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Development in East Africa:
Colonialism to Regionalism

A Non-Thesis Option Paper Submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School
of Arts and Sciences

of

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in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

by
Esther Mukasa-Magoye

*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere, one of the stalwarts of the African liberation struggle said: 'only by constant movements toward unity will our continent be in a position where ultimately, Africa will be able to become an equal and effective participant in the world economic, political, and social community' (African Research Bulletin, 1994: 115351b).

This quote reflects the general sentiment shared by most African leaders today. It also highlights two critical aspects of the reality that African leaders have to face: inequality and the world system within which this inequality exists. In the current situation, which can (still) correctly be characterized by the term crisis, development strategies in Africa must address these issues in order to tackle the very real challenges that Africans face.

This study starts from the assumption that these issues must be studied historically, since the situations and opportunities of the present are informed by the events of the past. Thus, in order to understand why African leaders have chosen to pursue regional groupings as a path towards development, it is necessary to examine the historical context within which these choices are made. Of great significance for this discussion is the colonial period. This period is notable in terms of Africa's social, political, and economic development. Specifically, colonialism is historically significant for the role that it played in accelerating the process of capitalist development in Africa. Additionally, the introduction of capitalist relations of production had significant implications for Africa's position in the world capitalist system. Consider the following statement from the final report on the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERDP): "The basic nature of most African economies has remained virtually unchanged for the last 30 years" (Lone, et al., 1991: 20). This means that little has changed since independence for African economies. There is a connection, then, between the strategy of regional integration, a means of breaking free from the dependent relationship between Africa and other members of the world economy, and colonialism, the period in which the origins of this relationship are found. The goal of this study is to investigate this relationship as it holds significance for East Africa, specifically Kenya and Uganda.

### *1.1 CONCEPTUALIZATION AND METHODOLOGY*

Addressing the issue of the development of capitalism in Africa requires that we establish some conceptual, theoretical and methodological groundwork. To begin with, we must understand what is meant by the development of capitalism in this discussion. As Sender and Smith point out in a summary of Marx's theory, "the origins of capitalist development were rooted in changes in ownership and control of the means of production" (1986: 1). In a fully formed capitalist system, we can speak of generalized commodity production and the accumulation of capital for investment in production for exchange. Here we are most concerned with the political, social, and economic changes stemming from colonialism that altered the pre-colonial relationship between ownership and the means of production in African countries.

The concept of development is not as easily conceptualized. It is difficult to speak precisely of what is meant by development. It is understood, in the widest sense, to refer to progress and growth. Progress and growth can occur in the political, social and economic realms. For Africa, this translates into such issues as meeting basic needs, improved standard of living and the overall quality of life. The discussion which follows will focus on economic issues, but political and social factors will also be considered.

Finally, the concept of regionalism is to be understood as any form of cooperation among three or more countries. Cooperation, just like development, can occur at one or a combination of the following levels: political, economic, and/or social. Here, again, note that the case presented here, the East African Community, focuses on economic cooperation.[1]

The methodology employed in this study is comparative historical analysis. As mentioned earlier, knowledge of the historical context is critical for understanding the present, as the past indelibly shapes the current situation. Additionally, this statement from the Organization of African Unity emphasizes two points that are crucial to the study of Africa:

> The member countries of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) of course realize that they belong to the same geo-political space and aspire to solidarity for their common development; but they know how different they are from each other in geographical situation, natural resources, population, and history, both ancient and recent (Nyang'oro, 1989: 4).

On the one hand, there is a recognition of the heterogeneity of the continent. Each country enjoys a distinct historical trajectory which affords each a claim to uniqueness. On the other hand, there is a certain level of homogeneity on the continent in terms of the challenges the various countries face in meeting the common goal of development. For these reasons, it is just as important to analyze the countries individually as it is to examine Africa as a whole. The former provides concrete evidence to support speaking generally about the continent.

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[1]While others (Mutharika, 1972) distinguish between cooperation and integration as different degrees of commitment between regional partners, this discussion will use the termes interchangably.

### *1.2 ORGANIZATION*

This study focuses on the events of East Africa. It highlights the colonial experience of Kenya and Uganda, and examines regional integration in the case of the East African Community. Section 2 briefly addresses the pre-colonial period and pre-capitalist modes of production so that their articulation with capitalist modes of production can be better understood. Section 3 examines Kenya and Uganda in order to provide empirical evidence of the impact of colonialism on African political economies. Section 4 outlines some of the theoretical perspectives developed to understand issues of development in general and development in the Third World in particular. In section 5, the case of the East African Community provides insight into the prospects of regional integration in Africa.

## 2. PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD AND PRE-CAPITALIST MODES OF PRODUCTION

Prior to colonialism, surplus was appropriated in a variety of ways in Africa. They included

> domestic production by the family unit, in which the main form of exploitation was by senior men of their juniors and womenfolk; domestic production by cultivators or craftsmen within a political state which extracted surplus through tribute; and the very widespread use of slaves, especially in the vicinity of the major trade centers (Iliffe, 1983: 6).

These pre-capitalist modes were noted for the absence of any systematic use of wage labor. Where it did exist, mainly along trade routes, it was distinctly different from wage labor "under capitalism, which is based on generalized markets for labor and other means of production" (Sender and Smith, 1986: 41).

### *2.1 The Political Economy of Pre-Colonial Uganda*

In pre-colonial Uganda, Maxon notes that there was a significant difference between the northern and southern regions. Ugandans in the North faced more difficult environment. Droughts were common and the low population was highly dispersed. Also,

> Cultivation of cereals utilizing shifting patterns of land use within a communal mode of production centered on the household, combined with stock raising was typical of the Acholi and Langi, while pastoralism was practised by the Karamojang. The small division of labor that existed in such societies was gender based, with mutual assistance between households fairly common. There was little surplus production other than for local exchange (Maxon, 1986: 82).

In the southern region, the land was more fertile and heavily populated. Surplus, which until the end of the nineteenth century was primarily for consumption rather than profit, was the result of household and communal labor methods.

