

# African Studies Quarterly

Volume 9, Issues 1 & 2  
Fall 2006

Special Issue

Special Issue on Africa's Moral and Affective Economy

Guest Editor: Goran Hyden

Published by the Center for African Studies, University of Florida

ISSN: 2152-2448

# **African Studies Quarterly**

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## Introduction and Overview to the Special Issue on Africa's Moral and Affective Economy

GORAN HYDEN

The purpose of this special issue is to allow a better insight and appreciation of Japanese scholarship on Africa. Japanese academics interested in Africa have been actively studying various aspects of African rural life. Agricultural economists have focused on the production side while anthropologists have taken a special interest in the social and cultural side of rural life. Although not exclusive to Kyoto University, the center for Africanist research in Japan has been concentrated to this old and venerable institution of higher learning in what was once the capital of Japan. Understandably, the Japanese have published their work first and foremost in Japanese. Their body of knowledge about Africa is contained in monographs, edited volumes, and journals published locally.

Those of us who have been fortunate to work and interact with Japanese Africanists are aware of the interesting empirical work that they are doing. This special issue contains seven separate contributions that showcase Japanese studies of Africa. The various authors have different disciplinary backgrounds but they are all sharing a cross-disciplinary perspective on the continent. Some are senior academics who have done research in Africa for many years while others are doctoral students still in the process of finishing their degrees.

The general theme of their work is "things African." They are interested in indigenous values and institutions and how they fare in the context of increased exposure to external forces. Their work is theoretically and conceptually located in the moral and affective economy sphere with its focus on informal institutions and practices. In addition to my own work on the economy of affection these authors have taken their lead from the research on the moral economy in Southeast Asia by James Scott.<sup>1</sup>

The conclusion that can and should be drawn from their research is that the informal institutions and practices that are associated with a moral or affective economy continue to be a vital part of social and economic life in Africa. Indigenous concepts and practices are, if not reinvented, at least continuously adapted to changing circumstances. As the contributions to this volume demonstrate, this is true for people in urban as well as rural settings. Principles of reciprocity remain important guides for social and economic behavior. The articles published here also indicate that this phenomenon is common in different countries. The volume contains

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ISSN: 2152-2448

studies carried out in Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda.

In order to do justice to the theoretical and conceptual context that the various authors have chosen for their work, it is necessary to begin with a discussion of some of the key terms used or alluded to throughout the issue. Thus, the first section of this paper covers the economy of affection and the moral economy – their origin, definition, and place in the study of Africa. The second section focuses on the distinction between formal and informal institutions – an important point in studies of African social, economic and political phenomena. The third section will provide an overview of the content of the various individual contributions to this issue.

## THE ECONOMY OF AFFECTION AND MORAL ECONOMY

The economy of affection and the moral economy are part of a conceptual lineage that goes quite far back in social science historiography. Some may argue that Emile Durkheim's distinction between mechanical and organic types of solidarity is the beginning. Others may refer to Weber and his differentiation between traditional and modern forms of authority. Yet others may point to Karl Polanyi's seminal book, *The Great Transformation*, and his notion of substantivism in contrast to capitalist economics.<sup>2</sup> To this can be added a series of anthropologists, e.g. Marshall Sahlins, whose work has built on these early pioneers.<sup>3</sup>

The common denominator in these early studies is the transformation of society that follows from the spread of the market economy or capitalism. To be sure, this is not the only variable that matters in this process. Many would point to technological development and industrialization. Others would point to urbanization or the impact of education. Whatever the role and importance of these other factors, capitalism is of special significance when it comes to understanding the economy of affection and the moral economy. The latter two constitute alternative forms of political economy. They are not purely structural as the Marxist version of political economy is in its emphasis on formal institutions like market and state. Nor are they just based on the assumptions associated with *homo economicus* – the autonomous individual capable of making rational choices to maximize his self-interest. The moral and affective types of economic action discussed in this issue are embedded in social relations and cultural conventions. Individual behavior and choice in these economies are fully rational, albeit in a given context. Rationality in the economy of affection or the moral economy, therefore, must be understood as contextualized as compared to the abstract version associated with rational choice theory. Comparison is not impossible but it is a challenge because of contextual specificities. Such comparisons can never be stretched to the point of being organized under a single formalized theory.

This may be viewed as a major shortcoming of these alternative political economies, yet it is precisely because of the limitations inherent in formal theory that the social sciences need more than one lens to interpret social reality. Formal theory is really only helpful in the study of phenomena that are predictable, e.g. votes in legislatures where party loyalties are known in advance and issues can be arranged on a stable ideological spectrum. Attempts to study social and political reality outside such stable institutional environments inevitably imply such severe

reductionism that the study loses sight of the more interesting research questions to be asked. The economy of affection or moral economy help us throw light on forms of social, economic, and political behavior that are significant, yet not covered by concepts in mainstream political economy.

The notion of moral economy in contemporary social science studies is foremost associated with the name of James C. Scott (see above), and more specifically his study of peasants in southeast Asia. Partly because of his Asian focus, he has attracted much attention among Japanese social scientists interested in peasant economies. Scott argues that social practices among peasants in southeast Asia are based on two moral premises: (1) the norm of reciprocity and (2) the right to subsistence. This translates into a fear of technological innovation and social change. Peasants adopt the “safety-first” principle or what economists would call a risk-averse position vis-a-vis their environment. Instead of taking on these challenges, peasants seek social insurance in the form of support from family, friends, and neighbors. These relations of mutual support are sometimes lateral (among equals) at other times vertical involving a relationship with a patron. According to Scott, patron-client relations have been on decline since capitalism began to make an inroad in the countryside. As a result, these producers on the land – subsistence farmers, tenants, and agricultural laborers – have become increasingly dependent on their own wit. Theirs is not the conventional class action, but rather non-compliance with rules and regulations, sabotage, evasion, and deception – what the same author in a subsequent volume refers to as the “weapons of the weak.”<sup>4</sup>

The economy of affection is a close equivalent to the moral economy that has been used in the study of African social and political life. According to Hyden, this type of political economy is an outgrowth of the prevalence of a peasant mode of production, in which rural producers have yet to be captured by state or market.<sup>5</sup> In this pre-capitalist order, households place greater emphasis on social reproduction and subsistence than on production and profit. Because agricultural technology is simple, there is little specialization and hence limited social differentiation. The wealthier members of a community are not rich because they own land on which others are forced to till. Instead, their wealth stems from owning a larger plot and having more family members to cultivate it. The economy of affection blends economic and social rationality: individuals are rational in the sense of pursuing strategies that are embedded in local social contexts. Hyden defines the economy of affection as “a network of support, communications and interaction among structurally defined groups connected by blood, kin, community or other affiliations, for example, religion.”<sup>6</sup>

Like the moral economy, the economy of affection is a way for peasants to cope with circumstances that are threatening their livelihoods. There are some significant differences, however, stemming foremost from the differences in level of development between southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Because market and state have penetrated society more effectively in southeast Asia, the moral economy is more a direct response to the inevitable exploitation of the poor that tend to be associated with these processes. The existence of an indigenous state legacy and the longtime exposure to capitalism in countries like Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia as well as the concentration of people and the reliance on more sophisticated agricultural technology have facilitated a process of capturing the peasants that are just beginning to happen in Africa. To be sure, the aim of the colonial state was precisely that of

capturing the peasants for its own ends, but since independence much political energy has been spent on dismantling that structure and weakening the capacity of the state – and the market – to influence life in the rural areas. Economic liberalization has not transformed agriculture or promoted rural development. Instead, it has led to an accelerated migration from the countryside to the urban areas.

This process of migration has also changed the nature of the economy of affection. When confined to the rural areas, it tends to rely on relatively stable reciprocal solidarities. People are ready to exchange labor at critical points in the agricultural season. They also chip in to regularly assist each other at times of important family occasions, notably the birth or baptism of a child, youth initiation, weddings, and funerals. These reciprocities tend to be quite specific and they are taken for granted as obligations to others for purposes of enjoying a form of social insurance that otherwise would not be there. Some of these specific reciprocities continue to survive as members of households move to the urban areas. Rural-urban ties continue to be important, especially among first and second generation of urban migrants. The important thing, however, is that old social ties are amended and new ones invented to perpetuate economy of affection types of relations and behaviors. Many of these tend to be generalized in nature and some are ad hoc arrangements at times of hardship. They also involve relationships that cut across previous, quite strictly demarcated lines of reciprocal interaction. As several articles in this issue demonstrate, the social significance of precapitalist social relations survive. They constitute the mental frame within which individuals make choices and behave.

The economy of affection and the moral economy, as portrayed by Scott, differ in the following two respects. With regard to *presence*, the former is more prevalent and central to social and political life than the latter. The moral economy, while important to local peasants, is rather peripheral to the economy at large in any southeast Asian country. In Africa, by contrast, the economy of affection is at the core of social and political life. In addition to the phenomena discussed in this issue, the economy of affection is at the root of clientelism and other forms of both lateral and vertical forms of reciprocity. Most importantly, the relations between rich and poor have yet to “snap” in the sense of leading to land alienation and being replaced by capitalist types of social exploitation.

The two economies also differ with regard to *function*. The moral economy is primarily a defense mechanism. It is reactive in the sense of being a way for marginalized people to counter the influence of external social forces that threaten their livelihoods or lifeworld. Whether material or cultural values are at stake, peasants, according to Scott, get together to protect themselves by engaging in evasive action, deception, and other forms of non-compliance with orders or demands from more powerful groups or institutions. The economy of affection also serves as a defense mechanism but it transcends that particular function. It serves the purpose of maintaining social relations and also social advancement. In this respect, the economy of affection is entrepreneurial. Poorer members of society seek out richer members, not just relatives, to obtain a “loan” that would allow him to e.g. build a house, buy the necessary equipment to start a business, etc. Richer ones seek out poorer ones to build a power base that can be used for political purposes.

The economy of affection, therefore, is more prevalent and more varied than the moral economy. Although both are alternatives to conventional types of political economy, the former

has a more dominant influence of society and its development. In fact, it is so strong that it easily subverts conventional models of development based on state or market, a topic that lies outside the scope of this particular issue.

As another aside, it should also be mentioned here that the moral and affective economy is becoming a global phenomenon. At the empirical level, it is increasingly applied to Africans in the diaspora: traders and others who live in Europe and North America engaging in reciprocities of various kinds, e.g. helping new migrants to get a place to stay or a visa to reside. At the more normative level, Sayer applies the notion of “moral economy” to the conditions of developed societies where the market economy is well institutionalized.<sup>7</sup> His argument is essentially that social scientists need to think beyond utilitarianism and rejuvenate a more radical political economy that is based on such principles as justice, equality and respect for public goods. Human agency is more than just pursuing one’s self-interest. It also implies judgements of responsibility and morally-guided action.

## FORMAL AND INFORMAL INSTITUTIONS

Institutions are typically understood as rules of conduct; organizations are the actors performing within a particular institutional framework, either complying with or challenging it. Recent literature on neo-institutionalism is characterized by two controversies. One concerns whether an institution is merely the sum total of individual actors working together or it has a life of its own, influencing the choice and behavior of individual actors. Scholars like Ostrom would tend to see institutions as creations by rational individuals capable of both designing and terminating institutions at their will.<sup>8</sup> In this theoretical scenario, institutions are dependent variables explained by the rational choices of individual actors. Other scholars, coming out of a sociological or historical approach to institutions, e.g. March and Olson, argue that institutions have an influence on human behavior and choice.<sup>9</sup> Individuals are being socialized by social entities, e.g. family, schools, organizations, that convey the importance and value of specific institutions. The latter, therefore, are independent variables explaining why individuals behave in certain ways or make certain types of choices.

<sup>10</sup> Compliance with state regulations and the principles of neo-liberal economic order – the “good governance” package – is being advocated as inevitable prerequisites for development. Institutionalization, therefore, means formalization. Another is empirical. Scholars find it hard to study things informal. They are hard to identify, even more difficult to measure. The emphasis, therefore, tend to be on formal institutions, the rules that are written and that are tested in the open. Because informal institutions are not so easily transparent, they are typically left out altogether or spoken of only in general terms as part of “culture.” A third reason is epistemological: the tendency to deny agency to informal institutions. Informal institutions are not just customs and conventions that do not change. As articles in the issue demonstrate, informal institutions are constantly being subject to change, including efforts to stabilize them. Institutionalization, therefore, is also possible in the field of informal institutions. The challenge is that understanding such processes are more labor-intensive and do not easily lend themselves to generalizations in the context of an abstract formal theory. Informal institutions

exist in the “gray” zone between economics and culture and that is where the research frontier is, especially in Africa, but not just there.

Social science research is better served by an inductive approach that begins with the identification of a research problem that requires careful consideration of which theory or method is best suited for understanding and analyzing that problem. An increasing number of social scientists, unfortunately, approach the study of social and political problems with ready-made solutions – theories that they wrongly assume are sufficiently robust to explain issues regardless of cultural and historical context. This is not meant to deny the value of comparative research, only to suggest that comparisons based on abstract theory are inevitably only telling a very small part of the whole story; hence, it is useless for purposes of prediction – a principal ambition of the social sciences.

<sup>11</sup> In developing countries, it is more often part of pre-modern reality: ways of resisting, coping with, and taking advantage of formal institutions imposed by formal state institutions – and, often, international bodies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

This issue deals with informal institutions that are a product of the affective and moral economy. Other informal institutions may have a different origin. The point, though, is that regardless of origin, informal institutions matter more, not less today. The work that the Japanese researchers featured here have done is an important contribution to knowledge. They operate at the frontier of today’s social science research.

## THE INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The seven contributions to this issue can be divided into two groups. The first four deal with a set of reciprocal arrangements that are leftovers from precolonial times: labor and food exchanges that help members of a local community overcome labor bottlenecks while simultaneously sharing the fruits of their labor in the context of a “beer party.” The remaining three contributions deal with the reinvention of informal institutions inspired by affective solidarities among formal business entrepreneurs as well as informal sector traders in an urban environment.

*Soichiro Shiraishi* discusses the influence of the monetary economy on traditional labor exchange practices among the Sabiny people in eastern Uganda. While beer has given way to money as a medium of exchange, the short-term exchanges that are characteristic of the modern economy are still conducted with the help of locally meaningful terms that grow out of the traditions of the Sabiny. Capitalism does not obliterate informal institutions, but creates conditions in which they are reinvented.

does not produce conflict.

*Sayaka Ogawa* offers fascinating insights into the evolution and management of informal institutions among local middlemen and smallscale retailers (street peddlers) in Mwanza, the second largest city in Tanzania. Particularly interesting is a local credit system that balances the pursuit of profit with social norms that draw inspiration from the economy of affection. She demonstrates that reciprocities can survive and stabilize relations even in fluid urban contexts. The fellowship that emerges among these smallscale business people does not stem from

building trust in the conventional manner that Westerners think of. Instead, trust comes from being able to handle tricks that members keep making against each other. These acts are the equivalence of jokes in a joking relationship aimed at testing the temper of a stranger and deducing trust therefrom.

*Tadasu Tsuruta*, finally, discusses the contemporary relevance of moral-economic concepts that people in Tanzania, using the country's *lingua franca*, Kiswahili, have invented in response to external economic and cultural influences. The important message that his article conveys is that linguistic terms and concepts in Kiswahili are multi-faceted and straddle notions that are disaggregated into more specific terms in the English or French language. Things like joking and mutual aid, dance and politics, as well as wit and cunning, go together with very different social implications than they have in modern society. At the same time, it would be a mistake, Tsuruta argues, to consider this to be just a leftover of traditional life. The interesting thing about these concepts is that they cannot be placed in pre-arranged Western categories. Thus, they prompt us to probe their cultural content and rediscover the extent to which moral and affective relations are important in contemporary Africa.

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Reference Style: The following is the suggested format for referencing this article: Goran Hyden. "Introduction and Overview to the Special Issue on Africa's Moral and Affective Economy." *African Studies Quarterly* 9, no.1 & 2: [online] URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1a1.htm>

# Moral Economy as Emotional Interaction: Food Sharing and Reciprocity in Highland Ethiopia

KEIICHIRO MATSUMURA

**Abstract:** In peasant studies, many anthropologists have taken the view that the peasant economy has some salient cultural traits distinct from the rational choice of neoclassical economics. This view has been criticized by political economists as ignoring the process and mechanism of peasants' economic behavior. This paper examines cases of food sharing in highland Ethiopia, in order to reveal that the sharing process among peasants is greatly influenced by their affective motivations. People in highland Ethiopia share their food crops with various persons ranging from close relatives to unknown beggars, who rarely give anything in return. While tendencies in sharing activity are analyzed in terms of the social relationship between donor and recipient, the act of food sharing itself is seen to be motivated mainly by mixed feelings of fear, awe, and anxiety. In beggar-donor interactions, beggars appear to elicit sympathy through affective approaches in order to extract the food crop. I will reconsider the issue of reciprocity, exploring the possible function of these affective approaches in emotional interaction as a form of agency towards the achievement of the distribution of wealth. This is an aspect, which has been described merely as 'moral' or 'ethic' by moral economists and reduced, in turn, by political economists, solely to 'calculative rationality'.

## Introduction

The concept of "moral economy" suggested by James Scott opens us to a particular framework for understanding the behavioral features of rural peasants.<sup>1</sup> Peasants are suggested to share salient cultural traits, characterized as anti-market, aversion to risk by the safety-first principle, and adherence to the norm of a subsistence ethic within the community.<sup>2</sup> This simplified portrayal of peasants has provoked a great deal of criticism. In particular, political economists have accused the "moral economists" for having left out important questions as to how morals work among peasants, how norms are derived in the first place, and in what way village resources are distributed.<sup>3</sup> These criticisms are targeted against the assumption underlying a depiction of the peasant economy as static, where the process and mechanisms of economic action are of minimal importance.

Despite all their criticism, however, political economists have been able to reveal only a single aspect of the mechanism of peasants' economic behavior: the rational calculation of self-

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1-2a2.pdf>

interest. As Albert Hirschman pointed out, theoretical emphasis on "interests," among all other human passions, was historically invented and constructed in accordance with the rising spirit of capitalism in Europe.<sup>4</sup> In this paper, I will suggest an alternative perspective on the mechanisms and motivations of peasants' sharing activities by focusing on such interactions in highland Ethiopia.

In most literature of peasant studies, the issue of wealth-sharing and reciprocal assistance has long been discussed in terms of their cultural aspects. Clifford Geertz, for example, argues that in colonial Java society, peasants, despite the pressures of population increase and plantation economy, maintained their socio-economic homogeneity by fragmenting their limited wealth.<sup>5</sup> Geertz thus characterized Java society using the terms "agricultural involution" and "shared poverty". In African studies, Goran Hyden elaborated his model of the "economy of affection," in which he argued that reciprocal social networks of the African peasant mode of production persist even in the post-colonial era.<sup>6</sup> These arguments are based on an assumption that some sort of moral or ethic concerning the sharing of wealth through reciprocal ties is maintained within close relationships based on kinship and the community.

George Foster's study on a rural community in Mexico illustrated the significance of "cognitive orientation" in the peasantry.<sup>7</sup> He argues that peasants, based on an "image of limited goods," fear that a stable balance of the wealth could result in a disruption. The amount of desirable objects, such as land and wealth, are always conceived to be limited. It is believed that someone's improvement in position would threaten those of others. A person who acquires, or has acquired, more than his traditional share of goods, must be pulled back to the level of all.

Despite the wide variety of concepts surrounding peasants' economic behavior, there is a common perception that the sharing custom is derived from the peasants' cultural traits. These arguments are more or less based on the assumption that peasant communities are culturally homogenous, perpetuating a system of distribution of wealth clearly distinct from the one of *homo economicus*.

Are these characteristics no longer applicable to newly established settlements dependent on cash crops, or multi-ethnic urban-like communities? In the rapidly changing situation of rural Africa, it is now widely observed that peasant communities are heavily dependent on cash economy or waged labor, and the demographic mobility between the urban and the rural is increasingly growing. The view of peasant economic behavior based on static cultural features has to be reconsidered.<sup>8</sup>

In this paper, I will focus on a rural community in highland Ethiopia, where multi-ethnic migrants have settled for the production of cash crops. People have different cultural backgrounds and religious beliefs. It is almost impossible to find a single cultural trait or concept shared by all the villagers. This culturally heterogeneous community can provide a much wider basis for understanding the dynamic processes of food sharing in a changing society of contemporary Africa.

