilemma *vis-à-vis* the project of villagization. If an increasingly dominant version of *ujamaa* discourse explained villagization as a means of facilitating peasant contact with government services by concentrating rural people in accessible settlements, then regional development would in fact centre upon the availability of resources to construct, maintain and traverse functional rural roads. However, roads to and within Mtwara remained few and largely impassable during the lengthy rainy season.

In one sense, therefore, regional deficiencies in funds and infrastructure marked Mtwara as developmentally stunted. Conversely, others viewed this condition as confirming the south-east as a virtuous example of *ujamaa* development. If the formulation of self-reliance meant that regions should literally not depend on

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[55]PMO CDR/12/14/4 (IV), Mtwara Region Rural Development, *Maongozi na Utaratibu wa Kutekeleza Azimio la Arusha Katika Mkoa wa Mtwara* (Ndanda Press, March 1968).

[56]PMO CDR/12/14/4 (IV), Mtwara Region Rural Development, Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Mtwara Regional Development Committee held at Mtwara on 31 July 1967.

[57]PMO CDR/12/14/4 (IV), Mtwara Region Rural Development, R.30/17/26, Taarifa ya Shughuli za Maendeleo Mkoa wa Mtwara, December 1968, from Afisa Maendeleo wa Mkoa, Mtwara, to Kamishna wa Maendeleo, Dar es Salaam, 1 January 1969.

[58]PMO CDR/12/14/4 (IV), Mtwara Region Rural Development, Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Mtwara Regional Development Committee held at Mtwara on 31 July 1967.

[59]PMO RD/12/14/1 (V), Mtwara Region Rural Development, RD/RDF/REP/3, Taarifa ya Kazi Zote za Regional Development Funds Mkoa wa Mtwara, from Afisa ya Maendeleo Mkoani to Katibu Mkuu, Wizara ya Tawala za Mikoa na Maendeleo Vijijini, 14 October 1970.

resources from Dar es Salaam, the state's somewhat circular logic rendered the peripheral or marginalized status of Mtwara as a factor *contributing* to its development. In other words, Mtwara could become renowned as a developmental success not only because of the region's astonishing progress in implementing villagization (according to quantitative measurements), but also because of the challenging conditions under which it had achieved such rapid and extensive resettlement.

Popular voices and official statements articulated both positions using the language of *ujamaa*. In 1968, a supplement on the region in *The Nationalist* declared that though Mtwara 'used to be called the "Cinderella" province' and 'was deemed backward, devoid of development potential', it was now 'a fast developing region'. The report proclaimed that 'agricultural production is increasing by leaps and bounds, and [Mtwara's] contribution to the nation's economic development is increasing. The region has been opened up and is confident of its future.' The factors given to account for 'this rapid advance' were 'the people's hard work at production' and 'their cooperative spirit'.[60] Throughout the 1960s, cashew production in Mtwara continued to increase steadily every year, and in 1970 the government opened a short-lived cashew processing plant in the region. The press described this event as a hallmark of self-reliant development, 'marking a "leap forward" in the peasants' sustained efforts for better increased production'.[61]

Yet in a series of contemporaneous letters to the editor, a chorus of voices from within the region challenged these glowing assessments, protesting that the south-east's neglect by national officials violated the principles of the socialist production of national space envisioned by *ujamaa*. The first letter asserted that 'in Tanzania, there are two groups of people. Those in northern and central regions are the ones who enjoy the country's fruits of independence and those in southern regions are left behind without any progress.' The letter concluded by asking, 'Is this country really a socialist one and yet is in two parts? Why do the northern people enjoy the fruits of this country? Why are the southern people ignored?'[62] Many of the accounts that followed, echoing this indignant tone, focused especially on the matter of investment in roads. One letter noted that the 'lack of good all-weather roads is a major handicap in economic and social development',[63] while another 'Concerned Southerner' reiterated that the 'southern part of Tanzania needs permanent roads like any other part of this country, but to one's dismay, the roads to that part are really in a very poor condition'. The latter also critiqued the central government's disproportionate investment in infrastructure in other regions, inquiring: 'Is the right way of distributing the national wealth to the equal members?'[64]

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[60]'Mtwara Region Supplement: Intro', *The Nationalist*, 16 November 1968. The 'Cinderella' metaphor appeared elsewhere in British Africa (von Oppen 2002).