An important aspect of Ugandan politics was the centralization of power in many of the kingdoms. In Buganda, the Kabaka, or king, was the highest authority in the hierarchy. The power and size of the Buganda state grew between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries because of the military's successful conquests over other ethnic groups' territories. The Kabaka will be a key figure in the transformation of the region into a European colony.

Some are quick to characterize pre-colonial African societies as entirely acephalous and classless. This is certainly not the case. The example of the Buganda kingdom is one of a strong centralized state. Many other examples exist to support the claim that, although acephalous societies existed, colonists did not bring with them the concept of the state (Carter, 1963). Secondly, if we are to understand class as Marx does then class distinctions, though less concrete, can be made in pre-colonial African societies. For him, "classes are merely special cases of social relations of production at particular. . . periods of history" (Marx, 1965:11). However with the European invasion, a new class structure will be developed where the colonizers become the privileged ruling class and introduce the classes associated with capitalism (Phillips, 1984: 82).

It is important to note the role of Christianity in Europe's "Scramble for Africa." Specifically, Christian missionaries played a significant role as precursors to British control. In the late 1870s, the Kabaka, fearing that Egypt had ambitions to expand into the lake regions of his territory, welcomed the Christian missionaries. His intention was to counter the threat of Muslims seeking to overthrow him and maintain power within the region (Maxon, 1986: 123). However, this interaction only served to begin the undermining of his authority. The Kabaka himself never converted, but many of his subjects did. Religious persecution ensued and the "converts joined with the larger group of Muslim Ganda to overthrow" the Kabaka (Maxon, 1986: 123). Although initially successful, the Kabaka was restored to power. However, Christianity had gained a strong foothold in Buganda and as Maxon notes, "the need to spread European faith formed a very important justification for imperial expansion" (1986: 124).

### *2.2 The Political Economy of Pre-Colonial Kenya*

As in Uganda, agriculture was the mainstay of Kenya's pre-colonial society. Livestock raising and cultivation were characterized by a gender-based division of labor within the family units. "Men cleared the land for planting, women planted, weeded, and harvested, boys herded cattle, and young men defended stock" (Maxon, 1986: 93). Cattle were retained as insurance against possible food shortages as there was little incentive for large surpluses of grain. Additionally, in the early nineteenth century, long-distance trade grew first between Kenyans and other Africans along Lakes Baringo and Victoria. Later, Arab and Swahili traders took advantage of Kenya's coastal region.

These trade routes will be one of the main factors that attract European settlers. Among those items traded were ivory and slaves.[2]

Unlike Uganda, there was little centralization of power in Kenya. With the exception of the Wanga kingdom, Kenyan societies were noted for their lack of a centralized political authority. Instead, groups were organized by age-sets. This will be a key point with the onset of colonialism.

Clearly, this era was marked by relatively small-scale production for consumption. Family units worked the land in order to meet their subsistence needs. Feudal states existed where kings extracted a tribute from the subjects residing on their land. There were trade routes that allowed for the exchange of goods between the East African coast and Asia and Europe. In this case, though, we can only speak of simple commodity production. The articulation of the pre-capitalist modes of production with colonial capitalism then, can be understood through the political, social, and economic changes that occurred in Africa during the colonial period.[3]

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[2] Slaves had a dual role. They served as porters for transporting goods out of the interior and, once at the coast, the slaves were traded abroad.

[3] As a conceptual note, the term colonial capitalism is not meant to connote any unique from of capitalism. Rather, the term merely recognizes those who controlled the production relations in the society—the colonial powers.

### *2.3 Environmental Issues in the Region*

Another important issue to keep in mind is that between 1890 and 1914, the African population declined disastrously as a result of what some characterized as an ecological catastrophe. This situation was marked by the large scale occurrence of animal and human diseases, drought, and famine.

> The period of natural disasters began with a serious rinderpest epidemic which swept across Kenya and German East Africa beginning in the early 1890s. Huge numbers of cattle and wild game perished. . . Smallpox followed in its wake as did locusts which destroyed large amounts of sown crops. The 1890s were also a time of drought in several portions of the region, with resultant famine and death (Maxon, 1986: 141).

The spread of sleeping sickness, carried by the tsetse fly, further deteriorated the situation, particularly in the Lake Victoria region. This will have serious implications for the labor demands of the Europeans in their efforts to increase agricultural production.

## 3. COLONIALISM IN UGANDA AND KENYA

The main means used by colonists to prompt Africans to participate in a monetised system was the imposition of taxes. As discussed above, Africans primarily exchanged their labor, livestock or other commodities for payment. As Shillington notes, this changed with the introduction of colonialism:

> Colonial authorities almost universally imposed a head-tax upon all adult men. . . [which] amounted to at least a month's wages on white-owned mines or two months or more on a white-owned farm. The purpose of the tax was two-fold: to pay for colonial administration and to force all adult men into the cash economy, in particular, to work for low wages for European colonists. It was a deliberate attempt to break African rural self-sufficiency. It was no longer enough for a community to feed, clothe, and house itself. Cash had to be found to pay taxes (1995: 352).

Additionally, the market also brought in imports which Africans became dependent upon, again emphasizing the need for cash (Rodney, 1985: 337). Initially, most Africans still retained access to the primary means of production—the land—and were able to avoid the penetration of colonial administration policy. For a time, then, they were able to avoid being drawn into this new system. This situation did not last as ultimately the majority of Africans were, to some extent, drawn into the cash driven economy. This was a consequence of the manner in which the British shaped the economic environment, including the social relations of production, so as to meet their needs. In the specific cases of Uganda and Kenya, note how

> the economic ideology of the period required both that colonial development be confined to forms of production which would not compete with British manufactures and the colonial consumers prefer British commodities however uncompetitive (Brett, 1973: 75).

In other words, note the process whereby Africans became subordinate and dependent within the international capitalist market.