The research village is located in southwestern Ethiopia, which is known as the possible origin of *Coffea arabica*. People grow coffee as cash crop and cultivate maize for subsistence. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, immigrants have increasingly moved to this area in search of fertile land. According to the national census in 1994, the population of the research village was 1987 individuals in 451 households. In my extensive survey of 404 households in

2002, more than half of the household heads were Oromo (61.4%), many of them being recent settlers from various areas.<sup>9</sup> Most of the Oromo people were Muslims, but some of them are Christians. The second largest ethnic group was Amhara (18%), who had migrated to this area from the north. All of them were Christians belonging to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The third group was "Kullo" (Dawro and Konta) (8.0%), coming from the southern part of Ethiopia mainly as coffee pickers.

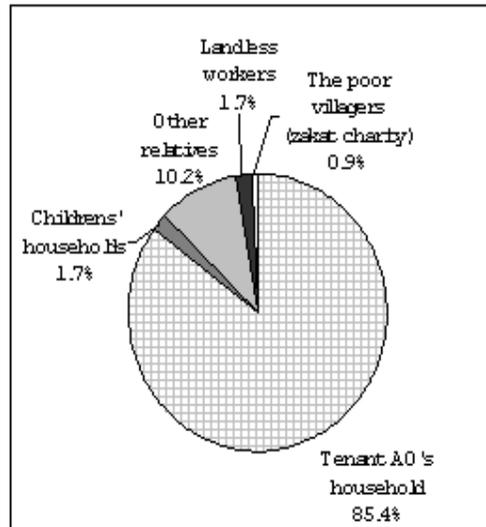
## FOOD SHARING IN HIGHLAND ETHIOPIA

In this newly populated multi-ethnic village, people usually share and distribute their food crops. After the maize harvest, the poor villagers get around begging for a portion of maize. Most of them are elder women, but sometimes strangers also join in the attempt. Those who reap the harvest are expected to share the crops with those who do not. How do people share food with others? What motivates them to do so? I shall begin by describing two types of crop distribution observed in the village setting: the first being those practiced immediately after the maize harvest; the second, among villagers in everyday life.

### Maize distribution after the harvest

In highland Ethiopia, sharecropping is common practice. The ratio of harvest shared between landholder and tenant depends on the provider of oxen used for plowing. When a landholder provides the oxen, he is entitled to half the harvest. When a tenant provides the oxen, the tenant receives two-thirds. However, the crops are not only shared between landholders and tenants. During the harvest, tenants try to secure the a force through various means. One of the main such means is through labor exchange. In addition, tenants usually ask relatives and friends for help. Furthermore, landless poor villagers often join the work in expectation for a reward in crop.

A.O., a tenant farmer in his sixties, was cultivating maize with his two unmarried sons in 2000, using oxen provided by the landowner. During the harvest, A.O. was assisted by a total of twenty persons including his two sons. Among them were six agnatic and matrimonial relatives, four villagers working for labor exchange, five helping as friends, and two landless peasants working for reward. Immediately after the completion of this harvest, A.O. and his two sons reciprocated their work as labor exchange to eight persons including four relatives and four labor exchangers, and distributed maize to nine persons including two married children, three relatives, and two landless workers, and two poor villagers.



**Figure 1.** Proportion of maize distribution of total harvest for tenant AO (in weight)

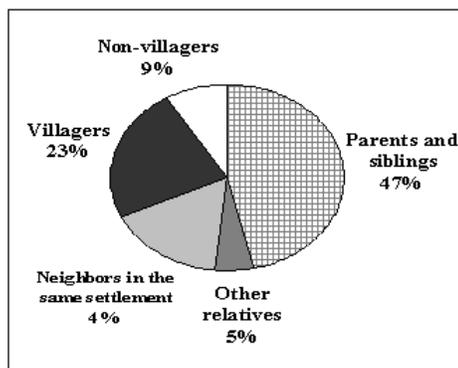
Figure 1 shows that out of the total maize harvest for tenant A.O. (1137.8 kg), about 15% in weight was distributed outside his household. A notable share was distributed to his family and relatives. Although labor exchangers were not given any crop but reciprocated only in labor for their own harvests, three kinship members received labor in addition to a distribution in maize. A portion of the crop (0.9%) was voluntarily donated to two poor villagers as *zakat*, or Muslim charity. Out of the friends who helped in the harvest work, only one was given crop for the reason that he was landless and poor. The other three friends were not given any because they were young and unmarried, and the one poor villager, who worked briefly for A.O., was denied because of the shortness of the period he offered help. From this case, it can be pointed out that maize distribution after harvest occurs mainly between those in fixed relationships, notably agnatic kinsmen and poor villagers, and in large amounts at a time.

#### Food sharing in everyday life

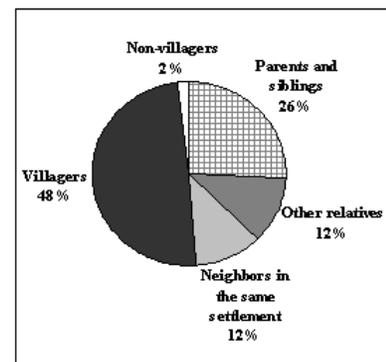
The sharing and distributing of crops are not restricted to the immediate post-harvest period, but takes place in everyday life. Here I will focus on the case of B.Y., a tenant farmer in his thirties who was also my chief informant. B.Y. lived with his wife and a baby and cultivated a small plot. Not so rich a farmer, he worked hard to produce maize as well as cash crops including coffee, taro, peanuts and so on. I collected his data on food sharing and gift-giving for two periods between 2002 and 2003: two months during the dry, post-harvest season and another two months during the wet, pre-harvest season.

Maize harvest, which usually takes place between October and November, is followed by a dry season during which coffee beans are reaped. This is the best time of the year for farmers, as both food and income abound. The wet season, in contrast, corresponds to the preharvest

season, when villagers are usually affected by food shortage. An analysis of B.Y.'s case shows that he shared more food during the wet food shortage season with a wide range of people from kinsmen to unknown beggars. While data for the dry season totaled an equivalent of 58 Birr in crops such as maize, taro and peanuts, which in turn were distributed to 14 persons, in the wet season the total reached 88 Birr distributed to 28 persons. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 indicate that about half of the sharing in cash-equivalent value was for those who are not kinship members, but neighbors, villagers, and even non-villagers.



**Figure 2.1** Food sharing during rainy season (in cash-equivalent value)



**Figure 2.2** Food sharing during dry season (in cash-equivalent value)

Interviews with B.Y. on each case of sharing revealed that food sharing can be classified into six categories according to the social relationships involved in each case: parents and female siblings; close relatives and male siblings; employees and younger collaborators in farming; respected persons and those to whom the donor is indebted; villagers and acquaintances; and unknown beggars.

Firstly, when the recipients were parents or female siblings, the provider showed a tendency to share as a voluntary act, supporting his family members in times of trouble. Such sharing opportunities were frequent and not fixed. The amount of crop shared in each case was small, but the demands from the needy recipients were hardly ever refused. Secondly, sharing with close relatives and male siblings implied an obligatory attitude on the provider's behalf, to show his faith to relatives living close by. Compared to the first category, the amount of shared crop was much larger, but opportunities were usually limited to fixed occasions, as on the completion of harvest.

In the third and fourth categories, when the food crop was given to employees and younger collaborators for farming and to respected persons and those to whom the donor is indebted, the donor voluntarily gave out food crops and other commodities. His aim seems to be to maintain a good relationship with the recipient. Finally, in the case of the fifth and sixth categories, which consist of villagers and acquaintances and unknown beggars, sharing was not

usually voluntary, but preceded by begging on the recipient's part. The amount of the crops given in each case was very small, but its occurrence was most frequently observed.

These cases indicate that people do not always give more to those in closer relationship, but share their food with various persons ranging from close relatives to unfamiliar persons and even unknown ones. Moreover, in all the cases, the donor did not seem to expect any reward in return. In fact, counter-gifts were given in only exceptional cases.

Why do people so frequently share their foods with others? Are they willing to give some crops without any hesitation? Why are people sharing food with others beyond the boundary of kinship or even village? I will explore these questions by examining the actual interaction of sharing and some episodes, which reflects people's perception of giving and receiving.

## MOTIVATIONS AND INCENTIVES OF FOOD SHARING

### Expected sharing and inevitable dilemma

What views do people have on giving crops to others? Farmer B.Y. said: *"Everyone knows who harvests a lot of crops, or who are digging taro now. They come and tell us that they will soon come to take taro"*. His words imply that those who have many crops are always expected to share with those who do not. Moreover, the recipients often behave as though sharing is a normal obligation of the rich.

One day, a poor woman living in the village came to B.Y.'s compound and said, *"Last time, you gave me too little. Did you mean to give me anything at all?"* The woman's attitude, which struck me as quite arrogant, indicates that she viewed, or at least pretended, sharing with the poor to be an ordinary thing and even a duty for those who were relatively better off. At that time, B.Y. refused her demand and said, *"It was enough and even too much!"*

I asked B.Y. if he was expecting reciprocal assistance in case of food shortage. B.Y. replied, *"People never appreciate our gift, and never return us a thing. Far from it! Suppose we were suffering when they were not in trouble. They'd never even come close to us."* The implication here is that those who give crops do not necessarily expect to receive reciprocal assistance in times of need. And yet, why do people share food?

People often emphasize the importance of sharing food with the poor by adhering to Islamic principles. When farmer B.Y. gave some maize to an unknown beggar, he explained the reason as follows: *"Because Allah gives us food, it's bad for us not to give anything when we are begged. If you tell a lie that you don't have any crop, all the crop in your house will disappear."*

During my research, however, I observed many cases that run counter to these words. Once, an elderly widow came to B.Y.'s compound and begged his mother for food. In an appeal for crops she complained that her son was sick and that she was hungry. At that time, B.Y. said to his mother, *"Don't give her anything! We cannot afford to do that!"* I asked him why he said so and refused to give something to a poor woman. He replied: *"When I was a child, my parents did not mind giving our crops to others, and wound up losing our annual storage in six months. It was quite terrible!"*

While people seem to share food with their relatives, neighbors and poor villagers, they also face the dilemma that too much giving could make them suffer from food scarcity,

especially during rainy season. So it sometimes happens that people refuse the demand for crops and repel the beggars. They do not always follow the religious precepts without hesitation.

### Food Sharing and Social Relationships

In spite of such a dilemma, people actually share food with various kinds of persons ranging from kinship members to unknown beggars. What differences are there between sharing with close relatives and sharing with strangers? Sahlins classifies reciprocity into three categories: "generalized reciprocity" -- the altruistic gift giving without expectations for immediate return; "balanced reciprocity" -- the direct exchange of equivalents; and "negative reciprocity" in which people try to make gains at the expense of others.<sup>10</sup> Sahlins argues that these three types of reciprocities are related to social distance: "generalized reciprocity" is based on close relationship among kinship members; "negative reciprocity" is observed on remote distant relationship between other ethnic groups and strangers; and "balanced reciprocity" is built up in between.

First of all, I will introduce episodes that illustrate background motivations for food sharing among close relationships. One day, a female cousin of farmer B.Y. said to his mother: *"I have been laid up these days, but B.Y. has never visited me at all. Bring him to divine justice!"* The expression of this "divine justice" connotes a severe accusation. B.Y. heard of her words from his mother with embarrassment and said: *"I have been in the field all day long. I've never heard of it. And again, she is always laid up with stomachache, headache or something bad. That's why I give her milk or butter each and every time. This time, too, she wants me to bring her something."* Despite all these words, he visited her after a few hours.

There is no way to confirm whether or not the female cousin really wanted B.Y. to bring her anything at all. But it was obvious that he himself felt expected to share something with this neighboring relative. In the research village, relatively wealthy persons constantly feel the pressure to share wealth with other kinship members.

I came across an incident in which B.Y. found a fist-sized object covered by plastic buried in his maize field. He took it to a witch doctor and asked what it was. The witch doctor said, *"One of your relatives planted this witch medicine. It is intended to make your field barren."* At that time, I could not understand why the relative had to do such a thing, because they could possibly gain some benefit from B.Y.'s harvest. B.Y. explained to me: *"Relatives don't want you to be richer than themselves."* This indicates that indebted feelings or senses of inferiority invoked by food sharing and gift-giving can have a significant implication among close relationships.

According to B.Y., *"People often work against wealthy kinsmen. They use witch medicines or spread malicious rumors for preventing him from becoming richer."* In close relationships such as with kinship members, there is an antagonism against wealthy relatives. Those who are somewhat richer than other kinsmen are forced to consider negative pressures or envy among relatives. Then the fear of envy and hostile action can be an important incentive for people to share their wealth with close relatives.

In the case of sharing with strangers, what are the motivations? One morning, a stranger came to farmer A.O.'s compound. The man said *"Please give me something to eat."* A.O. replied,

"Come in. My wife will serve you a meal." After the man finished it and went away, A.O.'s wife said, "Yesterday, he came to the house next door. We were drinking coffee, and invited him in. He must be a thief and is now about to go to a different village to steal." It is frequently observed that people serve strangers meals or give some crops. Why do people share their limited wealth with strangers, and even with a suspected thief?

There is an oft-told story among Muslim villagers. The rough storyline is as follows: A ragged beggar visits a farmer, who chases him away, but eventually people find that the unknown beggar is a *wali* (Muslim holy man). In fact, a rumor of a man in the village ran quite similar to this story. Once, a stranger with dirty clothes came to the village. He was usually walking around and picking up rags in the village. It seemed to me that he had some mental problem. The villagers, however, saw him in a different way. They said: "He looks like a madman, but in fact he is a great wali." Strangers are easily associated with holiness or sacredness, respected and sometimes, feared by the villagers.

Furthermore, the status of other ethnic groups indicates their unique position in the community. Out of seven witch doctors around the village, four are Kullo, two are Amhara, and one is a different branch of Oromo. Interestingly, all of them are from other ethnic groups or from a remote area. The Kullo have migrated to this area as temporal coffee pickers and they are regarded as being lowest in status in the research area. Nevertheless, it is widely believed that the spiritual power of the Kullo is most formidable and dangerous. People feel a kind of respect and awe as well as fear toward strangers. It can be argued that these mixed feelings drive people to share food even with socially distant persons despite their own dilemma.

#### The process of begging and giving

It appears that different kinds of emotional feelings have to do with peasants' sharing activity. In this section, I examine the actual process of narrative interaction between a donor and a beggar. These verbal exchanges can sometimes be quite obnoxious, as I have suggested above, and in other cases peaceful or even funny. The following scripts are abridged from the narrative of a begging woman (H.M.) who was a Christian Amhara allegedly over a hundred years of age. She visited a house of a Muslim Oromo farmer and spoke in the Oromo Language.

H.M.: "Two children (young men) were quarreling over my (grand)daughter. That's why I've come here today. They're surely going to kill me. I do not have any relatives around here. So I am very scared. When they come to my home, my daughter gives them bread and milk, but nothing for me. I am fasting and spending nights without any meal."

In fact, she usually spoke only Amharic and the Oromo farmer could also speak Amharic fluently. But at that time, she used the Oromo language and made a pitiful story to appeal for food crops. It seemed to me that the Oromo farmer did not fully believe what she said, but her words and expressions were enjoyable enough to create a pleasant atmosphere between them.

(After some turns of the conversation, finally the farmer gave her some taro.)

H.M.: "*Oh, my brother. Allah, give him a long life. Like a person receiving a reward, I shall enjoy the food, lying down on my bed. When I go home and put two taros in my mouth, I will boast it as if our Oromo ancestor killed an animal [such as lion] (Oromo phrase).*"

H.M.: "*Allah, give her a peaceful life. Give her a good harvest of taro every year. Give her a child every year. Our great Abba Yabu (Muslim holy man), bless you and bless your crops. (lifting the taros on her back with an effort) Ass of the mother you kicked out after marriage! (Oromo phrase meaning like 'oops-a-daisy') I won't go anywhere, now. I shall return home directly by way of the meadow.*"

Tracing these rhetorical utterances of a female beggar, it can be pointed out that religious belief and even ethnic identity are utilized as means for obtaining food. She weaved various stories of misery, referred to Oromo ancestor and Muslim holy man even though she was a Christian Amhara, and told with humorous expression in a friendly atmosphere, which successfully aroused the donor's sympathy to the point where he could no longer resist giving her something. This process suggests that "moral" or "norm" may not be embedded in the society or in peoples' mind in advance. Instead, they are repeatedly evoked and reminded by sentimental approaches, through socially affective discourses or symbolic resources such as language and religion.

All these cases suggest that the process of food sharing is not automatically practiced according to a moral or a norm, but that people are negotiating with each other for validity between sharing with others and keeping for themselves. It is a dynamic process negotiated over the distribution of the wealth. In the process of this interaction, I have pointed out that some mixed emotions like fear, respect, awe, and sympathy do function as a key element affecting the outcome of food sharing. Only those who are able to manipulate these emotions in their negotiation can receive their share of food. In the next section, I will discuss this point in detail with reference to literatures on reciprocity.

## EMOTIONAL INTERACTION IN FOOD SHARING

### Reciprocity and religious principle

The issue of food sharing has long been discussed in terms of various concepts such as 'egalitarianism', 'leveling mechanism', 'reciprocity' and 'moral economy.' I will start my argument with the concept of 'reciprocity' in anthropology. As I have pointed out, sharing behavior in highland Ethiopia can be summed up in two distinct characteristics: despite difference in motivation, food sharing is undertaken among various individuals from family members to unknown beggars; and in each case any counter-service in return is hardly practiced.

As discussed above, these results are not in accordance with Sahlins' formula on relationships between social distances and 'reciprocity,' in which he argues that in closer relationships people are more likely to share food with less return, whereas in alien relationships people tend to act more selfishly. There is no doubt that the relationships among family members and relatives are apparently much closer and tighter than the ones with

villagers of other ethnicity or with unknown beggars. Why do villagers provide their valuable food crops even for unfamiliar persons?

First of all, I have indicated that the religious belief of Islam would lie as an influential discipline for sharing activities. Just as Schneider points out in the case of the Christianity of Europe, it can be argued that the Islamic principle would liberate people from the community-based, blood and territorial relationship and introduce the egalitarianism or brotherly compassion based on the extended relationship of the religious community.<sup>11</sup> There is no doubt that religious beliefs have something to do with food sharing in the research village.

Otsuka, an anthropologist studying Islam, highlights the significance of exchange theory, which indicates 'reciprocal connection' in wealth-sharing among Muslims.<sup>12</sup> To sum up his point, *zakat* in Islam implies a kind of 'reciprocity' between a Muslim and Allah (or a holy man), in which his contribution can lead to his mundane interests in return. Then *zakat* does not mean a material donation to the poor, but a display of devotion and faith to Allah or a holy man. Therefore, according to the principle of Islam, the real recipient of the donation would be Allah or a holy man, not the poor or beggars. In fact, farmer B.Y. mentions to a poor villager, "*We are giving in favor of Allah, not for you.*"

It is an oversimplification, however, to treat the Islamic principle as the sole ground for explaining food sharing in rural communities. Actually, the sharing activity is not limited to the Muslim villagers, but also present among Christian villagers and even between both. Furthermore, not everybody devotes himself to sharing food without hesitation. If all people actually believed that Allah would always guarantee rewards to the *zakat* giver, nobody would refuse to give. Hence the principle of 'reciprocity' cannot fully clarify the context of food sharing in the village. It rather seems to be an idealistic discourse among Muslims.

The villagers often say: "*We Muslims have to leave one-tenth of our crops in the field, even if monkeys or boars are going to finish it up.*" In reality, however, no one is likely to leave their valuable crops in the fields. At the same time, in everyday life, they face the dilemma in which they are at risk of food shortage by giving away a certain amount of their crops. Therefore, since there is a discrepancy between the religious ideology and people's actual behavior, we should take into account as to what context, and who, utilizes the Islamic discourse for obtaining their share.

In anthropological theory of gift exchange, it is generally argued that the gift recipient would be forced to reciprocate, or at least be subjected to an expectation to do so. Mauss calls it 'total service' with three obligations: the obligation to reciprocate presents that have been received; the obligation to give; and the obligation to receive.<sup>13</sup> The creation of obligatory relationships in gift exchange would be at the center of the principle of 'reciprocity.' As Blau also argues in his theory of social exchange, these obligatory exchanges could bring power relationship to the donor and the recipient by placing the recipient in debt.<sup>14</sup>

In a way, the ideology of Islam could be considered as a strategic approach to prevent people from indebtedness. Each time when the poor beggars refer to Allah for the giver's blessing, the words implies that *zakat* would be for Allah and not for the beggars, who would be freed from responsibility of the debt and counter-service. Hence the Islamic principle would bear authority as a powerful discourse in interactive negotiation over food sharing.