[61]'Newala peasants "leap forward"', *The Nationalist*, 3 September 1970.

[62]Azizi A. Muhibu, Mtwara, Letter to the Editor: 'A look at southern Tanzania', *Daily News*, 3 August 1972.

[63]N. B. Namembe, Letter to the Editor: 'When will south receive her share of development?' *Daily News*, 31 August 1972.

[64]'Concerned Southerner', Dar es Salaam, Letter to the Editor: 'Development: southern regions are neglected', *Daily News*, 8 August 1972.

Thus, to some the *de facto* condition of material self-reliance in Mtwara during the late 1960s and early 1970s implied a contradiction of the *ujamaa* principle of socialist equality and constituted an obstacle to true development within the region – as well as to national unity more broadly. The issue of regional peripherality, in turn, linked up to larger questions about citizenship and development across the country. If *ujamaa* celebrated national kinship and community, why did official policy often emphasize the self-reliance of individuals, households and local political units as ends in and of themselves? How could villagization be motivated by both a drive to consolidate local self-sufficiency and a desire to increase rural people's access to government resources and services? Could hard work and popular initiative alone be effective without sufficient state investment?

These questions remained unresolved, but became increasingly irrelevant in the early 1970s as Tanzanian leaders simultaneously rejected a utopian interpretation of *ujamaa* in favour of a narrower formula of forced resettlement, and acquiesced in the fragmentation of national space in economic and political terms. Rather than being marked by the centralization of 'developmentalist' state power in Dar es Salaam, the later years of *ujamaa* policy seem to be characterized as much by an unravelling of the state's ability to preside effectively over national development itself. In economic terms this was evidenced by the pernicious financial flows that had persisted below the discursive surface of *ujamaa* since 1967 – in the form of continued colonial-era export patterns, and increasing rates of food imports as a result of repeated local crop failures. The vulnerability of the Tanzanian national economy became apparent in the early 1970s, moreover, as national indebtedness to foreign donors grew while domestic production in many domains contracted. It was precisely this dissolution of economic self-reliance as a condition and a possibility that contributed to the entanglement of regions like Mtwara with foreign actors on the stage of a new global developmental economy.

After hiring a US-based management consulting firm to review the country's administrative structure in 1971, the Tanzanian government completed an internal reorganization in the name of decentralization. From 1972 onwards, administrative and decision-making powers in all sectors of development became concentrated at the regional level rather than dispersed among national ministries and filtered through popularly elected local government institutions. Under the new Rural Integrated Development Plan (RIDEP) model, the Tanzanian government invited foreign donors to pair up with individual regions to prepare (and, ideally, fund) five-year plans for those units. From 1972 onwards, both Mtwara and Lindi regions[65] were linked to the government of Finland under the new structure for national development; other pairings included Yugoslavia with the Ruvuma Region, Germany with Tanga, and the Netherlands with Morogoro (Belshaw 1982). In 1974 teams of Finnish experts arrived in the south-east to prepare integrated development plans (IRDPs) for the Third Tanzanian Five Year Plan (Voipio 1998). Though complete funding for this planning cycle fell

[65]One year earlier, the central government had altered the boundaries of Mtwara Region, dividing one of the largest regions in the country into two; Mtwara, Masasi and Newala districts remained part of Mtwara, while the northern districts of Lindi, Nachingwea and Kilwa formed the new region of Lindi.

through, over the next two decades the Tanzanian government commissioned British consultants and FINNIDA (the Finnish International Development Agency) to prepare and ultimately fund IRDPs in Mtwara, in congruence with similar initiatives in other regions. In the meantime, the central government itself submitted to the austerity measures and liberalization regimen imposed by the International Monetary Fund beginning in 1986.