### *3.1 Uganda*

In the Uganda Protectorate, a colonial administration was established in the late nineteenth century. Its first priority was to levy taxes against the inhabitants in order to meet the expenses of running such an administration. The Buganda kingdom constituted a large portion of the area that the British controlled within the protectorate. Recalling that this region was noted for the centralization of power in the Kabaka, it is understandable that the British approached the Kabaka and his chiefs for their support. The Baganda were willing to collaborate with the British in order to preserve their territory as a self-governing entity. After much hard bargaining, "the chiefs ended up with everything they wanted, including one-half of all the land in Buganda. The half left to the British as 'Crown Land' was later found to be largely swamp and scrub" (Byrnes, 1990: 13).

Despite this apparent victory over the British invaders, the Uganda Agreement of 1900 confirmed British authority over the Buganda and other groups in the Protectorate, by creating a province and several smaller districts under the larger Uganda Protectorate. While the "Ganda system of government was upheld" it was refashioned in such a manner as to facilitate the collection of taxes paid to the British administration and intrude upon the traditional autocracy of the Kabaka (Low, 1965: 79).

In much the same way, the British came to control the other regions of the Uganda Protectorate. In Toro, Ankole, and Bunyoro the "Administration [strengthened] the authority of the king with his people whilst at the same time acquiring by political conduct on the part of its representatives a controlling influence over the king" (Low, 1965: 84). However, the treatises signed with the Baganda were much more favorable than those signed with the other kingdoms (Toro in 1900, Ankole in 1903, and Bunyoro in 1933), as there were provisions for tax exemptions for certain native administrators. Native administrators were those Africans working as tax collectors and labor organizers on behalf of the "economy-minded colonial administration" (Byrnes, 1990: 13). Eventually, native administrators would take on additional responsibilities for the colonial state.

One striking example of African collaborative efforts with the British is that of Ssemi Kakungulu. His efforts facilitated the expansion of the Protectorate's control, north-east of Buganda, the center of the Uganda Protectorate. Sir Harry Johnston, the Protectorate's first Commissioner had this to say in a letter to London:

> A certain Uganda chief named Kakunugulu first of all assisted Colonel Ternan's force in the capture of the Mwanga and the Kabarega and the dispersal of mutineers in the northern part of the Protectorate. This man was then placed in charge of the Bukedi district, north of Lake Kioga and outside Uganda proper, to bring the unruly Kedi or Lango people under control and further to keep the district clear of mutineers. . . [His work is] so good that it compares favourably with what might be done by a European official (Twaddle, 1993: 138).

It soon became apparent that his aim was to create an empire. However, there was no one else in the region through which the British could establish their control, so they had no alternative but to continue to utilize Kakungulu despite his imperialistic goals. Kakungulu remained the chief connection between the colonial powers and the Africans, although his duties were extremely limited. In any event, Kakungulu is noted for his significant contribution to the establishment of colonial rule in the region.

### 3.1.1 Peasant vs. Plantation Production

In the process of establishing colonial rule in Uganda, a debate arose as to what method of agricultural production would stimulate economic growth. On one side of the debate, which lasted the first two decades of the 1900s, were supporters of peasant production. On the other side were those who supported plantation agricultural development. Several reports were submitted to the authorities in London explaining why white settlers should be sent to establish plantations to oversee the production of, at this point, cotton. These suggestions were repeatedly rejected and ultimately it was decided to place the burden of economic development on the African peasant. "From 1923, therefore the Uganda administration was committed to a policy which recognized the security of African land and the primacy of the African peasant as the basis for Uganda's economy" (Maxon, 1986: 186). It is important to note that Africans were not significantly involved in this decision-making process, except for the protests they raised in conjunction with missionaries and Uganda agricultural officials to the plantation proposals. This example of European domination over Africans will have significant implications for the structure of the country's economy.

Up until the official decision had been made, peasants had already been the driving force of the Ugandan economy. The system of land tenure initially established by the British divided land among the various kings and their chiefs, basically maintaining the same structure of land ownership and peasant tenants. However, the purpose of the system had changed in that the peasant was now producing a considerable amount of surplus that was to be exchanged in the international market. In Uganda, the primary cash crops were cotton, coffee, and tea. This will mark the beginning of Uganda's dependence on a limited range of exports utilized as a means of creating surplus and growth.

### 3.1.2 Diminishing Traditional Authority

Under this system of peasant production, the landlords collected taxes not only for the colonial state but for themselves as well. This created a wealthy landed aristocracy who soon came to wield considerable power over their tenants:

> Until 1921, an ordinary peasant was simultaneously liable to three different kinds of labor—the busulu [an obligation to perform one month's labor each year, which could be commuted by a cash payment], the luwalo [which consisted of an obligation to provide one month's labor each year on roads], and the envuju [a tribute in kind from the food and beer produce of a peasant's holdings]. . . and the peasant was the target of his chief's coercion to supply 'voluntary wage labor' (Sathyamaurthy, 1986: 232).

This had the effect of straining the relationship between the peasants and the landowners. Once loyal subjects to their chiefs and king, the peasants noted the gross abuses of power to which they fell victim and it caused a considerable amount of tension to build. The peasants later turned directly to the colonial administrators for help, thus weakening the authority of the traditional structure.

These excessive demands by the landed aristocracy not only had the effect of deteriorating traditional authority, but they also resulted in a qualitative change in the conditions of production. Considering the above demands, tenants lost all material incentive to extend their cultivation of cash crops.

> The problem was not just a relative decline in the share of the economic surplus available to the colonial state, but an absolute decline in the total surplus, a decline more in the production of cash crops produced for exchange than of subsistence produced for use (Mamdani, 1976: 127).

Peasants grew enough to pay their taxes and make other cash payments and relied on subsistence farming for the rest of their needs, as they still controlled the means of production. This is evidence of how capitalist and pre-capitalist modes began to grow side by side.