In order to avoid reciprocal indebtedness, the recipient can also take approaches such as 'alienation' to the donor. As the villager's words, "*when they are not in trouble, even if we are suffering, they never come close to us,*" indicate, the recipient of shared food tends to avoid frequent contact. If they keep in touch, they would always be reminded of the indebtedness, which places them in a subordinate position against the donor. Avoidance of everyday contact by the recipient can be considered as a way of concealing hierarchical relationships between the donor and the recipient.

Of course, the donors also have strategic means to gain advantage in the interactive negotiation. When begged, they often show their annoyance in an obvious manner and refuse the demand. The words thrown at the begging women: "*it was enough and even too much!*" and "*Don't give anything! We cannot afford to do that!*" clarify that the speakers do not always give crops out of kindness and that they are in superior position in the negotiation over sharing. These donors' approaches, however, are subject to counter-approach from the recipients.

#### Emotional interaction over sharing food

Hence the interaction of food sharing appears to be a kind of tug-of-war interaction over the obligation and indebtedness induced by reciprocity. Among others, as I suggested, envy is definitely a significant element for the interaction. It has been repeatedly pointed out that envy would function as a leveling mechanism. Its operation, however, cannot be explained in simple terms such as: "food is shared because the rich are envied." How can we understand the way in which envy works as an incentive for food sharing?

In his essay on envy, Foster stresses the importance to recognize the correlation between 'envy' and 'jealousy.' "Envy stems from the desire to acquire something possessed by another person, while jealousy is rooted in the fear of losing something already possessed."<sup>15</sup> Thus an emotion of 'envy' and 'jealousy' necessarily includes the mutual interaction between the envier and the envied.

we can say that man fears being envied for what he has and wishes to protect himself from the consequence of the envy of others; man also fears he will be accused of others, he wishes to allay the suspicion; and finally, man fears to admit to himself that he is envious, so he searches for rationales and devices to deny to himself his envy and to account for in terms other than personal responsibility, the conditions that place him in a position inferior to another.<sup>16</sup>

Foster argues that envy is activated by multiple fears. The cases in highland Ethiopia can also be explained to some extent by these multiple fears. What is of most importance here is that food sharing is always driven through the mental interaction of expectation and fear between the rich and the poor. On the one hand, the poor expect an act of sharing, or at least they pretend as if this expectation is well-deserved, without admitting that they are envious, inferior, or indebted. On the other hand, the rich sense this envy and the expectation to share, and fear unfavorable outcomes should they fail to do so. These hidden interactions between the envier and the envied are present in food sharing process.

The case of highland Ethiopia, however, implies that envy works as a strong motivation especially in close relationships. There are also different kinds of fear observed in the interaction of food sharing such as fear of the religious principle or of God, or strangers and those from other ethnic groups. Furthermore, these fears include mixed feelings of awe, anxiety, and

respect that often emerge as ambivalent sentiments. Fear of God, includes not only fear of sanctions from God, but also respect for his sacredness. Fear for strangers includes not only fear of unfamiliar persons, but also anxiety about the potential for misfortune. Reference to Allah by the recipients can exert pressure only when the donor feels fear and awe toward Allah. If one has no faith in Islam, those words may not have an effect. The same could be applied to witch medicine, which can exercise pressure on the rich only if they bear fear of witch doctors or magicians.

These kinds of multiple emotions may cause people to act in certain ways, which political economists have hardly taken into account. Hyden argues that in the economy of affection actors share a common set of expectations.<sup>17</sup> The point is that those shared expectations can function only by being activated and reproduced through the cycle of emotional interaction among people.

In highland Ethiopia, relatively vulnerable persons such as the poor, beggars, and socially weak minorities are in more advantageous positions for negotiations through emotional interaction. They would consciously and unconsciously manipulate these mixed emotions and gain superiority in the negotiation over sharing. As a result, the food crops not infrequently flow from the haves to have-nots. If this interpretation is correct, another possibility emerges: the influx of migrants with growing social mobility could even accelerate sharing activities among the peasants. Although it is quite difficult to see whether or not the amount of food shared among peasants has increased, the relationships to be shared could possibly have become much wider and diversified in accordance with the growth of social heterogeneity. The classical argument of peasant studies has focused solely on relatively closed and homogenous peasant communities. The framework of emotional interaction for food sharing can provide a useful perspective in considering the contemporary situation in rural Africa.

## Conclusion

The principle of political economists can be seen as 'economy of rational calculation,' in which individuals always account their interests, utility, cost and benefit. The process of interactions in highland Ethiopia, however, indicates that people are often driven into the sharing of food through ad hoc emotional incentives. These affective motivations are sometimes ambivalent and mixed, including fear, respect, and sympathy. This 'economy of emotional interaction,' I think, is one of the significant agencies that bring about the situation described as "moral economy."

Peasant studies have identified a distinct feature maintained among the peasants, which is completely irreconcilable with the capitalistic or market-oriented standard. Nowadays, however, most agrarian societies in Africa have been rapidly integrated to the market economy and capitalism. Many anthropologists of peasant studies have set up their theory based solely on peasant societies *outside* the market economy. That is the reason why their framework limits their view of peasant economic behavior within culturally homogenous communities with persistent essential features. In order to reveal the "moral economy" *within* the market economy, the economy of emotional interaction is a concept to take into account the dynamic process of contemporary situation surrounding peasants in rural Africa.

**Notes:**

1. Scott 1976.
2. Scott 1976.
3. Popkin 1979.
4. Hirschman 1977.
5. Geertz 1963.
6. Hyden 1980.
7. Foster 1965.
8. Roseberry 1989.
9. Matsumura 2003.
10. Sahlins 1972.
11. Schneider 1990.
12. Otsuka 1989.
13. Mauss 1990, p. 13.
14. Blau 1964.
15. Foster 1972, p.168.
16. Foster 1972, p.166.
17. Hyden 2004, p. 9.

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Reference Style: The following is the suggested format for referencing this article: Keiichiro Matsumura. "Moral Economy as Emotional Interaction: Food Sharing and Reciprocity in Highland Ethiopia." *African Studies Quarterly* 9, no.1 & 2: [online] URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1a2.htm>

# "Earning among Friends": Business Practices and Creed among Petty Traders in Tanzania

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**Abstract:** This paper analyzes how petty street traders called *Machinga* have created unique credit transactions in response to the political and socio-economical transformation after the economic liberalization of Tanzania. The credit transaction described in this paper is called *Mali Kauli* and is conducted by middlemen and micro-scale retailers. In this paper, I will discuss how newly created urban social relationships and knowledge of urban life, both function to sustain this unstable credit transaction, which balances social norms with economic profit. In conclusion, I will insist that the norms of reciprocity are not incongruous with economic rationality. The flexible "moral economy" does not require a rigid community or set of conventional norms. It can take effect in fellowships in which people trick each other, yet at the same time build mutual trust. The *Mali Kauli* transaction is a creative practice of the *Machinga*.

## Introduction

The economic liberalization of Tanzania since the mid-1980s has brought a rapid influx of imports to Tanzania. These imports, including second-hand clothes, have opened new economic opportunities for the urban poor and vitalized the small-scale commercial sector. *Machinga* are the street traders and hawkers selling these imported goods. The term *Machinga* is derived from the two English words: 'marching' and 'guys'.<sup>1</sup> The numbers of *Machinga* are increasing at a rapid rate. For example, Ngware estimated their number in Dar es Salaam at 85,000 in 1995.<sup>2</sup> Although no official figures are available for the present, one can assume that this number has increased several fold in the past ten years.

The purpose of this study is to examine the social networks and the historical change of the business practices of *Machinga* by analyzing a unique transaction called *Mali Kauli* in the trade of second hand clothes in Mwanza city. The *Mali Kauli* transaction is a unique credit transaction conducted by middlemen and micro-scale retailers. Although *Mali Kauli* is profitable to both kinds of merchants, its sustainability does not rest on economic benefit alone. While middlemen do enjoy economic dominance, playing the role of patrons, they build horizontal personal relationships with retailers that do not necessarily correspond to the principles of neo-classical economics.

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1-2a3.pdf>

Economic anthropologists and political scientists have investigated these personal economic relationships embedded in society, using concepts such as the "economy of affection" or "moral economy".<sup>3</sup> The majority of pioneering work referring to this type of economy has focused on peasant societies. They have emphasized the existence of "the norm of reciprocity" and "the right to subsistence" in such societies.

Previous urban studies in Africa have pointed to the existence of "economy of affection" or "moral economy" in the informal sector.<sup>4</sup> Several authors argue that entrepreneurs in the urban informal sector are caught between supporting their rural relatives while at the same time trying to make ends meet in the city. Many promising informal sector entrepreneurs cannot achieve effective capital investment and expansion of their business as they find it very hard to reject requests for assistance.<sup>5</sup> So not surprisingly, some studies have argued that to be successful, entrepreneurs in the informal sector should abandon their "affection" to their rural brethren or others making claims on their resources and instead create modern business relationships.<sup>6</sup>

Studies of moral economy call into question the validity of development as a linear process from tradition to modernity. Ueda insists on the need to study how reciprocal norms are maintained by the social logic of a moral economy, and how individual entrepreneurs manipulate both the social logic and personal needs as the situation demands.<sup>7</sup> In this paper, I will explore Ueda's points through an examination of *Mali Kauli* transactions.

In the current globalizing situation in which movements of people, things, and information accelerate, a dichotomic model of global and local economies no longer makes sense. The critical edge of anthropology, emanating from anti-essentialism, has corroded the very theoretical premises of moral economy: the analytic concepts of culture, customs, norms, and community as their functional totality, all gave way to views that these are mere political, social and ideological constructs associated with various forms of power. If local cultures and traditions are mere constructs with no original substance, and if community boundaries are too fluid and ambiguous to serve analytical purposes, then do such views contradict the sheer existence of a moral economy? If we reject morality thinking, that is, a discussion about what is and isn't good in the way people treat one another, then we deny ourselves any grounds from which we can criticize preexisting, unequal sociopolitical arrangements.<sup>8</sup>

This paper aims to present a more flexible version of moral economy, which manifests in traders' attempts to sustain human ties amidst the irreversible deluge of global capitalism - a moral economy which allows us to appreciate the diverse moral sentiments underpinning a rich array of practices, without reducing them within simplifying dichotomies of selfishness and altruism, economic rationality and social norms.

The data for this paper were collected from my research in Mwanza city, the second largest city in Tanzania with about 620,000 people situated at the southern tip of Lake Victoria.<sup>9</sup> I conducted my first research phase using participant observation for about 10 months from September 2001 to June 2002. As a second phase for nine months between November 2003 and July 2004, I have conducted interviews with 300 merchants on their life history and the changes in their business practices since the 1970s.

## THE MALI KAULI TRANSACTION

### The Trade of Second-hand Clothes in Mwanza City

The merchants who participate in the trade of second-hand clothes in Mwanza can be categorized into three groups: wholesalers, middlemen, and retailers. The second-hand clothes are being brought in by wholesale traders. The *Mali Kauli* transaction, on which I focus in this paper, is conducted between middlemen and retailers.

First, I define these merchants and describe their economic activities. Wholesalers are defined as those who import the bales from international recycling agencies and sell them to middlemen. Second-hand clothes are gathered from general households by charity organizations and volunteer associations and are then transferred to recycling agencies. These agencies classify the second-hand clothes by items such as shirts, jackets, dresses and so on, and wrap each kind in vinyl sheeting and iron bands.<sup>10</sup> The blocks of clothes wrapped with vinyl sheeting are called bales. One bale includes 200-1,000 pieces depending on the kind of clothes. Wholesalers sell them to middlemen in their shops.

Middlemen are defined as those who purchase bales from wholesalers and sell them item by item to retailers. In Mwanza, there is *Mlango Mmoja*, a permanent market, where 350 stalls of second-hand clothes are established. Most middlemen open the bales in this market. Retailers are defined as those who purchase the second-hand clothes from middlemen and sell them to consumers. Retailers can be sub-classified into stall-keepers, small-street traders, hawkers, and rural market traders.

In Mwanza there are 18 wholesaler shops. The managers and the employees of these shops are estimated to be about 30 persons. The estimates for middlemen and retailers are: 200 and 4,000, respectively. Most wholesalers are Indian and Pakistani traders, while middlemen and retailers are predominantly African. Wholesalers need capital of at least US\$20,000 to import bales, manage the shops and obtain business license. Middlemen purchase an average of 7 bales, twice a week, with an average capital of US\$1,000. The smallest middlemen, however, need only US\$50 to buy one bale per week. The capital of retailers is usually very small, and most of them do not need any capital because they buy second-hand clothes from middlemen on credit.

The biggest gap is between wholesalers and retailers. This is evident both in terms of ethnic identity and access to capital. No middleman has managed to become a wholesaler while many retailers have become middlemen. This gap between wholesalers and others corresponds to local perceptions of urban dwellers. While wholesalers are called *Wauzaji wa Jumla*, both middlemen and retailers are called *Machinga* by urban dwellers. Among the merchants, retailers refer to a middleman as *Mtajiri* (a rich person or employer) in the Swahili language, and middlemen refer to retailers as *Machinga*. However, middlemen recognize that they, like retailers, are called *Machinga* by urban dwellers. This builds a sense of fellowships among middlemen and retailers. As mentioned in the final chapter, the *Mali Kauli* transaction is underpinned by urban fellowships.

### Types of *Mali Kauli* Transaction

There are two types of transactions between middlemen and retailers, namely cash transaction and *Mali Kauli*, which is a kind of credit transaction. About 80% of thirty three middlemen interviewed in my research conducted *Mali Kauli* transaction in 2001-2002. According to my research, *Mali Kauli* can be regarded as the dominant transaction between middlemen and retailers.

The meaning of *Mali Kauli* is selling the commodities (*Mali*) on credit through a verbal promise (*Kauli*). Let us briefly look at the characteristic of this type of transaction. In *Mali Kauli* a middleman typically deals with an average of twenty retailers. He sells clothes to retailers on credit without any collateral, and allows them to return the unsold clothes and renegotiate the "basic price," which is the purchase price of each item for retailers.

The *Mali Kauli* transaction is accomplished as follows: Most middlemen purchase an average of seven bales from wholesalers twice a week. On the morning of the first day, a middleman opens his bales and classifies the second-hand clothes into three grades: A, B, and C, according to the quality and fashion of each item. Grade C is not sold on the first day but saved until the third day. After the middleman finishes the classification, retailers inform the middleman of their choice on how much of each grade is available. Then the middleman determines the "choosing turn" of the retailers requesting the same grade. Retailers choose their clothes according to their "choosing turn." For example, the first retailer of grade A choose fifty clothes, then the second retailer of grade A choose thirty clothes, and then the third retailer follows him, followed by the fourth, and so on. Finally, the middleman and each retailer negotiate the "basic price" per item.

During the daytime of the first day, the retailers start selling their clothes. They try to gain their profit by selling each item above the "basic price." On the evening of the first day, the retailers come back and pay the middleman for the number of clothes sold during the day. At this time, retailers can return unsold clothes or renegotiate the "basic price," which the middleman usually reduces. This process is repeated on the second and third day.

In short, a bale of second-hand clothes is sold according to the following cycle: Most middlemen purchase the bales on Mondays and Thursdays. From Monday to Wednesday, middlemen mobilize all retailers of grade A and B to sell as many clothes as possible by decreasing the basic price of each item. Usually, middlemen can obtain enough profit to purchase new bales on Thursday. On Wednesday middlemen mix the unsold items of grade A and B with clothes of grade C, which were set aside on Monday. All the unsold clothes become grade C on Wednesday.

As middlemen have already covered the cost of purchasing bales by the sale of grade A and B, grade C becomes their net profit. On Thursday, grade C are sent to some rural markets. The rural market traders go into the business with the goal of selling everything. They will sell every grade C by auction sale to the rural small-scale traders.

An important point of this *Mali Kauli* transaction is that the middlemen give the monetary assistance to retailers who are unable to raise enough profit on any particular day. Retailers observed in my research often made plenty of excuses in order to demand middlemen for monetary assistances and indefinite debts from middlemen. These occur at the end of each day

when retailers pay middlemen the purchase costs of clothes sold during that day. Fig.1 shows the income of a retailer per day. This retailer needed at least Tsh.1,580 (US\$1.50) per day for eating three times and paying city bus fares.<sup>11</sup> If this figure represents the minimum cost of living, this trader made no profit from his retail business on twenty six days out of eighty five days. Out of twenty six days, however, this trader successfully received financial support from the middleman on nineteen days. Furthermore, he elicited indefinite debts from the middleman on the remaining seven days. In this way, the trader could sustain a minimum standard of living during the whole period. When this same retailer was able to sell many clothes, he successfully pressured the middlemen into giving him rewards, which occurred on ten occasions during the eighty five days. All of the middlemen interviewed in my research tried to respond to such requests for monetary assistance and reward. This financial support from middlemen is indispensable for retailers to make a living in the city.

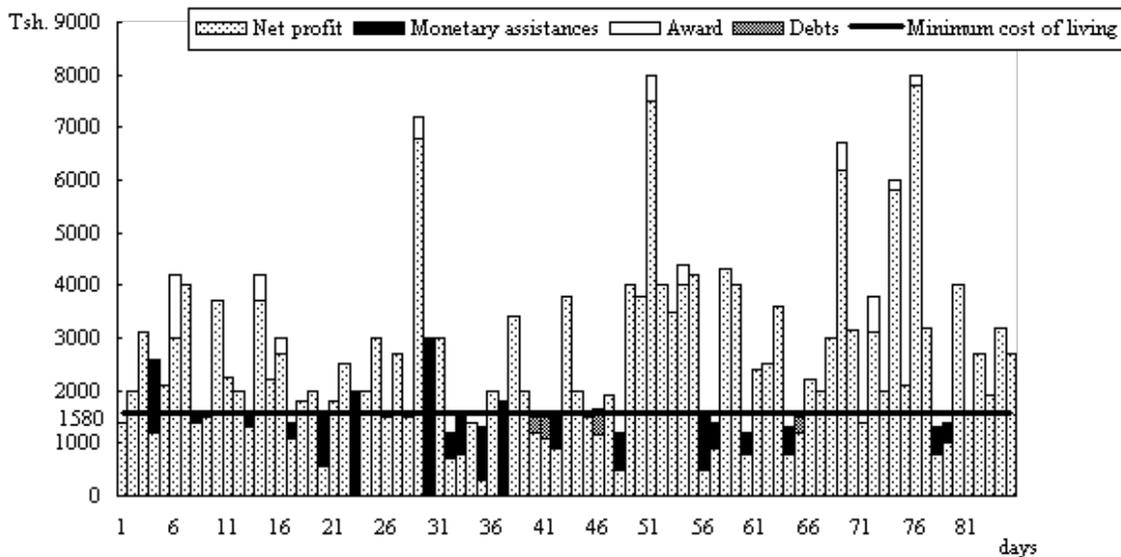


Fig.1. Income of a Retailer (85 days)

In order to examine the reasons for the conduct of *Mali Kauli* transactions by both middlemen and retailers, I will outline the history of second-hand clothing trade.

### THE EMERGENCE OF MALI KAULI

#### Historical Change in Business Practice among Small-Scale Traders

Before economic liberalization, private commercial activities were banned under the socialist regime, and second-hand clothes were imported by Christian charity organizations or by smugglers.<sup>12</sup> Especially in the late 1970s, as the economic crisis deepened, about thirty individuals from Mwanza town coordinated the smuggling groups based on ethnic network to import second-hand clothes (mostly from Rwanda, Burundi and Kenya).

In 1986, with the introduction of economic liberalization, various goods including second-hand clothes began to be legally imported. Indian traders, who had left Tanzania after their

houses and businesses were nationalized in the early 1970s, came back to Tanzania and opened wholesale shops. Very often former smugglers were the true middlemen. At that time both middlemen and retailers operated their business only in the city center. Middlemen operated theirs in Market Street while most retailers operated in Makoroboi Street and the Shaa open market. The form of transaction between middlemen and retailers at that time was different from the *Mali Kauli* transaction, which only emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Middlemen who used to be in the same smuggling groups before economic liberalization, jointly purchased more than one hundred bales from wholesalers on credit. After they purchased the bales, they shared the bales among each other. They held auction sales side by side on Market Street.