In search of material and technical resources, the Tanzanian government adopted the newly fashionable model of 'integrated development' on a regional scale, but only at the expense of actual national integration. This move marked the ascendance of a new model of global engagement for Tanzania, both compromising the internal integrity of the nation state as a spatial unit and challenging its sovereignty by increasingly exporting developmental governance to individual foreign donors (Armstrong 1987). It also signalled the evaporation of *ujamaa* as a national development ideal and a discourse within which claims for state resources could be framed by people within regions like Mtwara.

CONCLUSIONS

In 1972, an editorial in *The Nationalist* proclaimed, 'Tanzania's policy of self-reliance is a matter of life and death. It must be seen to be so all the time.'[66] Despite the urgency of this message, its meaning was remarkably indeterminate. Self-reliance had denoted many things to people within Tanzania since its rise to prominence as a key principle of national policy five years earlier: a mandated developmental strategy or a collective developmental aspiration, a condition of dignity or privation, a hallmark of national citizenship or a reflection of local survivalism, a matter of luxury or necessity. Over the course of the 1970s, self-reliance as a political maxim became dislodged from a concerted programme of national development, and resurfaced as a catchword of international development discourse as well as an emergent set of neo-liberal policies since directed at much of sub-Saharan Africa. The pursuit of individual self-interest for cost-sharing purposes, in other words, displaced the ideal of self-sacrifice for a more ambitious project of nation building as the dominant political ideology in late-twentieth-century Tanzania, as across much of sub-Saharan Africa more broadly (Ferguson 2006).

Conventional assessments of national development in Tanzania imply that this transition was precipitated by fundamental flaws in the *ujamaa* experiment – stemming from *ujamaa*'s reproduction of a generic top-down, authoritarian statism apparently inherent in the concept of development itself, or from the dysfunctional character and artificial foundation of the modern state in Africa, or both. The aim of this article has been to challenge such quick conclusions, breaking down the monolithic analytical categories of 'developmentalism', 'state', and 'peasantry' to expose a much more fluid historical landscape marked by a dialectical friction between competing constructions of national citizenship and definitions and measures of development.

[66]Editorial, *The Nationalist*, 3 January 1972.

Without following a culturalist impulse to classify the Tanzanian case as a purely 'alternative' development project – as scholars have written about alternative modernities or alternative nationalisms (Chakrabarty 2000; Chatterjee 1993) – I have shown that subsuming *ujamaa* under the generic label of 'developmentalism' distorts the evolving, internally complex, and historically particular nature of this political formation. More productive have been tentative attempts to undertake a loose typology of developmental repertoires and comparatively position *ujamaa* in relation to other nation-building projects born out of the intersection of the global dynamics of decolonization and the Cold War. Such an effort, however, requires both an attentiveness to the dialectical and dynamic nature of state power and political ideology – best achieved through methodologies that look beyond and within 'the state' as a category – and an appreciation of the broader arc of popular expectations and experiences of development in the long term (Ferguson 1999).