With these circumstances in mind, the colonial state made a concerted effort to change the nature of production relations. They did so by reorganizing the structure of the native administration. The objective was to further weaken (but not eliminate) the traditional authority and ensure the dominant role of colonists within the system. In Buganda, the Kabaka was stripped of his power to assign chieftancies and the British replaced 145 out of 212 chiefs between 1921 and 1933 (Mamdani, 1976: 127). The chiefs that remained essentially became civil servants as they were put on salary. Additionally, the busulu was outlawed so as to eliminate any attempts by landlords to extract surplus from the peasantry.

### 3.1.3 Indians in Uganda

Nanarandas Rajaram and Co., Ltd. entered Uganda in 1860. They had a considerable amount of capital and experience in the cotton industry. These and other Indian entrepreneurs that followed them were striving for a free market. Their main focus was on cotton ginning, the processing of cotton for cloth and textiles. They faced considerable competition from the colonists who were working to establish a monopoly of the market. The officials in London denied the colonists' petitions to create a monopoly and the Nanarandas Rajaram and Co., Ltd. made it clear that they were not going to be pushed out of the market.

Thereafter, a door was opened for middlemen ginners. Indians came to dominate the ginning process. The number of Indian owned ginneries grew from 11 in 1912-1913 to 176 in 1926.

> The birth and proliferation of middlemen ginners provided the most prosperous among Indian petty bourgeoisie with a way of entering the ginning industry on the processing side, and then accumulate enough capital to become independent of the large ginner (Mamdani, 1976: 92).

Around 1926, the colonial state began to impose restrictions upon new entrants into the industry. Additionally, recognizing the strength and skills of the Indians, the British formed an alliance with the Indians and promoted their intermediary role. These two factors led to the exclusion of Africans from using this path to establish a role as a petty bourgeoisie. For example, "a Muganda landlord who wanted to erect a ginnery on his own site was rejected by the Cotton Control Board 'on grounds that there were already too many ginneries in the country'" (Mamdani, 1976: 92). The few educated Ugandans who entered civil society, who never rose above mid-level positions, and some of the landed aristocracy and rich cash crop farmers formed the very small middle class (Boahen, 1985: 349-50).

### *3.2 Kenya*

The initial interest in Kenya stemmed from strategic reasons. First of all, the British were already on the road to establishing themselves in Uganda and were optimistic about the economic future of the region. There was a growing desire to connect the interior to the coastal region in order to facilitate the export of Uganda's cash crops. Additionally, the Germans, who had established themselves in neighboring regions were threatening to move further northward so as to have access to a port for export. In fact the Uganda railroad was their idea. However, the British took the initiative and began construction of the Uganda railroad in 1896 in Mombasa.

> The railway's objective was Uganda. But its construction also made possible the economic development of the intervening lands. The costs of porter transport were such that hitherto no commodity except ivory had been or could have been exported from any part of Kenya other than the narrow coastal region. But with the freights from Nairobi [which significantly reduced transport

costs] other forms of trade had become feasible (Wrigley, 1965: 210).

Thus it was necessary to bring the coastal and intervening areas under their control so the East Africa Protectorate was established in Kenya. The expansion of British control after the completion of the railroad in the Kenyan territory proceeded slowly and hesitantly until the financial needs of the British government necessitated a more strategic plan. The "British government, although willing for a time to provide grants-in-aid, was pressing for action that would generate revenues in the protectorate adequate to cover local expenditures" (Nelson, 1983: 17). It was in this way that colonialism found its way into Kenya.

Since it was not possible to exploit any mineral deposits, as there were none in the East Africa Protectorate (Kenya), the development of an export trade would depend on agricultural production. Another factor for this outlook was that ivory and slaves were no longer seen as viable options by the colonial regime. Their ultimate decision to create a settler colony was based on several other factors.

Recalling that Kenyan societies were decentralized, there were no central figures through which European ideas and aspirations could be communicated to the people. Secondly, the population was small, approximately 2 million Africans in a country that contained some 75,000 square miles of readily habitable land. As one author notes, "it was thus natural to infer both that there was ample room for immigrants and that without immigrants there could be little hope of a rapid growth of production and trade" (Wrigley, 1965: 213). It was in this manner that Kenya became a settler colony.

3.2.1 Land: Settlers vs. Indians and Africans

With the arrival of settlers, recruited not only from Britain but South African colonies as well, the issue of dividing the land became paramount. The settlers found themselves concerned not only with the African inhabitants but also with a sizable population of Indians. A large contingent of laborers had been brought in from India to help construct the Uganda Railroad. About 7,000 of them stayed in the region, adding to an already established Indian population along the coasts that resulted from the previously mentioned trade links.

> [The Indians] moved rapidly into the interior to exploit the opportunities created by the railway and the British Administration, operating the railway, filling clerical cadres and developing trade, not only around the railway stations but also among the remotest native settlements (Wrigley, 1965: 225-6).

Considering their reputation for shrewdness and their eagerness to exploit a new opportunity, the colonists feared that the Indians might want to exploit the land as well. The settlers demanded exclusive land rights for Europeans in the most fertile and potentially productive regions, including the Highlands (Wolff, 1974: 55). Furthermore, the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1902 made the provision "that only temporary occupation licenses, limited to one year and a maximum of 5 acres might be issued to Africans and other non-Europeans who were considered qualified to use the Land" (Nelson, 1983: 19). This, combined with further instructions promulgated the next year that Indians were not to be issued land in certain other fertile regions, effectively ensured European domination of the land that Indians sought. However, some Indians were allowed to serve as "retail traders or laborers and to settle in lands deemed unsuitable for, and unwanted by Europeans" thus situating them socially and economically between the Europeans and the Africans (Wolff, 1974: 55).

Clearly, Africans, too, were to lose in the struggle over land. Recalling that the Kenyan population was highly dispersed and considering the fact that some pastoral groups, like the Maasai, were always on the move, Europeans justified the seizure of land by claiming it was "empty." Other Kenyans were simply expelled from their land. Those who remained were classified as squatters and were tolerated by the settlers because they provided a source of labor. "Others would drift into the towns that now for the first time began to be built in the interior, and where African anti-colonial organizations would first be formed" (Gordon, 1993: 44). Still others were able to retain the less sought after land and established native reserves. This last group relied upon subsistence agriculture for their needs. The rest formed the wage labor force.