Traders who arrived first to Market Street were known as *Wafungulishaji*. They are the retailers who sell clothes on Makoroboi Street. *Wafungulishaji* "force middlemen to open their bales," in the promise of buying at least fifty clothes by a certain price. After selling several clothes to *Wafungulishaji*, the middleman begins to sell other items out of the bales at auction. *Wapelembaji* are those who join the auction to bid on each item. They shop around several middlemen auctions selling same kinds of clothes. Then general consumers come to join the auction. *Wapiga-top* who sell clothes in Shaa open market, watch the development of auction. As the auction reaches a final phase, they begin calling out "Top," requesting the middleman to close up the auction. The middleman responds after a series of calls, letting the *Wapiga-top* purchase all unsold clothes at rock-bottom price. Thus, all items in the bales have been sold.

As mentioned above, in the early days of economic liberalization, middlemen sold each item at the auction to three kind of retailers: *Wafungulishaji*, *Wapelembaji* and *Wapiga-top* who all purchased clothes in cash. Each kind of retailer had different business strategies, each with its own merits and demerits.

*Wafungulishaji* typically got the most fashionable and best quality items out of the bales because they purchase clothes before middlemen sell them at auction. On the other hand, even if they find that the contents of bales are mostly bad clothes, they have to purchase promised numbers of items at the promised price. In this respect, the *Wafungulishaji* take chances and hope that the bales contain good quality items. *Wapelembaji* can check each item and buy as many clothes as they want at the auction. However, they have to buy clothes at a higher price than the *Wafungulishaji* because they engage in bidding up the price of the items left behind by the *Wafungulishaji*. *Wapiga-top* can buy a bulk of clothes at the cheapest price. But they sometimes have to take unprofitable clothes such as dust-cloth because they are unable to check the items, similar to the *Wafungulishaji*.

The strategy of the middlemen in the late 1980s was in response to their inability to check the contents of the bales before they purchased them. Even if all items in the bales were bad, they had to pay a fixed purchase cost to wholesalers. Therefore, selling the clothes to *Wafungulishaji* before opening the bales was regarded as a risk aversion strategy by the middlemen. Selling to *Wafungulishaji* covered some of the costs for each bale, but if the bales contained mostly good clothes, middlemen would fail to gain large profits. If middlemen sold all items out of their bales to *Wapelembaji* by bidding up the price of each item, they could boost their profit. Selling clothes to *Wapiga-top* was also regarded as a risk aversion strategy. If

middlemen tried to sell bad clothes at auctions, they would typically lose both time and money. Judging when they should accept to sell their unsold clothes to *Wapiga-top* by closing the auction was quite difficult for the middlemen. An inappropriate decision could lead to failure in raising large profits or in completing their sales.

Despite the speculative nature of the transactions mentioned above, both middlemen and retailers interviewed in my research stated that they enjoyed profit at that time. For example, they said,

"Immediately after economic liberalization, I could sell all items out of bales that first day. And next day, I could increase the number of bales compared to the day before. But these days I cannot imagine purchasing bales every day"

"I started my business with only Tsh.4,000 in 1988. After two months, my capital had grown to about Tsh.200,000. All the retailers that I know, who started before 1990, eventually did become middlemen."

#### The Transition from Auction to *Mali Kauli* Transaction

Business conditions changed drastically from the early to the mid-1990s. First of all, the number of second-hand clothing traders increased at a rapid rate, from about 200 in the mid 1980s to more than 2,000 traders in the mid-1990s. With a greater number of middlemen, Indian wholesalers decided to reject selling bales on credit because they could sell all bales in cash. Middlemen who had formed groups to purchase bales now separated and became independent operators. Middlemen had to compete fiercely to attain stable customers. Middleman would persuade *Wapelebaji* to become their stable *Wafungulishaji* in exchange for occasional credit. Retailers also preferred to transact with certain middlemen in exchange for occasional credit. As a result, the number of stable clients per middlemen began to increase.

The Tanzanian government implemented various policies for informal sector development in the 1990s to respond to increasing street traders. For example, the Dar es Salaam City Council legalized sixty six economic activities and set the amount of tax and license fees under the 'Hawking and Street Trading (Amendment)' By-Laws of 1991.<sup>13</sup> Local authorities like Mwanza City Council followed this policy. However, the most important change for the traders was a new policy for Mwanza urban planning. The Mwanza City Council constructed six trading centers, including *Mlango Mmoja* Market, (the biggest market for selling second-hand clothes), under the "Mwanza Master Plan" enacted in 1993. Under this plan, the police and *Mgambo* - the militia organized under the ruling Party - started to destroy stalls and desks of street traders and forced them to move to these markets in 1995-1996. The middlemen and retailers bitterly refused to move, and some traders invented mobile stalls or went to suburban areas to hawk. That is how the notion of *Machinga* came about. Urban dwellers and government officials began to call the street traders marching in the city by that name. It should be noted that middlemen and their stable clients helped each other by gathering small change to pay bribes to have the police release their fellow trader in custody.

As a consequence, middlemen and several retailers engaged in transaction with each other formed a loose group in the mid-1990s. At that time, however, most middlemen continued to

sell second-hand clothes at auction, and selling clothes on credit was uncommon. It was only after moving to the Mlango Mmoja markets that selling second-hand clothes on credit, namely *Mali Kauli*, became the common form of transaction.

Despite their reluctance and resistance, middlemen and retailers finally moved to these markets by 1997.<sup>14</sup> This move to the Mlango Mmoja markets made it difficult for both middlemen and retailers to maintain their business styles. The Mlango Mmoja markets are located far away from the city center and the roads to get there are bad. Customers who used to stop to join the auction on the way to their office or central bus station did not bother to go to Mlango Mmoja.

After moving to the new markets, traders were strictly obligated to pay tax and license fees. They had to pay Tsh.12,000 a year for license fee, Tsh.2,000 a month for tender fee, Tsh.5,000-12,000 a year for rental cost of a market stall and Tsh.2,000 every six months as cleaning fee. The traders who could not pay these costs abandoned their official location and re-established their business activities in the city center. Most of them became hawkers and street traders, and some of them decided to go to rural markets, promoted by the Mwanza Municipality at that time. In addition, the Tanzanian government introduced Value Added Tax (VAT) and a twenty percent tax on imported goods in 1998.<sup>15</sup> As a result, the wholesale price of bales increased dramatically.<sup>16</sup> Such policy changes made these street traders shift their business strategies from selling at auction to *Mali Kauli*.

#### ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF *MALI KAULI*

The *Mali Kauli* transaction system evolved for two reasons. First, the rising wholesale price of bales made it increasingly difficult for the costs of bales to be met by auction sale; a condition aggravated by the newly imposed taxes and license fees. By classifying second-hand clothes into three grades and setting an approximate price for each grade, the middlemen could avoid the hazards of negotiating with retailers, thereby systematizing the trade in their favor.

Secondly, the classification into three grades also made eminent sense given the diverse market outlets that middlemen and retailers encountered. The urban market is relatively "up-scale" while the rural markets are for poorer customers. The grade A is not only too expensive for the rural people but also out of touch with rural tastes because this grade includes items of cutting edge fashion (such as dresses that reveal part of the body). On the other hand, the cheapest grade C is too damaged for the urban residents to wear in their office and not suitable for the "chic" crowd of urban youth. Hence middlemen, by classifying the items into three grades, from which retailers are allowed to choose, were distributing second-hand clothes in an effective manner.

Retailers, on the other hand, choose each grade according to seasonal change of demands. For example, in rural areas, demands for second-hand clothes rise during the harvest season, thus raising retailers' demands for grade C. Consumers would go for grade A for their best outfit during Christmas season, after which they would revert to grade B, when tapped out by holiday spendings. Middlemen, therefore, still have to cope with seasonal variations that somewhat complicate their business despite the introduction of *Mali Kauli*.

This transaction system has two beneficial effects for the middlemen. First, they can attract many retailers, including those who are without capital, and mobilize them for rapid distribution of clothes. Secondly, they can effectively allocate items of various grades among the retailers in exchange for credit. The second point becomes clear by contrast with cash transaction, where retailers are free to select the grade they want and some grades remain unsold for a long time. These benefits allow them to attain greater profit. Mali Kauli also has benefits for retailers. First, they can begin business without capital. Some retailers do have capital at the beginning of their business, but most retailers cannot save their capital because of the high competition. Secondly, retailers can return unsold clothes that failed to match consumer preferences or proved to contain dirty marks and small tears. Had such clothes been bought for cash, retailers would end up spending many days selling them. The Use of Mali Kauli enables retailers to shift their business risks to middlemen. Thirdly, retailers can renegotiate the "basic price" on the following day if the original price proved too high. All these benefits allow retailers to minimize their business risks and to stabilize their economic activities. Furthermore, if retailers could not raise enough profit, they may demand monetary assistance from their middlemen. In sum, both middlemen and retailers benefit financially from Mali Kauli. They have a mutual interest in upholding this system because even if it may limit profit maximization, it lessens the risk. The system, however, also causes some friction between middlemen and retailers, which will be the subject of the next section. POTENTIAL FRICTION IN MALI KAULI TRANSACTIONS Retailers, as suggested above, sometimes require a particular grade in order to respond to the market demand. Middlemen, however, do not always accept such requests because they intend to distribute all clothes. Because middlemen determine the "choosing turn" of retailers requesting a single grade, they usually favor the requests of retailers who sell many clothes. However, this tendency is reversed on occasions when the middleman is stuck with a bale with low quality clothes: he would impose these on his favorite retailers, hoping to take advantage of their superior selling abilities. Retailers, who have been loyal to the middleman by selling large quantities, feel cheated by such treatment. The use of their high bargaining skills in protest against the middleman adds to the friction.<span >

Retailers, not content with the situation, could resort to other activities during the day that they have received such a share of clothes. To top it off, they would demand the middleman provided financial assistance at close of day. The middleman ends up with a double loss as he would never recover the cost of the bale, giving out money to retailers for days on end. The difficulty for the middleman is that he is unable to judge whether the retailer is just lazy or if he is trying hard in vain. The conflict between the middleman and retailers culminates as the retailers run away, the frequency of such events being quite high. During the period of my own research, no fewer than eleven out of nineteen retailers transacting with a particular middleman ran away, the latter suffering a reported loss of TSH 1,500,000 (approximately US\$ 1,600). Almost all middlemen interviewed in my research stated that they had experienced retailers running away with their credit. In the end, though, they tend to forgive the retailers because they cannot do without them. Most middlemen seem to foresee such outcomes when they engage in *Mali Kauli* transactions because it is the retailers who have the real bargaining power in this form of transaction. The interesting thing is that as many as ten of the eleven retailers

that ran away from the middleman eventually returned to him to begin *Mali Kauli* transactions again. To understand why this happens, it is necessary to probe the social relations that underlie these transactions.

#### THE SOCIAL NETWORKS OF *MALI KAULI*

According to my interviews with twenty six middlemen, it emerged that they prefer the *Mali Kauli* credit transaction because they are tired of giving small change or gifts to retailers. Such a gift is not considered credit and therefore is money gone. Because the middlemen are perceived as being rich, and thus privileged, they are expected to share some of their income with their poorer fellows. My interviews with ninety two retailers tended to confirm this. They looked at middlemen as lucky people who managed to build their wealth because they were the first to enter the trade and thus were able to monopolize it. As Hart points out the common view of the successful entrepreneur in Africa is that he has made it at the expense of others, not because of his individual effort.<sup>17</sup> When retailers enter into a *Mali Kauli* transaction, therefore, they tend to see the middleman as having an obligation to assist them.

This arrangement resembles the culture of reciprocity that Hyden discusses with reference to rural Tanzania in his book about the economy of affection.<sup>18</sup> In his case, the investments people make in reciprocal relations tend to be based on kinship, religion or village community. As other studies have shown, however, the economy of affection is not merely a rural phenomenon, especially in the case of informal economy.<sup>19</sup>

My study in Mwanza confirms the existence of these reciprocal norms as the basis of what may be best described as pseudo-kinship relations. Even though middlemen serve as patrons, their relationship with the retailers is not hierarchical. Middlemen often emphasize that their relationship with retailers is one of friendship, using jokes to cement this informal type of relationship. They do not want to come across as being rich by using a taxi or wearing expensive clothes. They sometimes share a single room with retailers in one of the slum areas of town. There is an urban fellowship among these people that is not primarily based on ethnicity but on the informal economic transaction that they call *Mali Kauli*.

This becomes evident when I compare the situation in 1992 (reconstructed from interviews) with what I have observed directly in 2002. In 1992, kinship and village origin as well as ethnicity was a much more prominent basis for economic transactions: no less than forty one out of ninety one relationships were based on kinship and village origin with as many as sixty two out of ninety one being based on ethnic origin. In 2002, in contrast, 163 out of 207 relationships studied were based on newly created urban relationships. Only twenty nine were built on kinship or village origin and thirty eight on ethnic origin.

This is in part a reflection of the extensive urban migration that has taken place in recent years, but it is also a testimony to how people in urban areas reinvent informal relationships to serve the basic principle of reciprocity. Middlemen are not choosing retailers any longer because they are from the same village or ethnic group. Many also say that they actually wish to avoid transacting with relatives and people of the same ethnic background.

This seems to go against conventional wisdom that suggests that middlemen would prefer relatives and others whom they can trace in case of default of payment. This principle may still

be important in many urban contexts, but my study of the informal economic relations in Mwanza shows that middlemen choose a retailer based on whether or not he is a *Mjanja*.<sup>20</sup> A *Mjanja* is a person with *Ujanja*. The original meaning of *Ujanja* is defined in Swahili as 'cunning' or 'slyness.' Why would a middleman regard *Mjanja*, a cunning retailer, as a desirable person for credit transaction?

Both middlemen and retailers are regarded as *Machinga* and they also represent themselves as *Machinga*. The middlemen state that their business is constantly being criticized and facing threats. Not only in the period of smuggling but also after economic liberalization, *Machinga* are always in danger of being arrested or having to pay bribes.<sup>21</sup> In the early 1990s, they carried the image of being a source of urban crime. Frequent violent protests *Machinga* against police roundup did not endear them with the rest of urban residents. Against these public criticisms, *Machinga* state that, "the right way has been always closed for us. We have to move like rats. We need *Ujanja* to do our business by avoiding criticism, dealing with police, and so on." When they encounter the police, *Ujanja* is used as a "weapon of the weak" or "the everyday form of resistance."<sup>22</sup> In addition, *Machinga* are generally regarded as being of low status because their business does not need an academic background or any special skill, and their earning usually is very low. For example, *Machinga* sometimes are called '*Walala hoi*' meaning the people who go to sleep exhausted.<sup>23</sup> They share what may be best described as a survival ethos. They say that *Ujanja* is the only skill and knowledge for them to survive urban life, because they lack education, skills or capital. While the term has negative connotations to others, being a *Machinga* is something to be proud of if you are a middleman or retailer in the urban economy. They have built their fellowship on the idea that a *Machinga* is a *Mjanja*; if the person is not *Mjanja*, he is not one of them.

The *Machinga* use *Ujanja* in their *Mali Kauli* transactions with middlemen in order to facilitate business maneuvers while maintaining fellowship ties. According to their own explanations, they achieve this in three ways: firstly, by choosing between clothes designated for profit and those that are not; secondly, by changing the retail prices according to customers (selling items at a higher price to rich customers and at a lower one to poorer customers); and thirdly, by focusing on the 'psychology' of middlemen instead of a single day's profit.<sup>24</sup> Middlemen and retailers, in interacting with each other, engage in relations that are constantly characterized by ambiguity or uncertainty. Because middlemen cannot judge whether retailers goof off or not, they have to second-guess them. The latter do not always speak the truth and they seem to have no regrets about telling lies such as "my child is sick," "the police confiscated my commodities" and so on. In spite of these uncertainties, the middlemen try to be even. As one middleman said:

in *Mali Kauli* transactions, do not blame the retailer even if you find he is lying. Instead, try to guess why he is doing it. If you find a sign that the retailer has a real problem, you must accept his lie and help him. If there is no evidence to that effect, don't give him monetary assistance. You also have to be ready to tell a lie. I know the hardship of sleeping without eating, but I cannot help someone every time even if I wished to. So, try to become just a friend '*jamaa*', not the best friend - '*besti*' - of retailers. If you don't even try to be a friend, they will run away, but if you are regarded as their closest friend and you cannot help them, they will also

run away. *Mjanja* is the person who can bargain well to keep the balance between being fellows 'wasela' and best friends.<sup>25</sup>

Negotiating equilibrium in an economic exchange that is embedded in a set of informal social relationships is a much more difficult proposition than doing so in the conventional marketplace. *Mali Kauli* is not just about making economic profit. It is also about serving and managing social relationships without turning them into a fixed community. Middlemen and retailers alike need each other against the threats that they face together by government and city authorities as well as the police. The uncertainty of their business and social existence call for a form of fellowship that transcends kinship and other parochial boundaries. At the same time, they are afraid of developing too strong a relation of dependence on each other. In particular, they are reluctant to let relatives be part of their economic transactions. When they let these people in, business becomes a charitable activity, as one middleman said. Thus, *Mali Kauli* has created a new version of the economy of affection in which it is not blood relationship that creates fellowship but informal business transactions that require a sense of moral affinity like that provided by the common usage of *Ujanja*. This form of transaction sits somewhere in between a regular business deal and the more exclusive social interactions that characterize kinship and family bonds.

## Conclusions

Middlemen and retailers maintain *Mali Kauli* transactions despite often-strained relationships. Their ability to sustain these unstable relationships is explained neither by their interest in profit alone nor by a traditional social norm. The success rests with their common embrace of *Ujanja*. It is the creed of life they deem necessary for survival in the urban environment and building a sense of fellowship. *Ujanja* is not only an "everyday form of resistance" of the informal sector against the power of the state. It is also the knowledge of life required for dealing with the hardships of urban life and being able to create a life-world over which they have some sense of control. The *Machinga* of Mwanza are at one and the same time trying to be independent and a member of a local community. By being cunning they can maneuver this apparent contradiction in ways that give them a sense of mastery of their destiny. Reciprocity based on moral principles is not incongruent with economic rationality. The true *Mjanja* is neither a selfish individual, nor a person immersed in tradition. He is an "operator" trying to be both self-reliant and social at the same time. He, as the rest of the material presented in this article suggests, is evidence of the flexibility of the economy of affection and its ability to continue to serve as a meaningful alternative political economy to the hegemony of neo-liberal market transactions.

## Notes:

1. It is the dominant interpretation of the term "*Machinga*". However some studies point out that the term is derived from an ethnic group called "*Mchinga*" that comes from Lindi and Mtwara Regions, one of the poorest areas in Tanzania. Apparently most people engaged in street trade in the aftermath of economic liberalization in Dar es Salaam in the late 1980s were from those two regions (Liviga, 1998).
2. Ngware, 2000, p. 9.

3. Hyden defines the "economy of affection" as a broader analytical concept than the "moral economy" discussed by James Scott (1976). According to his definition, the economy of affection is more generally referring to other types of informal institutions including the vertical relations, that typically are not included in the notion of a moral economy (Hyden, 2004 p.7).
4. Macharia(1997); Olomi(1996); Williams (1987); Tripp(1997); Tripp and Swantz (1997).
5. Marris and Somerset (1971); Bienefeld (1975); Hart (1975).
6. Hyden (1983) suggests that the economy of affection prevented modern capitalistic development in Tanzania. His argument is similar to that of Evers (1994) who argued that traders in the peasant society of Asia find themselves caught between choosing the fair price associated with local moral norms, on the one hand, and the market price, on the other. If they wish to solve the dilemma, they have four options: 1) immigrate out of their society, 2) join an ethnic or religious group, 3) accumulate cultural capital or 4) depersonalize the economic relationship.
7. Ueda, (1996), pp.16-17.
8. Sayer, (2000), p.2.
9. Economic and Social Research Foundation, 2000.
10. See Hansen, (2000 and 2002) for detail of this process. Hansen revealed the comprehensive distribution chain of second-hand-clothes from Western countries to Zambia (Hansen, 2002).
11. Most small-scale traders eat at *Mama ntilie* - "women who sell prepared food on the street". Based on the observation that this trader always ate at the same place and took same bus, his minimum cost of living was estimated at Tsh.1,580 per day: Tsh.180 for breakfast, Tsh.1,000 for lunch and dinner at *Mama ntilie*, and Tsh. 400 for the round trip fare of the city bus. This estimate is roughly supported by the trader's remarks-he was constantly complaining that he needed at least Tsh.1,500 to get through the day.
12. The *ujamaa* socialism of Tanzania entailed extensive state social and economic intervention, including nationalization of many foreign-owned enterprises, creation of a state import and wholesale trading monopoly, attempts to accelerate industrialization through the creation of new state productive enterprise (Gibbon, 1995, p10). Tanzanians bought the commodities from parastatal institutions such as State Trading Corporation, Regional Trading Corporations and cooperative *Ujamaa* shops at that time.
13. Dar es Salaam City Council, 1997.
14. Mwanza Municipal Council, 1998.
15. Tanzania Revenue Authority, 2000.
16. According to my interview with wholesalers, for example, the cost of a bale of shirts had been maintained at Tsh.20,000 from 1986 to1997, but it has risen to Tsh.80,000 in 1999.
17. Hart, 1975, p.1, 5.
18. Hyden ,1980.
19. Williams (1987); Tripp(1997); Tripp and Swantz (1997); Ogawa (1999). Tripp argued that the economic activities of female urban informal sector in Tanzania have characteristics of moral economy, that is not pure moral economy originated in rural society, rather it has been created in urban situation demands (Tripp, 1997, p127).