In Tanzania, tracing the multivalent concept of self-reliance across the divide of independence reveals both continuities and ruptures in political discourse and practice at the local level, as does examining a more recent historical transition in the 1980s and 1990s – labelled variously a shift to post-socialism, post-developmentalism, or neo-liberalism. Though contemporary Tanzania may be usefully conceptualized as belonging to a wider global post-socialist formation (Aminzade 2003; Askew 2006; Fouéré 2011), this analytical framework is most illuminating when it recognizes the distinctive nature of 'peripheral communist movements' (Chari and Verdery 2008) or socialist experiments in the Third World in comparison to the Soviet or Chinese examples, and acknowledges the reordering of relationships *within* the post-socialist world as a key dimension of this transition. In China's 'return to Africa from the late 1990s' (Lee 2009: 647), for instance, prior socialist idioms of self-reliance, hard work, and exploitation have enjoyed a resurgence, but just as during the *ujamaa* era these terms are now used to multiple ends – ranging from invoking a sense of continuity and solidarity in Chinese–African relations, to critiquing Tanzanian officials for acquiescing in policies of privatization and labour casualization at the hands of foreign capitalists (Sabea 2001; Monson 2006; Schroeder 2008). How are rural people in sub-Saharan Africa apprehending and adapting to the economic and political changes associated with this latest reconfiguration of development and citizenship? Understanding the prior possibilities, limitations and implications of national development for these communities conditions our ability to make sense of and respond to such emerging realities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Research for this article was supported by an International Dissertation Research Fellowship from the Social Science Research Council, with funds provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Issa Chilindima assisted with research in Mtwara, and Amina Iddy assisted with research in Dar es Salaam. This article has benefited from feedback from Frederick Cooper, Naomi Schiller, and participants in the April 2011 conference on 'Politics and Citizenship in the Postcolony' hosted by Emory University's African Studies Center. Two anonymous reviewers and this journal's editors also contributed useful suggestions that have strengthened this piece.

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ABSTRACT

This article uses a key principle of the Tanzanian *ujamaa* project – self-reliance – as an analytical lever to open up the historical landscape of development politics in that national context during the 1960s and early 1970s. Throughout this period Tanzanians understood and experienced self-reliance in a variety of ways: as a mandated developmental strategy or a collective developmental aspiration, a condition of dignity or privation, a hallmark of national citizenship or a reflection of local survivalism, a matter of luxury or necessity. I trace these multiple meanings through three distinct but overlapping fields of inquiry: first, by cataloguing the plural ideological registers indexed by self-reliance within official development discourse *vis-à-vis* domestic and international politics; second, by illuminating a diverse range of rural elders' accounts of *ujamaa* villagization and self-reliance policy in the south-eastern region of Mtwara; and third, by examining the ambivalent position of self-reliance within public debates about regional development in relation to the national scale. In doing so, I expose the dialectical friction between competing constructions of citizenship and development at the heart of *ujamaa*, and suggest new avenues forward for conceptualizing the afterlives of 'self-reliance' and the changing meaning of development in contemporary Tanzania and beyond.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article se sert du principe clé du projet tanzanien *ujamaa*, l'autonomie, comme d'un levier analytique pour découvrir le paysage historique de la politique de développement dans ce contexte national pendant les années 1960 et au début des années 1970. Tout au long de cette période, les Tanzaniens ont compris et vécu l'autonomie de diverses manières : comme une stratégie de développement mandatée ou une aspiration collective au développement, une condition de dignité ou de privation, une marque de citoyenneté nationale ou le reflet d'un survivalisme local, un luxe ou une nécessité. L'auteur étudie ces sens multiples à travers trois champs d'analyse distincts qui se recouvrent partiellement : d'abord, en cataloguant les registres idéologiques pluriels indexés par l'autonomie dans le cadre du discours de développement officiel concernant la politique domestique et internationale ; ensuite, en mettant en lumière la diversité de ce que relatent les anciens ruraux de la politique *ujamaa* de villagisation et d'autonomie dans la région de Mtwara, dans le Sud-Est du pays ; enfin, en examinant la position ambivalente de l'autonomie dans le débat public sur le développement régional par rapport à l'échelle nationale. Ce faisant, l'article expose la friction dialectique entre des constructions concurrentes de citoyenneté et de développement au cœur de l'*ujamaa*, et suggère de nouvelles pistes pour conceptualiser les incarnations futures de l'autonomie et la signification changeante du développement dans la Tanzanie contemporaine et au-delà.