### 3.2.2 Labor Shortages

For the first decade of their settlement, European farmers were fairly unsuccessful in stimulating economic growth. One of the main reasons for their difficulties was a veritable labor shortage. Contributing factors to the shortage was the ecological catastrophe,[4] resulting in famine and death, as well as the ability of Africans to avoid being engaged in the monetised economy. Although most of the fertile land had been expropriated, some Kenyans still had access to enough land to provide for their subsistence needs and create enough surplus to pay their poll and hut taxes. For the most part, Africans were initially able to avoid wage labor. Therefore, the European small farmers who had hopes of building large plantations were disappointed and angered by the shortage of labor. Although some were able to rely upon the squatters on their land as a source of labor, the settlers demand for labor was not sufficiently met by this situation. They called on the colonial government to help solve their problem and soon

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[4] See 2.3 on p. 10

resorted to informal conscription or forced labor. The government later called for an end to the practice of conscription. It was not until after World War I that the labor shortage problem was adequately addressed.

Between 1919 and 1921, the European population of the colony was doubled with the influx of former soldiers, which resulted from the Soldier Settler Scheme. This brought the issue of land back to the fore as "12,810 square kilometer had to be cleared for soldier farmers who were offered land for flax, coffee, cattle and maize" (Gordon, 1993: 49). More Kenyans were displaced from their land. Due to the growing land shortage and the increasing strain of meeting the tax burden, a sizable migrant labor force was created. This labor force, mostly men, would migrate in search of seasonal work on farms or work in the cities. For those who had land, it was left in the hands of the women who were responsible for meeting the subsistence needs of the family during the male's absence and if possible, creating a surplus for exchange in order to have cash for imported goods, school fees, or taxes.

An increasing portion of this migrant labor force made its way into the urban areas that had been created as centers of trade. Middleton notes that the "African population of Nairobi grew from 12,000 in 1921, to 27,000 in 1931, 40,000 in 1938 and over 70,000 in 1947. Mombassa grew from 18,000 in 1921 to 57,000 in 1946" (1965: 345). Despite the fact that there was no industry to employ them and only menial jobs available to them, this urban growth reflected two significant trends in Kenyan societies—the growth of a petty bourgeoisie and the development of African associations.

First of all this growth reflected the insecurity created by the ever changing land policies of the colonial government, effectively disconnecting many Africans from the land. For some Africans, this presented the opportunity of becoming more involved in trade. The presence of Kenyan traders was not a new situation. Many small African shops existed in the native reserves. These shops served as one of several links between the African rural producer on side and international markets (through the settler) on the other. As the number of shops grew there was a more direct linkage between the cultivator and the larger market. As Kitching notes,

> Thus the exchange of simple manufactured commodities for agricultural produce yielded an aggregated set of exchange values which could be monetised through sale to a larger trade; the money so obtained could then be invested in further purchase of manufactured commodities and . . . in the expansion of the stock or in the transportation of produce (1980: 165).

Africans in this position understood the importance of accumulating wealth for investment in production. After

World War II, there was a significant increase in the number of African traders.

This quantitative change was accompanied by a qualitative change as well. At this time, African traders faced direct and open competition with Indian traders and in some regions were found to have a considerable advantage over the Indians. Additionally, "Their position as retailers was recognized by the Government, who fixed quotas for the distribution of retail good so that Africans could not be squeezed out by the refusal of Indian wholesalers to deal with them" (Middleton, 1965: 387). All of this contributed to the development of an African middle class. The emergence of a middle class was also reflected in the large number of commercial and trade association created in the late 1940s.

Other African associations were also on the rise. Recall that Kenyan societies were relatively decentralized, organized mainly along age sets rather than hereditary lines. This lack of stringent tribal affiliations was most apparent in the towns where there was an influx of individuals in search of labor from all over the country. This facilitated the development of African political associations, as these landless individuals searched for work. The types of associations varied and included tribal benefit, residential benefit, tribal political, nationalist political, trade union, class, and religious associations (Middleton, 1965: 388-9). The main goal of most of these organizations was to create a collective voice for their concerns and grievances with the colonial government. For example, the Kikuyu Association was formed to oppose government alienation of land to Europeans. Also, the East African Association "spoke out against compulsory labor requirements [and] against increases in the hut tax" (Nelson, 1983: 26).

The most notable among these associations was the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), formed in 1925 and led by Jomo Kenyatta. Its focus was on fostering a Kikuyu consciousness. By doing so it encouraged the development of a Kikuyu ethnic identity. It stood as a model to other ethnic groups who later formed their own associations. At this point, there was no competition among the groups. Instead the growing ethnic consciousness that was developed also fostered a larger national identity that would facilitate the independence movement. In fact, after the KCA had been banned by the colonial government, Kenyatta was chosen as the leader of the Kenya Africa Union (KAU) in 1947. The KAU sought to bring together the different ethnic groups against the colonial government. Their insistent demands, which included more money for African education, more African representation within the higher civil service and the end of legal racial discrimination, combined with the Mau Mau uprisings were critical in bringing about a promise of independence in 1960 (Gordon, 1993: 52-3).

### *3.3 Summary*

Clearly this discussion highlights the different colonial experience each country had. From these experiences, we gain insight into the resultant differences in the nature and structure of capitalist relations of production as these countries gained independence. Among the more significant differences for the subject of capitalism is the issue of the creation of an African middle class. On the one hand, government policy and the structure of agricultural production inhibited the growth of a substantial bourgeoisie in Uganda. On the other hand, the same factors had the opposite effect in Kenya where a more significant capitalist class emerged.

Another difference between the two was the type of agricultural production pursued. In Uganda, the colonists opted for peasant production while European settlers established themselves in Kenya in order to oversee large-scale plantation production. In both countries, the decision to choose one method of production over another was based upon serving British interests. The goal was to create a situation that maximized profits so as to cover the administrative costs of colonialism. This was done by limiting the range of exports out of the colonies and expanding the range of imports from Europe into the colonies. As the evidence shows, the interaction of colonialism with pre-colonial political, social, and economic features had a distinctive impact on the character of Kenya's and Uganda's political economies.