20. A great deal of African urban studies argued that urban migrants tend to make closed groups according to kinship, village of origin and ethnic affiliation. We can trace the urban studies insisting the significance of rural ties back to the 1960s (e.g. Epstein, 1969; Mitchell, 1969). Several studies of urban informal economy argued that such group memberships function to establish their economic activities (e.g. O'Connor, 1983; Macharia, 1997). Macharia, however, argued that while ethnicity often give the basis for trust and consideration to credit, some ethnic groups are jealous and envious of each other's success and may never pay back a credit to run down the business of their co-ethnic, therefore, such ethnic groups would rather give the credit to people from other ethnic groups than their co-ethnic (Macharia, 1997, p.137).
21. According to my interview with the official in charge of markets in Mwanza City Council, the reasons why the police arrested *Machinga* are that (1) they reduce the businesses of formal shop-owners who pay taxes and license fees, (2) they block pedestrian and vehicle traffic by overcrowding and (3) they destroy the environment of the city.
22. These terms were created by Scott (1985). Tripp has shown how every day forms of resistance of urban dwellers exist in Tanzania. She insists that the massive scale on which Tanzanians engaged in informal economic activities cannot only be explained by saying that people 'withdrew' from the state. Tanzanians did much more by creating new resources, networks and thus transformed society. Their collective struggle to survive challenged the government to recognize these transformations (1997, pp. 201-202). Matsuda has argued that the attitude of urban dwellers in Kenya such as idleness and feigning ignorance can be regarded as "soft resistance" against repressive state power (Matsuda, 1999).
23. Rames (1993) p.xix).
24. Commonly expressed as 'saikolojia' (psychology), or 'mawazo' ('worries', often used as the speaker holds his head in his hands).
25. The term *Wasela* is derived from the English word "sailor." A common explanation for the etymology: "We sail the troubled sea of urban life in search for money."

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Reference Style: The following is the suggested format for referencing this article: Sayaka Ogawa. "'Earning among Friends': Business Practices and Creed among Petty Traders in Tanzania." *African Studies Quarterly* 9, no.1 & 2: [online] URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1a3.htm>

# From Beer to Money: Labor Exchange and Commercialization in Eastern Uganda

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses how labor exchange and social ties among the Sabiny in eastern Uganda have changed with increased commercialization in the area. It explains the rationale for the original "beer party system" and how labor exchanges associated with this system have been transformed in the light of social change affecting the area. It also examines the new forms of social interaction and how they compare with the original beer party arrangements. It concludes by arguing that although the market economy has penetrated the area and the life of the Sabiny has changed in many important respects, the short-term interactions in the market have not obliterated the longer-term commitments to indigenous cultural values and vice versa. This continues to be important for the rural inhabitants of this part of Uganda.

## Introduction

The aim of this article is to discuss the dynamics of the social relationships among African peasantries through describing the changing process of labor exchange and social relations. Labor exchange as a source of social safety and good neighborliness in village life has been one of major topics in the study of 'moral economy' or 'economy of affection' of peasant societies. Peasants in rural Africa pool their labor when they need intensive work on their fields such as clearing, weeding, and harvesting. They gather people not only from their own family or kin-group but from their neighbors too. Such kinds of co-operative labor often take the form of 'exchange labor' based on various degree of reciprocity and this co-operation lays the foundation for their sense of neighborliness.<sup>1</sup> In many cases, as among the Sabiny of eastern Uganda - the focus of this article - it is common practice to boost this spirit of cooperation among workers by sharing meals and especially drinking beer after they have finished.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, as other ethnographical studies describe, locally brewed beer epitomizes the symbolic medium of social ties among many peasant societies in rural Africa. For example, in his study of the Iteso of Uganda, Karp describes how people drink beer together at various occasions of their social life such as rituals and mere gatherings.<sup>3</sup> Among the Iteso, he says, beer is a symbol of diffuse solidarity. The Iteso have a saying that neighbors are 'people with whom one shares beer' and 'the primary source of labor supply for large-scale tasks'. As in the case of the Iteso, many other African peasant societies combine labor exchanges with social events like the beer party. There are two aspects of the beer party system that are important here. First, people reinforce and renew their we-feeling by drinking together at the beer party, and second, people exchange their labor by the medium of beer.

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1-2a4.pdf>

In recent years, however, quite a few studies point out that farm labor tends to become more individualist and 'traditional' social networks based on long term reciprocity like 'beer party system' have declined the role as channels of access to labor.<sup>4</sup> According to Ponte, after the liberalization of economic markets and commercialization of rural life in Tanzania, people utilize hired labor based on short-term contracts instead of relying on indigenous social networks like the beer party.<sup>5</sup>

Like Ponte's study, most other studies begin from the premise that as the market economy penetrates rural Africa, channels of access to labor are disembedded from social context and individuated. This is a parallel to the classical view of modernization in the social sciences. For instance, Simmel says that personal face-to-face relationships decline and become anonymous once money mediates between people.<sup>6</sup> As Parry and Bloch summarize, that kind of view treats money as promoter of individualism and devastator of community solidarity.<sup>7</sup> In Sabinu society, there is a tendency for the beer party system to decline while other forms of labor exchange and wage labor are becoming more common.

In this article I will describe the changes of labor co-operation in the research area and examine how far the mainstream theory about the impact of economic liberalization of labor holds.<sup>8</sup> I begin by introducing the socio-economic background of the area. I then proceed to discuss the 'beer party system' and the reasons for its decline. In the third section of the article, I analyze present labor exchange patterns and how they have evolved since colonial days. Lastly, I will discuss the significant points about the changes of social relationships in the area.

## THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE AREA

The Sabinu are a Southern-Nilotic people living on the north slope of Mt. Elgon in Eastern Uganda and the population is about 110,000. They have their patrilineal, exogamous *aret* (clan) system and a practice of virilocal residence. The research area is M Village, with a population of 360 divided into 57 households. People live on the terrace of the mountain. They grow maize, bananas, beans and other crops for family consumption and sale in the market.

Until the first half of 20th century, Sabinu people were primarily agro-pastoralists, keeping cattle and goats, and growing crops like sorghum, millet and yam for family consumption. Many elders say the landscape of the area at that time was covered by bush and most of the land was uncultivated, used for grazing their livestock. They also brewed beer from their harvest and had beer parties. In the research area, people introduced ox-plow and maize around 1950. Maize cultivation emerged gradually afterwards. In the last decades of the 20th century they began to grow hybrid maize and nowadays the landscape is covered by fields of maize and bananas. In recent years, maize has become the main crop. Sixty percent of the households sell their maize in 100 kilo bags. Since the Ugandan government began encouraging production of maize as a non-traditional commercial crop, the national production rose sharply after 1990.<sup>9</sup> Today, my research area is one of the main producing centers in eastern Uganda.

Weeding the maize fields is a labor-intensive task done by women. During the rainy season they must weed their fields twice. When I did my fieldwork in 2002, I interviewed women about this work and sometimes participated in some of the weeding while doing my interviews. I gathered a good deal of my information about past and present practices from these

interviews as well as with their husbands and other male residents in the area. Festive gatherings were often good occasions for getting information. I was often invited as a guest and those present requested to be photographed. It turned out that these gatherings were often organized by women's credit and savings associations. They are very popular in the area today and, according to elders, were not practiced several decades ago there were beer parties as major festive gatherings in the community.

## THE 'BEER PARTY SYSTEM' AND ITS DECLINE

### *Moyket* : the 'beer party system' in the colonial era

Labor exchange based on the 'beer party system' was very popular among the Sabiny in the colonial era. People call it *moyket*, or *isyet ak komek* (literally: work of beer). As late as the 1960, *moyket* was the basic means of recruiting workers for major tasks, and beer parties were the regular social gathering of the community. When a married woman wanted to organize *moyket*, she brewed local beer called *komek*. Neighbors witnessing it would ask her for the date of work, and through the word of mouth they would come on the day proposed by the woman. People would work from morning to early afternoon. Around 2 pm, workers would return to their homes, clean up, change their clothes, and gather again for beer.<sup>10</sup>

In this *moyket* system, there are two types of reciprocal exchanges. First, in the short term, there is the exchange of one-day labor for beer. Second, hosts and workers take their turns during the season so, at least in theory, in the long term the labor exchange through the medium of beer involves every household in the community. Since every woman will be host and guest, this system reinforces the mutual obligations among women.<sup>11</sup> Borrowing Goldschmidt's words, this *moyket* system socializes women's labor.<sup>12</sup> In the years when it was widely practiced, sharing works meant sharing a pot of beer, and people enjoyed that occasion. *Moyket* was not just a way of saving labor or filling a gap in the family labor. It also rendered work less irksome.

This form of labor exchange reinforced generalized reciprocity among the villagers. Moreover, after work, they would talk about anything; sometimes gossip or quarrel, and inform each other of news in the area while they were drinking together. The woman whose field they have worked on served beer in a pot, from which 10-20 participants would drink using a long tube. The 'beer party' after *moyket* work was always a festive event to which sometimes guests who did not participate in the work during the day, called *bendyo* (literally: meat) would be invited. Goldschmidt reports that there were 30 such guests out of 295 workers in beer parties he observed.<sup>13</sup> However, there was some restriction too. Firstly, the host would control the number of guests per pot. Secondly, people at the beer party could not welcome a person who is regarded as sorcerer or just selfish - *sokoronet*. Such rules of the beer party helped sustain a form of loosely generalized reciprocity.

During the colonial era there was another form of labor exchange, formed by three to five women, called *yemday*. There was also a co-operative labor arrangement called *kworishet* which used a special meal of sour milk and goat meat or chicken instead of beer. In rare cases, there was ad-hoc hired labor in which workers were paid by cash or in kind (usually crops). Older women among my respondents said that *yemday* and *kworishet* were the ways young wives

gathered unmarried youth of the same age, mostly for small-scale works. But neither system would attract large numbers to participate. Regarding ad-hoc hired labor, they explained to me that it would happen when they hired a few Gisu (a neighboring ethnic group) migrant laborers who lived nearby.<sup>14</sup> An old woman told me with laughter, 'you do not know how we were in those years. We can neither eat nor drink money! Who could do anything for it?' What she and others emphasized is that, although other ways were there, they put significance on *moyket* as social events.

### The decline of *moyket*

*Moyket* began to decline for two reasons. One is spread of religions like Islam and Pentecostalism, a second is the commercialization of agriculture.

In 1970s a segment of the population began converting to Islam. Later, in the late 1980s, people began joining the Pentecostal Church. Those who joined Islam or the Pentecostal Church declined to drink alcohol and refused to attend beer parties. In 1980s, Muslims used to organize their weeding work by *kworishet*, preparing a special meal such as sour milk, chicken, sometimes goat meat instead of beer. In the earlier years, neighbors did not welcome them because refusing to attend the beer party was the same thing as refusing neighbors. But by the 1990s, Muslims and Pentecostals had become the majority. People drinking alcohol had been reduced to approximately twenty per cent of the population. This minority was now being called '*piko ak komek* (literally: 'people of beer').

For a long time, brewing was almost the only way to sell maize. Since maize became a cash crop for sale in the market, most women have abandoned beer brewing. Only older women continue the practice today. Those who still do it do so because it gives them an income. Most sell their beer as wholesalers to the *kurabut* (club) or a bar in a neighboring village while some confine their sales on a retail basis at their own compound. *Kurabut* is the beer party of the savings and credit association.

The result is that the practice of drinking beer has changed in two important respects. First of all, it is less common today because religion has marginalized it. Only elders who drink really organize *moyket* today. In 2002, not a single woman organized *moyket* for the purpose of weeding her field. At the same time, the savings and credit association had become a new venue for socializing and drinking beer. For those still drinking, its club (*kurabut*) was taking the place of the old beer party.

### FROM 'WORK OF BEER' TO 'WORK OF MONEY'

#### Two types of weeding labor

There are particular divisions of labor by sex in the area. For example, men do plowing work with oxen.<sup>15</sup> Weeding work belongs to women and married men never participate in it. Married women basically depend on the labor of their own children and less often on their mother or unmarried younger sisters. I call this family labor. Apart from family labor, there are two ways women organize neighbors for weeding labor of their field. One is a form of labor exchange called *fakiyet*, the other is hired labor called *kondaras*.

*Fakiyet* is a rotational group exchange of labor. Some people explained that the term '*fakiyet*' comes from the Swahilli word '(ku)fagia', meaning 'sweep up'. Each *fakiyet* group has its fixed members for the season, varying in size between three and twenty five workers - bigger than *yemdoy* and smaller than *moyket* of past years. Members of the same *fakiyet* exchange the same amount of weeding work by measuring stints per worker, and they work in each field by rotation. Reciprocity in this labor exchange is rigidly balanced. Unlike *moyket*, there is no partaking of beer or special meal after work. Only sometimes do they take lunch together.

*Kondaras*, etymologically derived from the English word 'contract', is ad-hoc hired labor. There are no seasonal waged workers from outside the area, so the all hired workers are women or unmarried youth from the local community. There is also no partake of beer or any meal after work. According to the *kondaras* system, workers weed some stints at their own discretion. After finishing their stints they take their wage and leave. Old women commented that this *kondaras* is the best way of bringing a number of workers together as *moyket* was, and they usually added, 'if one had money.' The stints of *fakiyet* and *kondaras* are called *mutagara*. The husband or grown-up son of the woman usually measures the *mutagara* in paces before weeding work. The size of one *mutagara* is six times twelve paces. Payment for *kondaras* is 300 Ugandan shillings (about 17 cents) per *mutagara*.<sup>16</sup>

#### Network of labor transactions

I studied the arrangements for weeding labor among all married women in M village. They were sixty five in total; only three of them didn't have access to their own maize field. Table 1 shows that how women weeded their fields in 2002. Whereas twenty six women depended only on their own family labor, thirty three out of sixty two women utilized labor from outside the family for weeding their fields. They organized their weeding work either by *fakiyet* or *kondaras*, or by a combination of both. Many also went to someone's field for weeding to be hired as *kondaras*, wage labor.

**Table 1 : Type of labor on each fields (2002)**

type of labor	number of fields
<i>kondaras</i>	15
<i>fakiyet</i>	14
<i>fakiyet + kondaras</i>	4
<i>moyket</i>	0
family labour	26
no weeding	1
no data	2
Total	62*

\*except for 3 married women who do not have maize field

Women who earn their own income tend to organize *kondaras* labor for weeding their fields. Fifteen women organized *kondaras* labor in 2002. Table 2 shows their sources of wage payment for *kondaras* workers. Five women with banana fields are especially well placed because harvesting bananas is something that women do. They can sell bananas any time they wish. Another five women have their own petty businesses. They trade charcoal from other villages to town, sell homemade sour milk or locally brewed beer within the area. Some also sell other seasonal crops like sweet potatoes or tomatoes that they grow in their small vegetable gardens. But not all married women have chances to join these businesses. There are many others who do not have enough banana fields or kitchen gardens to sell crops. Some women complained that they do not know how to make sour milk well; some do not have their donkeys to carry charcoal. Another five women were helped by their husbands or sons because they were sick or had recently given birth to a child - or merely refuse to weed. Husbands or sons in these cases are shop owners in the village or work for a local NGO.

**Table 2 Sources of wage for contract labor (2002)**

	(number of women)
<b>(A) Sell bananas</b>	5
<b>(B) Petty 'business'</b>	5
<b>(C) Husband/son pays</b>	5
<b>Total</b>	15

- (A) Women who have 0.5 – 1 acre of banana fields.
- (B) Brewing and selling beer to the bar, selling sour milk, and trading charcoal.
- (C) Due to sickness, childbirth, and refusal to weed. In any case, a woman's husband or son had some regular income.

*Kondaras* and *fakiyet* are intertwined. The former is the way to access labor and to earn a wage. People in the area who do not own their business are ready to be hired as *kondaras* labor on the fields. Sometimes the owner of a field informs or asks neighbors in advance, at other times people who like to be hired as contract laborers come to the field to be recruited because they have heard from someone else that the opportunity exists. In the busy farming season young women can be seen roaming the area in search of *kondaras* work. Some of them come as a *fakiyet* group and convert their group labor to work *kondaras*.

An example of how women divert *fakiyet* to *kondaras* labor may be instructive. Suppose three women - A, B, and C - make up the *fakiyet* group. They fix their stint by *mutagara*, for instance, each worker agreeing to weed one *mutagara* per day. Each woman's field is of different acreage. For example, the field of A is equal to 5 *mutagara*, B's equals 8 *mutagara*, and C's equals 12 *mutagara*. In a first round, they weed each other's field. In a second round, A finishes her weeding with her own family labor because only a small portion is left to weed on her plot. A now exchanges her *fakiyet* labor for a wage labor contract on someone else's field in the area. She takes B and C to this field where the holder organizes weeding work by *kondaras*, and is allowed to get not only her own but also the wages of B and C. This means that A can get 900 Ugandan shillings because the stint of their *fakiyet* group is 1 *mutagara* per head and payment of *kondaras* weeding is 300 Uganda Shillings per *mutagara*. Afterwards, the three women weed the fields of

B and C. B and C will also divert *fakiyet* labor for a contract after a third round, the same as A did in the second round.

Table 3 shows the actual process of *fakiyet* and *kondaras* are intertwined. The field of C is larger than that of A and B. After the first round, both A and B diverted their *fakiyet* labor into *kondaras* and got 7,200 Uganda Shillings in total.

**Table 3 Case: Diverting ‘*fakiyet*’ into ‘*kondaras*’**

Turn of <i>fakiyet</i>	Weeding for A/B/C or <i>kondaras</i> for someone	Payment of <i>kondaras</i>		
1st	A	A	—	1st weeding season
	B	B	—	
	C	C	—	
2nd	A	<i>kondaras</i>	3,600U.Sh. for A	
	B	<i>kondaras</i>	3,600U.Sh. for B	
	C	C	—	
3rd	A	A	—	2nd weeding season
	B	B	—	
	C	C	—	
4th	A	<i>kondaras</i>	3,600U.Sh. for A	
	B	<i>kondaras</i>	3,600U.Sh. for B	
	C	C	—	

Thus, women can organize their weeding work in three ways: (a) their own family labor, (b) exchange labor (*fakiyet*), and (c) wage labor (*kondaras*). These three ways complement each other. Women have several channels of access to labor for their own fields, and also have channels of access to wage labor.

My point is that although the 'beer party system' has declined and hired labor has become the main way of access to labor, it is still embedded in the local context. Work arrangements among women are nested in other daily social interactions. Women help each other in their respective businesses, they participate in the same religious services and they engage in conversations as they fetch water, wash clothes or just chat in their compounds. In short, there are many different ways by which they can retain social ties among themselves. Perhaps no other venue, however, in recent times has become more important than the rotating savings and credit association. As Hyden notes, this form of association is one of the most common informal institutions in both rural and urban Africa. Its role among the Sabiny women deserves more

attention.<sup>17</sup>

#### ROTATING SAVINGS AND CREDIT ASSOCIATIONS

Many married women in the area have been eager to join a rotating savings and credit association. Table 4 shows the type, size and activities of such associations in 2002. These associations are the place for regular social gathering among people just as the beer party was before.

**Table 4 Type, size and activity of the credit associations**

Type of associations		number of members	Activity
<i>'gruuput'</i> (group)	A	45	Pool deposits every week, pay dividends (mostly gifts) once in 3 weeks.
	B	41	
<i>'paatyit'</i> (party)	C	21	Pool deposits twice a month, pay dividends (gifts) once a month.
	D	12	Pool deposits every week, pay dividends (money) once in 3 weeks.
<i>'kurabut'</i> (club)	E	13	Pool deposits every week, pay dividends (money) once in 3 weeks.
	F	10	Pool deposits every week, pay dividends (gifts) once in 3 weeks.

Each association has its fixed members. Members of each association come from both M village and other neighboring villages. People classify these associations to three types: (a) *gruuput* (corruption of the English word 'group'), (b) *paatyit* ('party'), and (c) *kurabut* ('club'). Each association meets once a week and pools deposits. Each member gets to take saved deposits in the form of gift or a lump sum of money on a rotational basis. It takes more than two years for large associations to give a gift or money to all its members while it takes seven months for the smaller associations to do so.

Three associations have their own name: '*Gas Tai* Women's Group', '*Gas Tai* Mixed Group' and 'M Village Women's Party'. The words *gas tai* mean 'looking forward' and have a

'development' connotation. Another characteristic of these larger associations is that they give dividend by gifts, not by cash. Among the biggest two *gruuput* ('group' type of associations), gifts of dividend are usually construction items like roofing materials and timber, blankets, bed mattresses, etc.<sup>18</sup> Traditional thatched roof round houses are still common in the area but tinned-roof square houses have become much more common. Before the 1990s, only a small number of villagers had built tinned-roof houses. Such houses are one of the barometers of good living. Before, only a few people with a regular wage income like policemen, soldiers or watchmen and some rich men who were able to sell their coffee or cattle, could afford to build them. *Gruuput* is popular among villagers because it enables them to build new modern houses like their better-off neighbors already have.

These associations have a chairperson, secretary, and bookkeeper just like the Local Council under the decentralization policy of the current Ugandan Government. Some members request to receive their dividend by cash. In such a case, the person must justify why she needs that amount (use of that amount) and members would give approval. Reasons are, for example, to pay a family member as patient at the hospital, or school fees of a son in secondary school. As far as I could gather, in the smaller *paatyit* or *kurabut* types of associations that give their dividend by cash, recipient must also declare for what purpose the money will be used.

I analyzed how these associations relate to *fakiyet* labor groups. There were six *fakiyet* groups for weeding in M village in 2002. Four are sub-groups of different saving associations to which they belong, which means each member of a *fakiyet* group also finds fellow members in the meetings of the savings and credit association. In these meetings, members not only make their deposits but also talk about problems each member faces. In addition, they often report the weeding condition in their fields and call on members to join their weeding *fakiyet* group at those meetings.

In short, the savings and credit association has become a venue for conducting a range of different activities. Membership also tends to have the effect of ensuring priority to such income-earning opportunities as *kondaras*. A woman belonging to a *paatyit* type of association (D in Table 4) is a case in point. Although nine other women in the same association formed a *fakiyet* group in 2002, the woman was too busy to join because she had her own charcoal trading business. She has to walk to a village at the foot of the mountain with her donkeys and buy charcoal by the sack and then proceed to town to sell her bags the next day. She hired those nine members of the same association for weeding her field. Among those nine, three of them converted *fakiyet* group labor to *kondaras* and each of them got 5,400 Uganda Shillings. According to the woman, there was a kind of agreement that when a member would organize *kondaras* for weeding, she should hire the members of the same association. For some members, the deposit of 3,000 Uganda Shillings once every three weeks is not easy to manage because they do not have a business of their own or sufficient sources of income. The agreement to hire members of the same savings and credit association is aimed at helping those who are poor. Because members can infer the economic condition of each other, and furthermore, any person can tell just by looking which woman has a daily income from some business, members who do not have enough income for deposit can legitimately approach those who have income to hire them for money.

Membership of a particular association reflects daily relationships and also social category. People are keen to explain what kind of persons belongs to what kind of association. Members of the two biggest *gruuput* type of associations are supporters of different local politicians. There are two opposing candidates for Member of Parliament from the district and the supporters of each candidate formed two associations in 2001.<sup>19</sup> The *paatyit* type is the most common in the area. Members of this type are only women. They usually have a chat over milk tea while meeting and their meeting is brief compared with that of other types of associations. Members of the *kurabut* type are all drinkers. They are the successor of the beer party today, however they rarely organize *moyket*.

In sum, people put a certain label on each type of association. For example, members of *gruuput* are 'people who like talking politics', members of *kurabut* are 'drunk', 'dirty' or 'immoral' etc. Thus these classifications between associations imply some nuance of social segments in their society though not every co-operative relationship in daily life reflects these segments.

## Conclusions

Is farm labor in rural Africa becoming more contractual as Ponte insists? He argues that with commercialization of rural life, the social negotiation over access to resources such as land, labor becomes contractual.<sup>20</sup> Thus, according to him, in respect to farm labor, people tend to choose short-term labor exchange rather than a long-term 'beer party system', and furthermore are likely to choose ad-hoc contract labor instead of labor exchange.

I basically agree with his analysis, because in the research area most women choose *fakiyet* or *kondaras* rather than *moyket*. Women, however, combine *fakiyet* and *kondaras*, and make complex networks of labor transactions. Furthermore, the solidarity of savings and credit associations is also connected to networks of labor transaction. That is, festive gatherings like beer party and labor exchanges are seemingly separated, but they are in fact linked to a certain degree. To be sure, today's network is different from the 'traditional' one that sustains and reinforces their social order. At the same time, this network is not a mere collection of ad-hoc dyadic transactions as a perfect contract society would be.

The difference between Ponte's and my conclusions stems at least in part from our choice of research location.<sup>21</sup> In his research area, many seasonal laborers came from neighboring ethnic groups and were hired temporarily during the farming season. In my research area, by contrast, women keep their networks of labor transactions partly because there are almost no seasonal laborers from outside the area. Even if there were such seasonal laborers, however, it is unlikely that the current networks would disappear because they are grounded in their long-term transactions.

Ponte also argues that farm labor increases inequality. As contractualization of farm labor progresses, people who have access to off-farm income can easily afford to hire labor. At the same time, women who do not have enough access to off-farm income hardly hire farm labor for their fields. My research shows that the situation is more complex and varied. Even if a woman does not have an income from off-farm business for organizing *kondaras* and her own family labor is not enough, she can join *fakiyet*. Furthermore, a woman can join *kondaras* as a hired labor at any time in a busy farming season.

Women embrace the idea of reciprocal help for other members of the same *fakiyet* or association. When a woman joins *fakiyet*, she can divert group labor to *kondaras* for her income. As long as she belongs to an association, she can report her hardships in the meetings of the association. Members will assess whether she should get income from the funded deposit. As suggested above, a member who has her own off-farm income is expected to help other members.

Summing up, I would say that my work indicates that the penetration of the market economy does not transform peasant society to the same extent that Ponte argues. Nor does my work confirm the point that Parry and Bloch make that social relations based on long-term transactions are so deeply embedded in culture that they subordinate all short-term transactions. Instead, I conclude that the activity of associations links both long-term and short-term transactions thereby sustaining ties among members while also generating new social orders. This is evident in my research area in the way savings and credit associations popularized the tinned-roof houses and changed the meaning of it from the symbol of rich man to symbol of solidarity. These associations also created new forms of associational life that are based not just on kinship or neighborliness. My study, therefore, shows the creativity or vitality of short-term transactions. They have the potential of changing long-term transactions and even the social order itself. This unending competition between short-term and long-term transactions explains the real dynamics of transformation of the peasant economy.

#### Notes:

1. See Moore (1975) and Swindell (1985): Chap.5, although they distinguish small scale labor exchange between individual from festive labor. On festive labor such as beer party system, they summarize reciprocity was comparatively weak. Also McAllister reviews, 'festive work parties have been thought to involve net transfers of labor to wealthier households, while exchange labor has been associated with relatively equal economic status among households (McAllister 2004, 101p)'. I am preparing another paper about this issue. See endnote xi of this paper too.
2. Co-operative labor with festive consuming of beer were mentioned in many ethnographic studies in Central, East and South Africa, for example, see Bruce (2000), Gulliver (1971), Heald (1998): chap. 8, Karp (1980), Mayer (1951), McAllister (2004), Pottier (1985) and Suehara (1983).
3. Karp (1980).
4. e.g. Berry (1993), Chap. 6.
5. Ponte (2000).
6. Simmel (1990).
7. Parry & Bloch (1989), p. 4.
8. Englund (1999) also stands the same suspicious view to former studies on changes of the form of labor exchange in Africa.
9. See Bibagambah (1996), pp.51-52.
10. Goldschmidt (1976).

11. This kind of view emphasizes ideal 'community' under beer party system, explaining that individual households are even and exchange their labor on long-term reciprocity. But it is doubtful whether each household organizes *moyket*. This kind of festive labor practice usually co-existed with other types of labor practice in colonial Africa (e.g., see Mayer 1951), and wealthier households organized festive work while others organize small-scale labor exchange. It is very persuasive that beer had ambivalent implication, both the public symbol of communal social-tie and status differentiation (see Pottier 1985, p.110). I am preparing another paper on this issue. Also see endnote ii above.
12. Goldschmidt (1986).
13. Goldschmidt (1976), p.159.
14. The Gisu are a Bantu-speaking people who live on the foot of a mountain. Also some of them live on mountain with Sabiny but mainly around the small trading points. In history, Sabiny chased them away by force three times, in 1965, 1980 and 1986 (see Heald 1998: p.47, p.53). People in the area called those as 'wars'. Those Gisu whom the old women told me were also fled from the area in wartime and are not in the area now.
15. Men, borrowing plow and oxen each other, usually do plowing work by exchange labor. Harvesting is usually done by family labor.
16. The measure of stint is different by crops, and payment for *kondaras* per stint also different by areas within their society.
17. Hyden (1980, 2004:p.9).
18. Different from thatched roof roundhouse which is a room, inside of tin-roof square house is divided into three or four rooms. Usually people arrange those rooms one for their bedroom, one for guest room, one for let to tenant villager for running shop or teashop.
19. Beginning from when Museveni got reelected as president in March 2001, in June of the same year government held the national election of MP. Following that, while I stayed, they held the elections of assembly member of Parishes in January 2002, of assembly member of Districts in February. People were in election fever. Candidates of assembly members of those Local Councils also could be politically marked into two by people depended on which MP from their District they follow.
20. Ponte also notice that the process of 'traditional' negotiation gave way to 'contractual' negotiation has not taken place in the same manner in different conditions or locations. See Ponte (2000), p.1019.
21. The data used in Ponte (2000) are the one he obtained in Morogoro and Songea in Tanzania.

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Reference Style: The following is the suggested format for referencing this article: Soichiro Shiraishi. "From Beer to Money: Labor Exchange and Commercialization in Eastern Uganda." *African Studies Quarterly* 9, no.1 & 2: [online] URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1a4.htm>



# Labor Exchange Systems in Japan and DR Congo: Similarities and Differences

TATSURO SUEHARA

**Abstract:** In this essay, I attempt a comparison of two labor exchange systems employed respectively by Japanese and Congolese (Tembo) peasants. The Japanese system is known as *yui*, while the Tembo system is called *likilimba*. *Yui* and *likilimba* have several basic principles in common: (1) mutual assistance, (2) exchange of equal amount of labor, and (3) no use of money or hired labor. At the same time, they are completely different in several points. The most distinctive difference between the two systems is in the basic unit between which labor is exchanged. In the case of the *yui* system, it is between households that labor is exchanged, while, in the case of the *likilimba* system, it is between individuals that labor is exchanged. In the closing part of this essay, I argue that, with the development of the market economy, these non-monetary systems of reciprocal labor exchange will become more needed, rather than disappear, by demonstrating the recent revival of *yui* in Japanese society.

## LABOR EXCHANGE SYSTEMS IN THE WORLD: AN OVERVIEW

What is labor exchange?

Labor exchange is a common phenomenon that can be observed in different peasant societies throughout the world. It is a way of exchanging one's labor for another's labor without using money. To put it another way, it is a way of exchanging labor for labor as a gift. Today, when the market economy has spread to every corner of the world, we are inclined to think of labor as a commodity to be bought and sold in the market. In fact, however, there are still many agrarian people in the world who still engage in labor exchange without buying and selling labor.

Among different labor exchange systems in different agrarian societies of the world, this article focuses on two examples, one from East Asia and the other from Africa, and attempts a comparison of the two systems by carefully taking into account the difference in farming systems between the two regions. The example from East Asia is a labor exchange system known as *yui* practiced among Japanese farm households, and the example from Africa is a

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1-2a5.pdf>

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ISSN: 2152-2448

labor exchange system called *likilimba* practiced among the Tembo living in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), formerly known as Zaire.

### Labor exchange as a measure against labor shortage

Why do many agrarian societies need some sort of labor exchange system? There are several reasons for this. In the first place, it should be noted that in most agrarian societies, labor exchange is often employed during the busy farming seasons in which farming households temporarily need an expanded labor force.

In rural Japan, for example, cooperative work parties known as *yui* are formed most frequently at the time of rice-transplantation and second most frequently at the time of rice-harvesting. During these two seasons of the year, most Japanese farm households come to be faced with a serious labor shortage, and thus become obliged to procure extra labor force through labor exchange, because both rice-transplantation and rice-harvesting are not only highly labor-intensive work, but also need to be completed up within a very short term (preferably one day per paddy field).

When a *yui* work party for rice-transplantation is formed by, for example, five households (A, B, C, D, E), the exchange of labor is normally done in the following way. On the first day, all the households work together on A's paddy. On the second day, all work on B's paddy. Then, all work on C's on the third day, on D's on the fourth day and on E's on the fifth day. In this manner, all households' paddies will have been transplanted when one cycle of labor exchange ends. Chie Nakane, Japanese social anthropologist, describes the *yui* system as follows:

Exchange of labour, such as at the time of transplantation in spring, was normally done with the co-operation of two or three households. This form of exchange is known throughout rural areas as *yui*. The term *yui* signifies literally 'co-operate' or 'unite'.

The work team would be formed by more than two households by *yui*, though theoretically the *yui* contract is established on the basis of two households. The labour given to X household by Y household should be similarly reciprocated by X to Y. It is borrowing in the form of labour with the obligation of future repayment. One day of work should be repaid by one day of work, not by money or in kind.<sup>1</sup>

Normally, Japanese rice farming households employ this *yui* system of labor exchange almost exclusively in the work of rice-transplantation and rice-harvesting; in less labor-intensive stages of rice cultivation, such as at the time of tilling or weeding, they use household labor alone. Moreover, the formation of *yui* groups is not limited among rice farmers alone. It is reported that *yui* groups were once widely formed also among Japanese shifting farmers (who survived in mountain areas at least up to the 1960s) at the time of labor-intensive work, such as opening a field by felling the forest or harvesting crops. In many agrarian societies, as in the case of rural Japan, labor exchange is required particularly in the busy farming seasons when individual farm households come to be faced with a labor shortage.

### Labor exchange as a form of reciprocal cooperation among smallholders

Labor exchange is normally done among smallholders of equal social and economic status. It is a form of mutual help or reciprocal cooperation, especially in the busy farming seasons.

However, there are some cases where labor exchange is done between large-scale and small-scale farmers. In these cases, it is highly questionable whether the exchange of labor between the two sides is actually done on precisely equal terms. Between farmers of different economic status, a so-called patron-client relationship is often established. In such cases, we must consider the possibility that large-scale farmers (patrons) and small-scale ones (clients) may exchange, in fact, not labor for labor, but labor for something else, even if on the surface they seem to exchange labor with each other. This possibility is extensively discussed, for example, by Japanese sociologist Kizaemon Ariga (to whose studies of labor organizations in Japanese rural communities I will refer later in more detail).

### Labor exchange as a beer party

There is another view of labor exchange, that is, a view of labor exchange from its aspect as a beer party. This view is shared particularly among European scholars who study labor exchange systems in African societies. William Allan, for example, describes them as follows:

Further evidence of the general existence of a grain surplus is to be found in the practice, almost universal throughout Africa, of the working 'beer party'. Beer-making played an essential part in the economies of most of the traditional systems of food-production, and the changes of recent years have not greatly diminished its importance.. De Schlipe has described the role of the working beer party among the Zande of the southern Sudan and pointed out that the practice tends to maintain some degree of social inequality.<sup>2</sup>

In most labor exchange systems in the world, the recipient of labor normally has to organize a feast after the work, in order to entertain the providers of labor with beer in return for their help. In Africa, for example, it is common that not only beer, which is normally brewed from millet, banana, palm, etc., but also food, such as the meat of goat or chicken, or *ugali*, a porridge-like meal made from the flour of cassava, millet, maize, etc. are served at such feasts.

When dealing with a labor exchange system, European scholars tend to focus their attention on its aspect as a beer party, rather than on the exchange of labor itself. On the other hand, such a strong interest in the festive aspect of labor exchange cannot be found among Japanese scholars. In this clear contrast we can see a critical difference in approach to the issue of labor exchange between European and Japanese scholars. In addition, under most labor exchange systems in the world, including the *yui* system in Japan, it is not rare that attendants at a communal work party work together while singing songs or playing music instruments like drums, in order to keep pace with one another. In these cases, we may say that a cooperative work party is not an occasion for mere hard labor, but also an occasion for pleasure.

### THE YUI LABOR EXCHANGE SYSTEM

#### Labor exchange between *Ooya* (patron) and *Nago* (client)

Japanese rural sociologist Kizaemon Ariga, made an empirical study of cooperative labor organizations in rural Japan known as *yui* (or *sukeai*), through the method of writing a detailed ethnography of one rural community, namely, Ishigami village in Iwate Prefecture of northern Japan. In his work titled, *Daikazoku-seido to Nago-seido* (Large family system and tenant system),

Ariga analyzed *yui* work groups in Ishigami village, which were formed by a set of households of different types: the original household and landowner called *ooya*; branch households called *bekke*; and tenant households called *nago*, which were in most cases former servants of *ooya*.<sup>3</sup>

Ariga's study of *yui* has two distinctive features. First, Ariga did not see *yui* as a mere cooperative labor organization formed solely for agricultural tasks. Rather, he thought that such a limited view would make it difficult to understand the entire social relationship between the households of patron (*ooya*) and client (*bekke* and *nago*). Then, by introducing Marcel Mauss's concept of "*prestation totale*" into his analysis, Ariga made a full investigation of the exchange of labor and goods that occurred between *ooya* and *bekke* and *nago* on various occasions in the village life, such as at ceremonies, like weddings, funerals and festivals as well as at times of non-agricultural tasks, such as roof-thatching and house-building.<sup>4</sup>

Second, Ariga analyzed social relations in Japanese rural communities almost exclusively in terms of the *ooya-nago* (landowner-tenant or patron-client) relationship. He asserted that the formation of *yui* had taken place at first between households of different status, such as between *ooya* and *nago*, and later had spread between smallholders of equal status. In short, Ariga considered that the *ooya-nago* relationship was the very basis of social relations in Japanese rural society.<sup>5</sup>

Ariga's theory that social relations in rural Japan were organized on the basis of hierarchical inter-household relationships represented by the *ooya-nago* (landowner-tenant) relationship, soon achieved wide recognition in the Japanese academic world of that time, and continued to have extensive influence on later scholars of Japanese society. For example, in her book *Japanese Society* Chie Nakane refers to Japanese society as a "vertical society", arguing that the most distinctive characteristic of Japanese society is that various kinds of personal relations are vertically organized on the basis of a fictive parent-child relationship called *oyabun-kobun* or *oyakata-kokata*.<sup>6</sup> Nakane further argues that this vertical, fictive parent-child relationship still persists in modern Japanese society as the basic organizing principle of various kinds of modern institutions, such as factories or schools. Of course, Nakane's argument in *Japanese Society* is not based solely on Ariga's rural sociology, but these two scholars share the same view that social relations in Japan are organized along a vertical line.

My view about the basic principle of social organization in Japanese society is in marked contrast to that of Ariga and Nakane. Through my own research on *yui* working groups in different rural areas of Japan, I have reached an understanding that not vertical, but horizontal social relations based on the norm of reciprocity are of great importance in Japanese rural society.

Why did we arrive at such opposing understandings of Japanese rural society? A possible reason is that each of us conducted fieldwork at different periods of time. Ariga's fieldwork was done from the 1930s to the 1960s, and Nakane's was done from the 1950s to the 1960s, whereas mine was done from the 1970s to the 1980s. Considering the fact that rural Japan had undergone great changes from the 1930s through the 1960s to the 1980s, it is reasonable for us to suppose that those historical changes that had actually happened in rural Japan were directly reflected in the opposing views of Japanese rural society- Ariga's and Nakane's view of it as a vertical society and my view of it as a horizontal society.