## 4. THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Understanding this distinctive impact and the implications for development became an issue of significance for the academic world. During the advent of independence in Africa, social scientists were already deep into a discussion about the issue of development. Theorists were interested in forming a theory of development to explain progress and growth in various societies. How to approach the study and analysis of development became a serious subject of debate in the process. In the 1960s, some theorists were looking to move beyond the modernization approach.

### *4.1 Modernization Theory*

Built with the history of Western development as a model, this approach created an ideal path which all societies progressed from traditionalism to modernity. Modernity reflected characteristics of ideal-type Western industrial state. When countries did not achieve progress, it was because they lacked certain necessary factors. Chew and Denemark summarize some of the modernization theorists' arguments and point out which factors were indispensable for each writer:

> For Rostow (1960), these necessary factors included levels of financial investment required for 'takeoff'... For Parsons (1964) and McClelland (1967), the transformation of values and socio-psychological conceptions must be sufficiently advanced. For Pye (1962), Almond and Powell (1966) and especially Huntington (1968), the lack of political institutionalization leads to serious hindrances to the developmental process (1996: 2).

For Africa and others in the Third World, this meant that any incidence of development failure was effectively a result of the persistence of the traditional aspects of society. This and other internal "problems" accounted for any lack of development.

By the late 1960s, this model was found to be woefully inadequate for explaining the lack of development in the Third World. Critics of modernization theory pointed out the ethnocentrism and arrogance of the ideal goals which characterized the theory's depiction of modern societies. Additionally, it favored domestic rather than external factors for explaining any failures in development. It also discounted issues critical to Africans, particularly the role of traditional institutions in facilitating growth and progress.

## 4.2 Theory of Underdevelopment and the Dependency Approach

As a reaction to the modernization perspective, the underdevelopment and dependency approaches emerged as new conceptual frameworks within which one could understand the nature of progress, particularly in the independent Third World. These approaches recognized that it was not possible to imitate the historically specific path followed by Western countries to achieve their status as developed nations. Underdevelopment theory originated in Latin America among economists associated with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA). Theirs was a non-Marxist approach which "divided the world into an industrial center and a periphery producing raw materials" (Chilcote, 1994: 230). The efforts of ECLA analysts like Celso Furtado (1964) focused on criticizing and modifying modernization theories. Later works began to develop more concrete theories of underdevelopment. Some writers focused on questions of unequal exchange (Emmanuel, 1972; Amin, 1976), while others were concerned with notions of uneven development (Novack, 1966).

Among the most influential theorists was Andre Gunder Frank who examined capitalist development in the center and underdevelopment in the periphery. He distinguished the center and periphery by referring to metropoles and satellites in his discussion of the "development of underdevelopment." Anthony Brewer (1990) outlines Frank's argument:

> The 'development of underdevelopment' occurs because the world capitalist system is characterized by a *metropolis-satellite* structure. The metropolis exploits the satellite, surplus is concentrated in the metropolis, and the satellite is cut off from potential investment funds, so its growth is slowed down. More important, the satellite is reduced to a state of *dependence* which creates a local ruling class with an interest in perpetuating underdevelopment (164).

For Frank, development in the metropolis and underdevelopment in the satellite were two different sides of the same coin of world capitalist expansion. Additionally, the dependent nature of the relationship between metropolis and satellite was critical to Frank. It had far-reaching implications, not only for the economic realm, but for the political and social realms as well.

In much the same vein as Frank's case studies of Latin America, Walter Rodney conducted a critical examination of Africa. His work, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, was an effort to gain insight into exploitative nature of the world capitalist system. He examined Africa's development prior to significant interaction with Europe (about the fifteenth century). This he contrasts with the exploitative nature of the relationship between Europe and Africa as the capitalist world economy began to expand, prior to and including the period of colonialism. For Rodney,

> Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitation, but one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profits to the so-called mother country. From an African viewpoint, that amounted to consistent expatriation of surplus produced by African labor out of African resources. It meant the development of Europe as part of the same dialectical process in which Africa was underdeveloped (1982: 149).

In much the same manner as Frank, Rodney specifically argues the case of African underdevelopment as a consequence of European capitalist development.

Of the various criticisms of the dependency approach,[5] in terms of underdevelopment in the Third World, the most significant one is its overwhelming pessimistic outlook for development. Many dependency theorists express little hope for successful capitalist development in Africa and offer, instead, alternative paths for development (Berman and Leys, 1994: 21-25) However, to date, none of these alternatives have produced any notable results and have been abandoned. Instead, African leaders have turned to strategies such as economic regionalism.

## 5. STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT: REGIONALISM IN AFRICA

[5]See Chilcote (1994) for a more detailed discussion of the critiques of theories of underdevelopment and the dependency approach.

Almost every country on the continent belongs to one of the many regional economic groupings[6] which include the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC, formerly the Southern African Development Coordination Conference—SADCC), and the Magrheb Union. Additionally, there is the East African Community (EAC) which is composed of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. It presents an interesting case to study now that, twenty years after its initial failure, the leaders of the three countries have committed themselves to revitalizing the organization. From its history and past failure, it is possible to observe some of the difficulties that plague regional organizations. Conversely, the more recent events will give insight into the direction of this organization as well as prospects for the future of African unity as a strategy for development. All of this must, of course, be considered within the historical framework established by the discussion of colonial Kenya and Uganda.

## *5.1 BENEFITS OF INTEGRATION*

Before discussing the EAC's specific case, it is necessary to first analyze the benefits of economic integration so as to understand why some leaders even

[6]Regional economic groupings, as forms of functional cooperation, tend to minimize the deleterious effects of conflict over national sovereignty (an issue of great sensitivity among African leaders).

consider following this route to development. First of all, as Arthur Hazlewood points out, such a union provides a larger market for goods "which will enable productive enterprises, particularly in manufacturing, to obtain economies of scale" (1975: 11). The populations of individual African countries do not provide sizable enough markets to encourage economic development through production on a large scale. However, combining their population in a single market considerably increases the market size. In the case of the East African Community, together the three countries currently comprise a market of an estimated 70 to 80 million people. An enlarged domestic market, along with intra-regional specialization (division of labor) can also enhance the industrial base of these countries, increasing the prospects for economic development.

Richard Mukisa and Bankole Thompson point to four other benefits of economic integration. The first is that "economic integration may permit countries to have access to resources that would not otherwise be available to them" ("Prerequisites for Economic" 1995). Resources that some countries are in search of include energy sources and some manufactured goods. Second, integration can allow for the joint production of public goods which reduces the total cost for such goods to the individual countries. For

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They, therefore, are preferable (and more successful) than political example, when two countries set out to construct roads connecting their urban centers, they split the burden of creating this infrastructural system. Third, "economic integration is expected to make each partner country less vulnerable to adverse developments in the international market" (1995). The final benefit is the increase in the amount of bargaining power African countries have. As regional groupings develop and prosper and when a continental force is created, Africa will have greater footing in the global community and will be more able to influence the international economic agenda. Although not exhaustive, this list adequately represents the reasons that African leaders consider economic integration as a strategy for economic development. With an understanding of this we can now examine the case of the East African Community.

### *5.2 EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY: 1890-1977*

Cooperation in the east African region predates colonialism, but became significantly more organized as the British took control of the region. As one author notes:

> The countries were too poor to organize and maintain all the services and institutions necessary for running a State; Uganda as a landlocked country depended on transport and other facilities in Kenya and Tanzania, duplication of certain investments in public sectors had to be avoided, creation of areas for industrial development on an economic scale and viability was unavoidable. A joint approach to meet the development

cooperative efforts.

> needs in agriculture, food, commerce, research, energy and human resources was the most promising way to progress (Umbright, 1989: 9-10).

After Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda gained their independence, they decided to alter the structures of the institutions in place, which included the East African High Commission, in order to match the new political and constitutional changes. Finally, in June of 1967 Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, and Milton Obote signed the Treaty for East African Cooperation, marking the formal birth of the East African Community (EAC).

In the Preamble of the treaty, "the said countries, [having] regard to the interests of and their desire for wider unity of Africa are resolved to cooperate with one another and with other African countries in the economic, political, and cultural fields" (East African Common Services Organization, 1967). A closer look at the document shows that the main emphasis of the organization was to facilitate the economic development of the region. Specifically, the aim was

> to strengthen and regulate the industrial, commercial, and other relations of the partner States to the end that there shall be accelerated harmonious and balanced development and sustained expansion of economic activities the benefits of which shall be equitably distributed (East African Common Services Organization, 1967: Article 2).

The structure of the organization is illustrated below in Fig. 1.

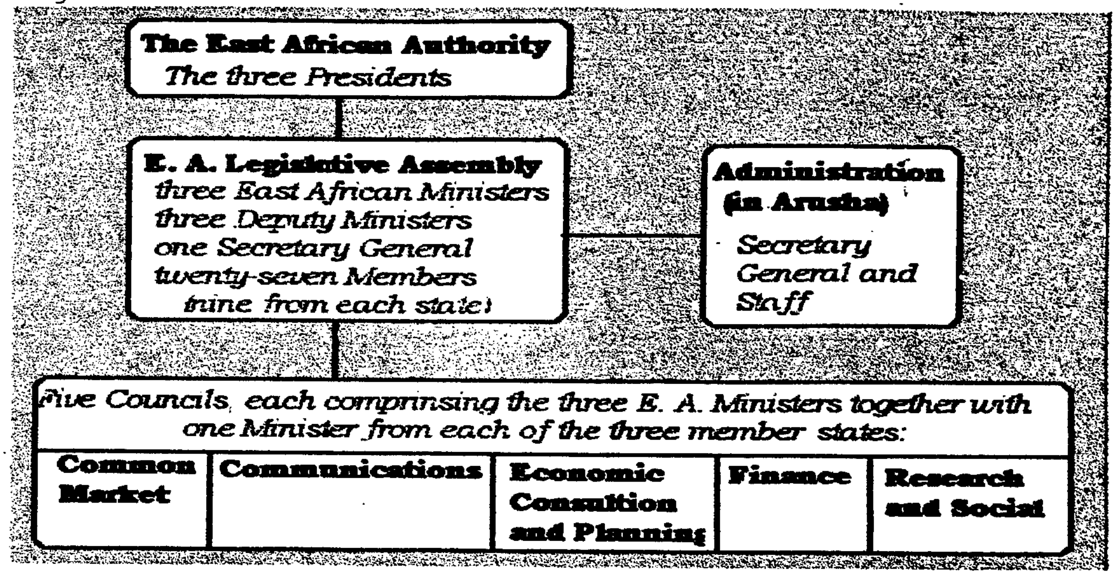


**Figure 1: Organizational Structure of EAC (Source: Umbright, 1989)**

At the outset, the EAC was characterized as ambitious, far-reaching, and the most extensive of the various integrative schemes attempted in Africa (Chazan, et al., 1992; Umbright, 1989). Within the common market, the three countries exchanged a common currency. The range of common services included highway and railroad construction as well as a variety of agricultural research organizations. However, it was not long before difficulties and conflict arose within the EAC.

### *5.3 THE COLLAPSE OF THE EAC*

Economically, of grave concern to Tanzania and Uganda was what they viewed as unequal distribution of gains within the Community. Considering that Kenya was a settler colony, it had a significant advantage in the area of industrial development. The presence of the settlers prompted the development of local manufacturing and a good infrastructure. Consequently, Kenya's level of development was qualitatively and quantitatively greater than the other member states. As Lynn Mytelka points out, "Where such asymmetries [in the level of development] are marked, equity and balanced growth within the integrative system are not automatic consequences of the integrative process" (1973: 243). As a result, Uganda and Tanzania were wary of the economic dominance of Kenya.