Another possible reason is that each of us carried out fieldwork in different parts of Japan. As contrasted to Ariga, for example, who conducted fieldwork exclusively in the northeastern part of Japan, I conducted fieldwork mainly in the central and western parts of the country. In particular, I conducted intensive fieldwork in the Okinawa Islands during the 1970s.

*Yui-maaru*: The Okinawan system of labor exchange between smallholders

In Okinawa, instead of "yui" in the standard Japanese, "yui-maaru" in the Okinawan vernacular is widely used as a term signifying labor exchange. The *yui-maaru* contract is normally established between small-scale peasant households for the purpose of mutual help, and is rarely established between large-scale and small-scale peasant households connected by the patron and client relationship.

In Tarama Island, where I conducted fieldwork, *yui-maaru* was practiced strictly according to the basic principle of exchange of equal amount of labor. However, there existed one exception to this rule: that is, if a *yui-maaru* group included a physically weak old person, the labor given to the old person by other members did not have to be reciprocated, which means that old persons were allowed to receive labor one-sidedly from other younger and physically stronger members.

In addition, it should be noted that, in Tarama Island, *yui-maaru* was employed most frequently at the time of sugar cane harvesting, but is also arranged in various non-agricultural occasions. From these observations, I agree with Ariga and thus with Mauss from whom Ariga borrows key concepts, that *yui* or *yui-maaru* must be understood not as an organization for labor exchange in agricultural tasks alone, but as an organization for "*prestations totale*."

## LIKILIMBA AND SHIFTING CULTIVATION

### Tembo people and their land

This section examines the *likilimba* system among the Tembo as an example of labor exchange systems in agrarian Africa. The Tembo are an agrarian people numbering less than a hundred thousand who live in the eastern part of DRC. They occupy a mountainous area at an altitude varying between 800m and 2000m above sea level, where they practice shifting agriculture. They grow more than twenty kinds of crops, the main being cassava, maize, kidney beans, and bananas. Their staple food is *ugali*, stiff porridge made from cassava flour.

The Tembo have a labor exchange system called *likilimba*, which they employ in all stages of their shifting farming. Before proceeding to an analysis of the *likilimba* system itself, I would like to give an outline of Tembo agriculture. The area has two rainy seasons and two dry seasons, and the Tembo sow crops in each rainy season, thus twice a year. The long dry season starts in May and lasts until August, while the long rainy season starts in September and ends in the beginning of May. Then, in the middle of the long rainy season, there is a short period of no rain (from the end of December to the beginning of January), which is referred to here as the "short dry season". The annual rainfall of the mountain area in which the Tembo live can be estimated at more than 1400mm from the fact that Bukavu, a big town in the region, has a

rainfall of around 1400mm per year.

### Tembo agriculture and *likilimba*

There are two types of fields in Temboland. One type is opened in the short dry season, and the other type is opened in the long dry season. The former type is almost twice the size of the latter type.

During the long dry season, forest trees and bushes are cleared to open new fields, and this task is exclusively the work of men. In the work of forest-clearing, Tembo men rarely practice *likilimba*, and even when they do it, they normally form very small work parties of two or three persons. At the time of bush-clearing, by contrast, they often form large *likilimba* work parties of twenty to thirty persons. In the case of the latter, it is possible for a man to finish clearing the bush in a day with the assistance of the work party, meaning that, if the work party consists of twenty members, it takes twenty days until all members' fields have been opened. After the work, the man who has received labor services on the day has to provide all the workers with banana beer and some food.

After having been opened, the fields are left unattended for three to four weeks until they are burned. Usually, at the time of field-burning, *likilimba* is not employed. This task is normally carried out separately by individual households. Then, comes the work of field-cleaning, which is also done on a household by household basis. After having been cleaned up, the fields are cultivated with hand hoes, and this task is also performed by individual households with family labor alone. Then, crops are sown in the fields. This task is almost exclusively associated with women. Only sorghum is sown by men. But men just sow it in their respective fields, without any cooperation with each other or with women. On the other hand, women organize large-scale *likilimba* for sowing. Twenty or so women form a work party to jointly sow maize and groundnut in their fields. This group-sowing is done everyday in a different member's field, and continues for thirty to forty days until all members' fields have been sown with the two crops. After the work is done, meals are offered to all the participants by the woman who has received assistance on the day. However, unlike at male work parties, beer is never provided at female work parties. For this simple reason, we cannot call women's work parties "beer parties."

After sowing the crops comes the work of managing and weeding the fields. This activity is performed on a household-by-household basis and is carried out by both men and women. One or two months after the sowing of maize and groundnut, cassava is planted in the fields. Planting of cassava is the work of women. Tembo women perform this task by organizing small *likilimba* work parties of two or three members who have close relations with each other in most cases.

Harvesting is also the work of women. In the case of maize, they form *likilimba* work parties of about ten members. In these work parties neither food nor beer is offered to the participants after the work by the day's host woman, but the participants are allowed to take with them a small portion of the day's harvest. In the case of groundnut, on the other hand, women usually form larger *likilimba* parties of about twenty members. In this case, too, the participants are allowed to take a small portion of the day's harvest with them. These female work parties for

the harvesting of groundnut normally last for twenty to thirty days, everyday moving from one member's field to another member's field. As for cassava, since this crop can be harvested once in a week, Tembo women do not form large *likilimba* parties to harvest it. It is harvested by small female *likilimba* parties established among two or three close friends.

#### The principles of *likilimba*

The Tembo, as stated above, frequently form work parties known as *likilimba* in various stages of their shifting agriculture. The way in which they organize *likilimba* is quite in accordance with their farming system. That is, they form *likilimba* work parties of different sizes and gender compositions, according to the kind of crop, as well as the kind of farming practice (in this regard, whether it is men's work or women's work is especially important). In addition, the reward for labor takes different forms, depending on the type of *likilimba*: in some cases, the host rewards the participants with both food and beer and in other cases, the host provides them with food alone. In some cases, the host does not offer them food or beer, but instead gives them permission to take away with them a small portion of the harvest from his or her field.

Large-scale *likilimba* is practiced almost exclusively during the busy farming season. By contrast, small-scale *likilimba* is often employed even in everyday farming activities. This small-scale *likilimba* may more accurately be viewed as Tembo's means to bring an atmosphere of joy and conviviality into their otherwise lonely and tedious routine work, rather than their means to raise the efficiency of the farm practice.

As we have seen so far, the Tembo employ different types of *likilimba* in different agricultural tasks. However, what should be emphasized here is that every *likilimba* is organized according to three basic principles: (1) mutual assistance; (2) exchange of equal amount of labor (one day of work should be repaid by one day of work); and, (3) no use of money.

Here, let me briefly touch on the third principle, no use of money. Today, of course, money is widely used among the Tembo. For example, if a foreigner hires a Tembo man as a worker, the foreigner must pay him money for his services (I actually did so when I hired some Tembo workers to transport my baggage). Besides, nowadays not a small number of Tembo people are working as wage laborers in nearby plantations. However, the Tembo never use money as the reward for labor services they have received from their fellow villagers. Likewise, any kind of meal can never be exchanged for money between Tembo peasants of the same village. Within a Tembo village, meal is never sold. It is always given to or shared with fellow villagers.

#### *Kwanza* and *lukoo*: sub-systems of *likilimba*

In the case of *likilimaba* that is arranged between women, the three principles mentioned above are almost always strictly observed. The reason is that there are no great inequalities of wealth among Tembo women. In the case of *likilimba* that is arranged between men, by contrast, those three principles are not always observed, but are sometimes abandoned. This can be explained by the fact that the Tembo society is a polygamous society. A husband with two or more wives has to work at least twice as hard as his monogamist fellows; otherwise he cannot open a new field for each of his wives. If he is a young, sturdy man, he can do this. However, the fact is that the majority of polygamists are old men. For very old polygamists or polygamists

with more than three wives, it is in fact impossible to participate in normal *likilimba* and continue to reciprocate one day of labor with one day of labor. It is in cases like this that a sub-system of *likilimba*, which is called *kwanza* in Tembo language, has an important role to play.

*Kwanza* is a form of work party that only rich old men can organize at the time of bush clearing. If a rich old man needs assistance in clearing the bush for opening a new field, he forms a *kwanza* work party by giving a costly feast as an incentive for fellow villagers to work for him. To prepare the feast, he buys goat meat and chicken in large quantities at a nearby marketplace and buys a lot of banana beer from women in the village (banana beer is the only locally-produced food that is sold in Tembo villages). By this arrangement, he can mobilize many village men to assist him in work. In this sense, we may say that *kwanza* is a form of festive work party or working beer party. Normally, *kwanza* work parties are willingly participated in by a large number of male villagers, who have few opportunities to eat meat in their everyday lives.

However, in the case of old men who are not rich enough to organize *kwanza* and, even worse, have no grown-up children to support them, what can they do? In this case, another sub-system of *likilimba* known as *lukoo* is used. *Lukoo* literally means "compassion" in Tembo language. It is a form of communal work party that is organized to help old men who are no longer able to participate in normal, thus reciprocal *likilimba* for bush clearing. In this *lukoo* type of work party, participants offer their labor for nothing. They do not expect anything in return for their labor service. Normally, it is a very small field that a *lukoo* work party opens for an old man in need of help. However, once a new field has been opened, it becomes possible for the old man to carry out all the remaining farm work with family labor alone. It is clear that only with the assistance through the *lukoo* system can old aged Tembo men continue to lead their lives as independent peasants. Finally, it is worth noting that both sub-systems of *likilimba*, *kwanza* and *lukoo*, are never employed by Tembo women.

## FINAL COMPARISONS

### Similarities and Differences between *Yui* and *Likilimba*

Agriculture in Japan and that in Temboland of DRC are of a completely different character. The former is based on paddy rice farming, while the latter is based on shifting farming with mixed cropping practice. Despite this fundamental difference in agriculture, both Japanese and Tembo societies have similar systems of labor exchange: the *yui* system in Japanese society and the *likilimba* system in Tembo society.

*Yui* and *likilimba* have some characteristics in common. First, both systems follow the same basic principles: that is, exchange of equal amount of labor (one day of labor should be reciprocated with one day of labor) and labor exchange with no use of money. Second, both are systems of mutual assistance and thus are most frequently employed in highly labor-demanding stages of agriculture. Third, both have sub-systems within them, including a system of one-way giving of labor without seeking return.

At the same time, however, *yui* and *likilimba* are different in several respects, and these differences seem to originate in differences of the social system in Japanese and Tembo societies. The most distinctive difference between *yui* and *likilimba* is in the basic unit between which

labor is exchanged. In the case of the *yui* system in Japan, labor exchange is done between households, not between individuals. Thus, if household A sends both husband and wife to a *yui* work party held at household B's paddy, the labor given by the husband and the labor given by the wife are summed up into the labor given by household A, and this total amount of labor given by A to B is later reciprocated by B to A. It is not between individuals, but between households that *yui* contracts are established.

In contrast to this, under the *likilimba* system among the Tembo, labor exchange is done between individuals, not between households. Thus, even husband and wife (or wives) in one household form separate *likilimba* work groups, using his or her own network of relatives, friends, and neighbors of the same sex.

As stated above, both under the *yui* system and under the *likilimba* system, labor must be exchanged for labor, not for money, meaning that hired labor is never employed in both *yui* and *likilimba*. So, if the market economy grows more widespread, are these non-monetary systems of labor exchange being replaced by the buying and selling of labor in the market?

### *Yui* in revival

In Japan, the practice of *yui* had sharply declined in the 1970s and 1980s. The reason was not that *yui* had been replaced by hired labor, but that the mechanization of paddy rice farming had advanced swiftly during this period. The decline of *yui* was accelerated particularly by the invention of various kinds of small-size agricultural machines, by which all stages of rice cultivation, including transplanting, harvesting, threshing, and bundling of rice straws, were mechanized. In this robotization process of Japanese agriculture, it became possible for even small-scale farm households to own different kinds of agricultural machines, because of the smallness of those machines. This rapid spread of agricultural machines enabled Japanese farmers to carry out all stages of paddy rice farming with family labor alone. In this way, rural Japan saw the sharp decline of mutual labor exchange without undergoing the formation of the agricultural labor market.

Then, is *yui* going to completely disappear from Japan? I think the answer is no. The reason is that a wave of new types of *yui* is now gradually spreading throughout Japan. This is evident from the fact that, from the 1990s onward, the word "*yui*" has been reviving in Japanese society. The word is now widely used across the country, not only in rural areas, but also in urban areas. In practice a number of different kinds of organizations have the word "*yui*" in their names. The following are some examples of such organizations: a group for supporting the handicapped in finding employment in Okinawa Prefecture; a not-for-profit organization for mutual help in Aichi Prefecture; a center for promoting civic activities in Kiryuu City, Gunma Prefecture (a public institution); a public corporation for nursing-care services in Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture; a group of members of a consumers' cooperative society for mutual help in Kanagawa Prefecture; an NPO for life-long education in Okinawa Prefecture; a group of teachers of social studies in Shizuoka Prefecture; a group for promoting the use of community currency in Fukuoka Prefecture; and, a private farm for organic agriculture in Nagano Prefecture. As is clear from this list, groups whose names include the word "*yui*" are diverse in

type of organization, ranging from private individual to cooperative society to NPO to public body.

Most of these new types of *yui* groups have been organized for the purpose of mutual exchange of volunteers, rather than mere exchange of labor. In Japan, until the mid-1990s, volunteer activities were shouldered by a very narrow circle of people. In my view, however, Japanese people dramatically changed their attitude toward volunteer work when the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake hit the country in 1995. Indeed, immediately after the earthquake, many people, young and old, from all over the country voluntarily rushed to the struck area to help the victims of the disaster - some were students, some were workers of private companies, some were public officials. Before then, Japanese society always gave the highest priority to economic growth. However, I think that when the country was hit by this earthquake many Japanese people must have felt that a terrible disaster like this could happen to themselves at any time. This was why so many people rushed to the struck area to work as disaster-relief volunteers.

While acts of one-way charity do not awake much sympathy among the Japanese, acts of mutual assistance are, as the above case clearly shows, understandable and acceptable to most Japanese people who have a long tradition of *yui*. Let me add another example. When another big earthquake struck Niigata Prefecture of northwestern Japan in 2004, a number of people living in the area struck by the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji Great Earthquake, including the cities of Kobe, Nishinomiya and Ashiya, hurried to Niigata to work as disaster-relief volunteers. I think that these people's actions must have been motivated by their "*otagaisama*" ("all in the same boat") mentality, as well as by their wish to help the victims by their own labor, not by money.

It is against this background that various kinds of Japanese organizations, including volunteer groups, self-help groups and NPOs, have recently begun to include the word "*yui*" in their names, seeing the word as a symbol of the spirit of mutual assistance. I suppose that from now on these new types of *yui* will spread more widely and play more important roles in Japanese society, where the development of market economy seems to be still advancing with increasing intensity.

This article has shown that the moral economy phenomenon exists in societies of very different economic backgrounds. It is not merely part of the past or confined to backward societies. The principles of moral economy exist side by side with the market economy and bureaucratic organizations. It keeps being reinvented and reenergized as the *yui* case of Japan illustrates.

#### Notes:

1. Nakane, 1967, p.144.
2. Allan, 1977, p.44.
3. Ariga, 1967a.
4. Mauss, 1950, p.151.
5. Ariga, 1957, 1967b.
6. Nakane, 1984.

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Reference Style: The following is the suggested format for referencing this article: Tatsuro Suehara. "Labor Exchange Systems in Japan and DR Congo: Similarities and Differences." *African Studies Quarterly* 9, no.1 & 2: [online] URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1a5.htm>



# The Changing Practices of *Kibarua* Employment: A Case Study of the Sagara, Tanzania

KAZUHIKO SUGIMURA

**Abstract:** This article analyzes the process in which the "economy of affection" in rural Africa transforms the nature of wage labor and thereby induces a phenomenon we may call "communal sharing of cash" among African peasants, through a case study of Sagara society in Tanzania. In Sagara society, which is now deeply involved in the money economy, a form of wage labor employment (called *kibarua* in Swahili) is frequently arranged by the rich at the request of the poor for cash. Contrary to the general view that wage labor is evidence of rural differentiation, *kibarua* reproduces an egalitarian world within the society by functioning as an effective social leveling mechanism.

## Introduction

The purpose of this article is to describe the cultural characteristics of *kibarua* from the point of view of the life structure of the peasants and the relationship that exists between the employer of *kibarua* and the laborer as a *kibarua* him/herself. The presence of wage labor in peasant societies in Africa has to a certain degree been highlighted in previous studies, such as those of Kasfir and Hanzawa.<sup>1</sup> The phenomenon of wage labor, together with the phenomenon of peasant differentiation, have been regarded as some of the contributing factors towards the penetration of capitalism into the African peasantry.<sup>2</sup>

Hyden, however, commented on the uniqueness of African capitalism, from the point of view of the differences between advanced and less advanced societies.<sup>3</sup> Firstly, the peasant differentiation phenomenon in advanced countries is basically supported by the differentiation of private land holding in contrast to the communal land holding system found in many societies of Africa.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, differentiation within the African peasantry remains at a low level, even in the most capitalist societies of Africa, e.g. Kenya.<sup>5</sup> Thus, African capitalism can't be equated with that of capitalism found in advanced countries.

It is important to consider not only the presence of wage labor and peasant differentiation but also to look at a society's cultural attributes. Studies focusing on the life structure and the value system of the peasants have been carried out in southeast Asia, for example by Geertz and Scott.<sup>6</sup> There are fewer such studies, however, with specific reference to Africa. My study was carried out to fill this gap by examining the *kibarua* concept as a wage labor arrangement among the Sagara people and explore its social, economic, and cultural significance.

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1-2a6.pdf>

The next section covers the general characteristic of the contemporary dynamics of the peasant economy in Sagara society before I proceed to analyze the *kibarua* phenomenon. The third section discusses the implications for the life structure of the peasant. In the conclusion, I address the issue of the extent to which the African peasantry is unique.<sup>7</sup>

## REGIONAL SUBSISTENCE AND CASH ECONOMY

### Description of the study area

Morogoro region, in which the Sagara community is found, has a population of 1,222,237 people, in five districts with 458 villages. Annual rainfall in this region ranges from 600mm to 1200mm. Kilosa is one of the districts in Morogoro region located at about fifty km from Morogoro town center (see Map 1). While the northern part of Kilosa district is dominated by the Kaguru ethnic group, the southern part is occupied by the Sagara people. The Mkudi and Chogoali rivers divide Sagaraland from Kaguruland to the northeast. Sagaraland is lower and hotter with more rain than Kaguruland.

Given these different ecological conditions, the Kaguru people are found to have many cattle (and mainly indigenous breed) while the Sagara people traditionally keep small animals such as goats. This difference has made them experience different lifestyles. However, despite such differences, both of them are truly agricultural people dependent upon the cultivation of staple food crops like maize, compared to the people surrounding them, namely the Masai and Gogo who live in drier areas.

Nyameni village, one of the villages of Ulaya division in Kilosa district of Sagaraland was selected as the site for this study (see Fig.1). This village is located along the main road from Mikumi to Kilosa. According to the 1988 population census, the population of Ulaya division was 10,107 people and Nyameni village was 2,188.

### Subsistence agriculture in Nyameni

Nyameni village is located near Morogoro town and from the point of view of transportation is very convenient for commercial agriculture production. There are many plantations along the main road and these have attracted many immigrants who have subsequently intermingled with the indigenous people.