Understandably, disagreements on the direction of economic policy hampered the progress of the EAC, but more significant were the political conflicts within the Community. First of all, it is important to note that immediately following independence, the leaders of these three countries followed divergent ideological paths. Kenyatta was particularly critical of Tanzania's African socialism. This, of course, created tensions between Nyerere and Kenyatta. Then, when Idi Amin overthrew Obote, Nyerere refused to officially recognize his claim to authority in Uganda. In fact, from 1971 to 1977 the East African Authority did not meet because of Nyerere's personal conflict with Amin. This was especially disastrous as the

Authority was the policy making organ for the EAC. Without any policy guidance, the community disintegrated.

These examples highlight the problems of African unity, particularly as we consider the politics of economic integration. While some leaders and analysts would like to believe that economics can be dealt with outside the realm of politics, the facts tell us otherwise. The political will of the leaders of such an effort is a significant aspect of the integrative process. It must be factored in (as much as is possible) when the initial structures are created. Omutunde Johnson notes that

> ideological differences and personal dislikes are a reality among African leaders. Hence the institutions established by any economic union must be such that they can function in spite of likely hostilities in high political circles" (1991: 12).

As the EAC reunites, this is a factor that must be considered as it lays the foundations for its future.

### *5.4 EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY: 1996-PRESENT*

On March 14, 1996, Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi, Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa, and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni "signed a pact revitalizing the defunct EAC" (Sizhi, 1996). This current effort is viewed with both anxiety and hope. There is anxiety over the prospect of continued political strife. Much of the tension which led to the first failure of the EAC still exists between the current leaders of these countries. For example, the foreign relations between Kenya and Uganda are particularly strained. Over the past several years Museveni and Arap Moi have exchanged bitter accusations about one another. At one point, Arap Moi accused Ugandans of supporting dissidents who were planning to assassinate him. Museveni similarly accused Kenya of supporting rebel forces in northern and eastern Uganda. However, both leaders have expressed their desire to work out their differences in order to facilitate the development of the region. It has been reported that:

> Prolonged differences between the Kenyan and Ugandan Presidents have gradually improved since the 1990s, and after assuming power [in November 1995], Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa actively mediated and brought the Kenyan and the Ugandan presidents together laying the foundation for the revival of the EAC (Sizhi, 1996).

Only time will tell if these leaders are sincere and if the political will truly exists to hold such a union together.

There are other indicators which cause analysts to be hopeful about this renewed regional effort. First of all, the political situations in all three countries are relatively stable at present. Uganda's progress since Amin and Obote's second term is probably the most significant turn around in the region. Additionally, the political ideology professed by the three leaders is more harmonious than in years past. Tanzania held its first democratic elections in 1995, in which Mkapa came to power. Although Uganda has a no-party system and Kenya faces external pressures to democratize, the three countries are pursuing paths that are much less divergent than before. Finally, it is important to note that "the three countries have embraced the free market economy and are all at various stages of liberalization and privatization of their economies" (Shanqin, 1996). While Kenya continues to have the strongest economy in the region, Uganda and Tanzania have experienced significant growth over the years.

> Uganda's GDP growth has averaged 6 percent annually since 1987, notched up an astonishing 10 percent [in 1995] and is set for around 8 percent [in 1996]. Inflation is held at 5 percent, the freely convertible currency remains steady, foreign reserves equal nearly five months' import cover, and the return of Asians expelled in 1972 has boosted investment (Holman and Wrong, 1996).

Similarly, Tanzania reports that its economy has picked up, too. President Mkapa reported that the country's

> exports are increasing faster than imports. . . inflation in the country fell from November's [1996] 27 percent to currently 16 percent. . . [and that] Private investments are picking up, notably in the tourism and mining sectors as well as manufacturing ("Tanzania's Economy Picks Up," 1997).

It is expected that since the gap in the level of development between Kenya and the other two countries has grown smaller, it will be possible to realize more equitable returns from this attempt at economic integration.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the colonial legacy of dependence and underdevelopment have been emphasized in order to highlight the historical context which informs the present. This focus on colonialism is by no means an attempt to overlook the events of independence which certainly contribute to the lack of development in Africa. Some of the political issues of independence were addressed in the discussion of the EAC. However, further research could definitely add to an understanding of the role of the African state and African leadership in facilitating (or hindering) development.

Regionalism is a strategy that not only aims to increase development within the boundaries of a specific geographic region, but it also seeks to strengthen the voice of Africans within the continent. This collective power which is created seeks to manifest itself not only at the regional level, but also at the continental level. The implications of African unity for the continent are significant when we consider the impact that it could have on Africa's standing in the global community. As OAU Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim notes:

> The only way to break out of this trend toward marginalizing our people and our continent is for African countries, first and foremost, to assume our responsibilities to ensure that through our collective action and our collective solidarity, we force ourselves on the international agenda (Novicki, 1992: 37).

He suggests that as Africans come together, politically, economically and otherwise, with a single unified voice, the international community will have to take African issues more seriously.

However, as noted in the example of the EAC, there are significant obstacles that African leaders must overcome. Among these issues, political will is probably the most crucial. In the future:

> What should be stressed is that, in order to encourage economic cooperation among the African countries as a means of accelerating the rate of economic development, there should be a radical change in the role of politics to ensure that it makes a positive contribution to economic development (Mutharika, 1972: 334).

Personal conflicts must take a back seat to the development needs of the people. Short term gain must be by-passed in order to obtain sustainable long term growth. Otherwise, Africa will continue along this very dangerous path marked by poverty.

Regionalism stands as one of the most promising strategies for the economic, social, and political development of Africa. It calls for the unification of African economies to meet the challenges of development. It further takes issue with the nature of the world economic system and questions Africa's subordinate position in it. Those who support regionalism support a radical change in the structure of economic relations at the international level so as to reap a greater benefit and spark a flame of economic growth that will burn steadily and more uniformly throughout the continent.