Fig.1. Outline of the Study field

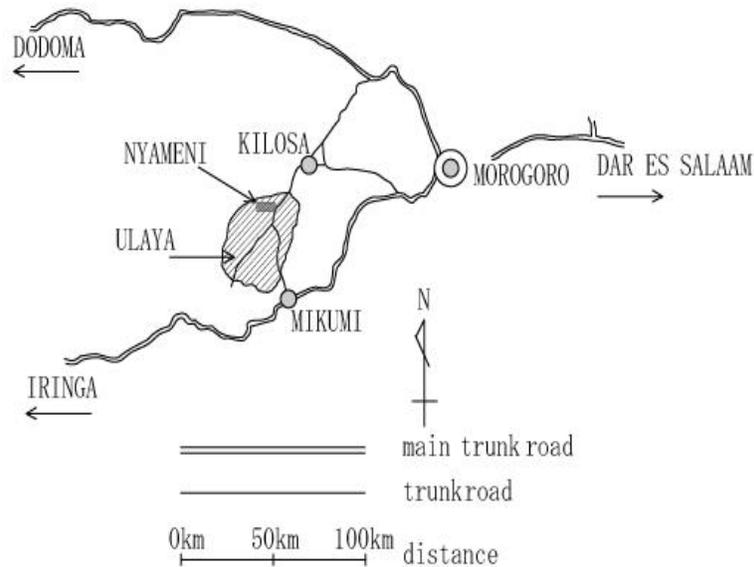


Fig 1

Ethnicity	Number of persons	Rate
Sagara	22	(58%)
Goni	6	(16%)
Kaguru	3	( 8%)
Luguru	2	( 5%)
Nyakusa	1	( 3%)
Gigua	1	( 3%)
Others	2	( 7%)

**Table 1.** Ethnicity of Inhabitants in Sagara Community -in the case of 38 persons in Nyameni

Fig.1 shows the distribution of the people according to ethnicity. According to Table 1, forty two percent of the people interviewed had immigrated from other areas. Among the immigrants are the Goni, Kaguru, and Luguru. Generally, Sagaraland is regarded as the most suitable area for cultivation in Tanzania. Most of the immigrants not only come from nearby areas like Ukaguru and Uluguru, but also from far away areas like Goni and Ugogo. They came to this area in order to look for agricultural field.

In spite of the availability of arable land, someone living far from the main road faces transportation difficulties, as there is no person in that village with a truck. They are dependent on traders from the urban area and other neighboring villages to transport their goods to the market. A poor transport system and low prices for agricultural products (which they cannot control, as they are mainly determined by the world market) have discouraged the Sagara people from expanding their agricultural fields. An example is the fall of price of cotton, which the government had earlier encouraged. For this reason peasants value and prefer to stick to their subsistence agricultural production.

As a testimony to the above, one immigrant of the Sukuma origin pointed out as follows, "Sagaraland is fertile and people could extend the scale of their agriculture if they want to but they don't want to extend the field. Instead of expanding their agricultural field, they accept immigrants generously."

The Sagara type of agriculture is an example of shifting-cultivation in the *miombo* forests of equatorial Africa. Traditionally, it is characterized by the opening up of new fields in the original forest and the use of long-term fallow. Land availability, however, has decreased year by year, and recently peasants keep the same land under cultivation for several years, in some instances for more than twenty years. Another recent feature of land use in Sagaraland is the practice of farming on different plots that are separated from each other. On average, peasants manage three to four plots per household. In Nyameni village, while most peasants have plots in the low lands, as it is more suitable for rice production, some peasants have farm plots on the slopes of the hill under the slash and burn system of agriculture.

Dimension s (acre)	person s	%	Combination of Crop	Frequenc y	Item/da y	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.0	2	(5%)	Maize+ kidney bean +cassava	R	Salt	10 0	10 0	10 0	10 0	5 0	50	50		
1.5	2	(5%)	Maize+ kidney bean+banana	R	Sugari	40 0	10 0	10 0	10 0		10 0	20 0	20 0	
2.0	14	(37%)	Maize+ kidney bean	CC	Soap	27 0					70			
2.5	2	(5%)	Maize+ cassava	C	Oil	10 0	60	15	15		45			
3.0	1	(18%)	Maize+rice	C	Tomato	20	30	20	20	5 0	30	30	50	50
4.0	5	(13%)	Maize+banana	R	Onion			30	30				20	20
5.0	4	(13%)	Maize+sorgha m	C	Kindrey bean								10 0	
6.0			Maize+cow pea	R	Dried fish								15 0	
Others	2	(5%)	Maize+sesame	C	Cassava									20 0
			Maize+finger	CC	Food oil	10 0	50	50	50		50	10 0	50	50
			Maize	C										
			Sweat potato	C										

Cotton	R	Coconut tree	100	60			50	40		50
Rice	CC	Tea		50						
Tomato	C	Tobacco		150	60	60				
		Soda						150		
monetary unit= Tanzania shilling by Hussein Hassan										

**Table 2:** Scale of Land Management Area -in the case of 38 persons in Nyameni

**Table 3:** Combination of Crops and Frequency in Sagara (CC: very common; C: common; R:rare)

**Table 4:** Daily Trend of Cash Utilization

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents according to farm size. Farm size ranges from one to eight acres. Sixty percent of the respondents have farm sizes ranging from two to three acres. Large-scale peasants managing 8 hectares or more make up only five percent of the respondents. The main food crops of this area are maize, sorghum, rice, banana and sweet potatoes, as indicated in Table 3. However, maize is the most popular crop and is regarded as the staple food crop. Before maize was promoted by the national government in 1972 under the National Maize Project, the staple food crop of the area was sorghum. Government wanted the Sagara people to plant maize only and adopt a mono-cropping system contrary to their mixed cropping system. The latter, however, has survived and is popular among many peasants as they wish to avert the risk of crop failures due to various factors (cf. Table 3).

Cash economy and everyday life

Although peasants stick to subsistence production, they strongly recognize the importance of cash. This is clearly shown by the types of commodities brought into the village and the lifestyles of the people. The practice of drinking tea with sugar (and sometimes with milk) is another. Most of the commodities flowing into the village come from the outside world and are basically consumer goods, which are not produced inside the village like radios, bicycles, clothes, medicine, batteries, lamps, and many other things. They also include canned food, dried fish, sugar and salt. While they use money to buy commodities mentioned above, peasants still use cash to purchase some of the foodstuff, which they need for their daily consumption, especially tomatoes and onions.

Table 4 shows the items for which cash is being utilized by one of the peasants living an ordinary life in Nyameni. The peasant buys salt, sugar, soap, oil, tomatoes, onions, dried fish, and cooking oil. He buys food little by little on a daily basis. Peasants often purchase tomatoes

and onions and other staple foods like cassava, as shown in Table. 4. Sometimes peasants buy soft drinks like soda (Coca-Cola) in order to have a glimpse of urban life within the village.

Under these circumstances, they try to get more money in their everyday life in order to maintain the above life style. Among the peasants, some get money by hunting and through keeping livestock. However, hunting activity is decreasing suddenly due to deforestation and shortage of animals. Livestock is limited to small animals like goats.

Among the richest peasants in villages of Sagara society, some of them get money through rental business of machines like maize milling machines, although the number of peasants who own such machines is very limited. Due to the fact that income -generating activities are very limited, most Sagara people are also dependent on wage labor. Such labor is confined to agricultural work although carrying luggage (porters), logging (cutting trees), scaring birds, building houses, weeding, breeding goats, building toilets, etc. may also yield a cash income. All these activities grouped together are commonly referred to as *kibarua*.<sup>8</sup> The analysis of these phenomena helps one visualize the key features of the peasant economy as a whole in Sagara society.

#### KIBARUA AND PEASANT ECONOMY IN SAGARA

This section discusses the current practices of *kibarua* labor among peasants and the relationship that exists between employer and worker in this system.

##### Utilization of *kibarua*

*Kibarua* (plural: *vibarua*) generally means casual and seasonal labor in Kiswahili.<sup>9</sup> The typical *kibarua* worker migrates from region to region or from area to area. Although there are laborers from other ethnic groups like the Gogo and Goni in Sagara society, most casual laborers are from among the Sagara themselves. *Kibarua* is the most convenient way for peasants to get cash in the village. More than half of the able-bodied members in the village are generally employed a few times a year. There are two types of employers: (a) the plantation estates and (b) the peasants themselves.

There are two plantations in Nyameni, one growing sugar cane owned by an Arab family and another growing coconut trees that is owned and managed by a Luguru family. In addition, both plantation owners have agricultural fields, which are normally planted with maize and rice. On the plantations there is usually a regular demand for *kibarua* work. If peasants want to work, they can easily find it. When they do, peasants work 2-3 days a week before returning to their own domestic agricultural work. Peasants who accept to work as *vibarua* receive an advance payment to allow them to meet subsistence expenses such as food. Because most food items are costly, the *kibarua* worker typically has little cash at hand.

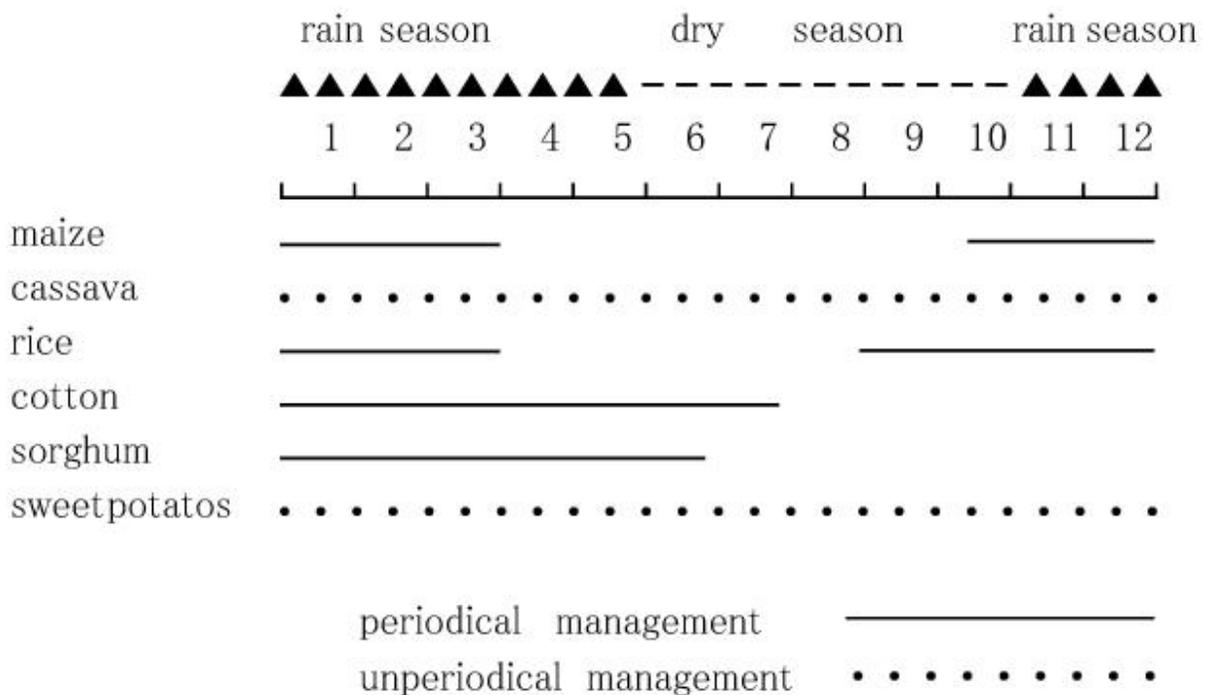
The other type of employer are the Sagara peasant themselves. Within the local community, there is a custom promoting the use of *vibarua* workers. Hiring a person takes place once a farmer has enough money. There are minor differences between the rich and the poor in terms of utilization of *kibarua*. Under normal circumstances, the villager who employs someone has a purpose of extending his or her farm size and to ease the burden of agricultural work. Thus, the utilization of the *kibarua* does not only concern or take place among the rich peasants,

but also the poor ones. In reality, even the rich peasant in the Sagara community has only little capital to employ a *kibarua*. Therefore, comparing the two venues of *kibarua* employment, the plantation surpasses overwhelmingly the rich peasant in terms of employment power, and peasants usually find themselves working on the plantations.

The *kibarua* phenomenon among the peasants

In order to understand the *kibarua* phenomenon among the peasants in Sagaraland, it is necessary to look at the seasonal fluctuation of wage laborers and the role of Sagara peasants as employers. The use of *kibarua* fluctuates in accordance with the agricultural season.

Fig. 2. Agricultural calender in Sagara society



As shown in Figure 2, peasants plant maize in December when the rainy season begins and harvest maize at the end of March. Generally speaking, the peasants manage their subsistence life by selling maize products. From September when the dry season begins, peasants spend much of their money on marriage ceremonies and other forms of private consumption. This situation leaves the peasants with little maize or money to allow them to purchase some maize in the market.

Interest in working as *kibarua* laborer also fluctuates according to needs within the household. For instance, in April and May peasants concentrate on domestic work and don not want to work as *vibarua*. Around December when money and food supply is short, their interest in doing so increases significantly. When peasants have money and can meet most of their needs they see no reason to work as *vibarua* and concentrate on domestic work. According to an

interview with the manager of the Arab plantation, the management understands the changing needs of the peasants and can take advantage of their needs by hiring them at a low remuneration. It is mainly interested in fulfilling its own production plan and hires a large number of peasants at reduced wage level at times when they are in dire need of cash. In comparison, employment provided by peasants is more flexible and can be extended according to the peasants' needs for work around December without reducing the wage like the plantation manager does. Peasants, however, have their own limitations when it comes to hiring a *kibarua* worker and they cannot do so as easily as the plantations can.

At this preliminary stage of my study, I am unable to conclude what the origin of seasonal *kibarua* relation among peasants might have been, but according to interviews with elderly peasants, it is related to traditional work practices in Sagara society before the introduction of a cash economy. According to this traditional custom, poor peasants have a right to work as *vibarua* (or look for wage labor) during times of difficulties while rich peasants have an obligation to give poor peasants work. This kind of moral economy plays a key role of maintaining the relationship between the *kibarua* worker and the employer as discussed in detail in the following section.

#### EMPLOYERS AND *KIBARUA* WORKERS AMONG PEASANTS

What about the concrete relationship between the villager employer and *kibarua* worker? In Nyameni village, the relations between employer and *kibarua* are not in terms of ownership of means of production like those found among landowners in agriculturally more advanced countries. As shown above, most of the peasants in the village have 2-4 acres. Therefore, there is no clear social stratification among peasants in the Sagara community. The utilization of *kibarua* is not something exclusive for privileged people as many peasants hope to do so whenever possible. A peasant who works as *kibarua* may employ some one else on those terms once he gets enough money from some of the source of income. There is no constancy in the relationship between the *kibarua* employer and worker. It is re-established afresh every year. Thus, even if the peasant performs *kibarua* work every year he initiates the relationship with the employer very selectively depending on the circumstances that exist in any given year.

It should be clearly understood that it is the *kibarua* who looks for work and not the employer who seeks wage laborers. It is not the role of the employer to look for a *kibarua*. This arrangement, as suggested above, is based on the belief that rich peasants cannot refuse employing someone as *kibarua* whenever such a need arises. Rich persons hold a special status in their community and they cannot afford to lose it by refusing *kibarua*.

Peasants recognize that *kibarua* work is a means to avoid a crisis or difficulty like hunger. It is not uncommon to find people in Nyameni suffering from hunger due to unfavorable weather and outbreak of pests or insects. Under such circumstances, peasants think of *kibarua* as the only alternative to get them out of that situation. According to interviews with the Nyameni peasants, 22 out of 25 persons responded that they depend on *kibarua* work during the time of food shortages. There is, therefore, a distinct sense of reciprocity among the peasants that helps them sustain their livelihoods even at times of crises. They have the same expectations of the

plantation management and they claim that they allow these enterprises in their midst only as long as they show generosity of employing them when they need money.

Because the plantation management operates on commercial principles, it cannot necessarily satisfy these expectations as well as the richer village farmers can do. Most villagers regard the latter to be more helpful because they do show an understanding of the customary principle of reciprocity to a greater extent than the plantation managers do. The village farmers who are best placed to hire *kibarua* labor often have another source of income as well. For instance, the village chairman and the village secretary are among the better off members of Nyameni village. So are those who do some handy work on the side, e.g. carpentry. Even though these people often have large families, in some cases more than one wife, they are ready to hire *vibarua* as a way of maintaining their status and respect in society. It is not strictly a business relationship in the formal sense of the word but rather a clientelistic relationship involving the pay for work rendered.

Persons who employ *vibarua* resemble the figures discussed by Sahlins in his discussion on "primitive exchange": persons who assist others reap great social and political benefits from their actions.<sup>10</sup> Nyameni is no exception. People getting elected to village government are typically local patrons who have carefully attended to local customary principles of reciprocity. These people are expected to spend more money than others at formal occasions. Poor families in the village regard rich persons as people who will take care of them by providing *kibarua* employment at times of need. The *kibarua* phenomenon, then, is not generating capitalism but helps distribute cash within villages of Sagara society. In this respect, it cannot be equated with wage labor in more developed countries and other Third World countries.

## CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

According to Kasfir, the presence of *kibarua* labor would be evidence of capitalist penetration and a social differentiation between rich and poor peasants.<sup>11</sup> Such a conclusion, however, is too simplistic and misleading, because *kibarua* is initiated not by employers but those in search of temporary work. This is the kind of moral economy that can also be found in many parts of southeast Asia where a poor person is regarded as having the right to be employed, however briefly, to earn some cash. Because the social stratification among the rural population in Sagara society is less marked than it is in southeast Asia, the *kibarua* worker can often exercise more pressure on the employer to offer him temporary work.

While it is possible to find landless peasants in Asia it is hard to find a person without land in Africa. The moral economy, therefore, tends to survive in African societies even where capitalism has made definite inroads, e.g. Kenya. A study by Hanzawa, for example, shows the existence of African peasants who, though having surplus domestic labor, nevertheless hire jobless fellows as wage laborers with the intention of giving them employment.<sup>12</sup>

Another such example is Sugiyama's vivid description of the Bemba of northern Zambia.<sup>13</sup> According to her, commercial cultivation of hybrid maize using chemical fertilizers was first introduced among the Bemba in the early 1980s. Since then, this highly commercial and intensive agriculture has been rapidly spreading throughout Bembaland, even in the most remote areas. At first glance, this rapid spread of modern commercial agriculture appears to

demonstrate that Bemba peasants have been totally transformed into "rational farmers." However, the facts tell quite a different story. According to Sugiyama, Bemba peasants have preserved their traditional moral principle of "the haves must give to the have-nots." She describes an interesting incident that occurred in a Bemba village. When a distributor of chemical fertilizers refused to extend credit to a villager who had not cleared off his previous debts to the distributor, another wealthy villager paid off all of the poor one's debts so that the latter could buy fertilizers for the coming season on credit from the distributor. As this episode clearly shows, a phenomenon that can be called "the sharing of cash" is widely observed in Bemba villages. Even somebody's personal debt problem is treated as a common "hardship," and thus wealthy members are strongly required to shoulder debts of the poor according to the traditional spirit of mutual help.

What we are witnessing in African societies is not the decline of the economy of affection and its replacement by a capitalist economy. Rather what takes place is a modernization of the economy of affection according to which cash is distributed to the poor through various structural relationships.

#### Notes:

1. Debate on the African Peasantry developed in the journal of "Development and Change" concerning the concept of "Uncaptured Peasant" or "Economy of Affection proposed by Goran Hyden. In the above debate, Kasfir pointed out the existence of the wage labor phenomenon as the index of capitalization linking with the World System into the present society in Africa. According to the criticisms offered by Kasfir, Hyden's theme hasn't developed through the analysis of the peasant economy at the micro level. See Kasfir, Nelson's article, 'Are African Peasants Self-Sufficient?' *Development and Change*, vol.17, no. 2. (1986). On the other hand, Hanzawa, shows the possibility of the existence of African peasants who, though having surplus domestic labor, nevertheless hire jobless fellows as wage laborers with the intention of giving them employment ,which produces economy of affection in Kenya, the most capitalized country among Africa. See Hanzawa's article, 'The Development and Characteristics of Commercial Agriculture in Kenya' in Kodamaya Shiro (eds), *Commercialization of Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Chiba. The Institute of Developing Economics. (in Japanese) (1993) .
2. Kasfir 1986, pp.335-357.
3. Hyden, Goran. *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and An Uncaptured Peasantry*. London: Heinemann Educational Books (1980).
4. Tama, Shinnosuke. *Economics of Farm Household and Farmland*, Tokyo:
5. Nobunkyo (in Japanese)( 1994).
6. Yoshida, Masao. "The Debate on Ujamaa Policy in Tanzania". *The developing economies* ,vol.23,no9. (in Japanese)( 1984).
7. Geertz, Clifford. *Agricultural Involution*. Berkeley CA: University of California Press(1963). Scott, James C. *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press (1976).

8. The data for this paper were obtained by using the following methods: (1) A questionnaire (structured or semi-structured) covering aspects pertaining to the dynamics of the peasant economy of the Nyameni village of Sagaraland. (2) Informal interviews and discussion with key informants. (3) Observation. Fieldwork was carried out between August and September 1994. My intensive research in Nyameni was also carried out from the end of August to September in 1994.
9. Kibarua means wage labor and a wage laborer.
10. Sagara people has an original language, Kisagara ,but in the present day most of Sagara speak Kiswahili in the daily life.
11. Sahlins describe the image of the rich man in the primitive society as generous people in the discussion on primitive exchange.
12. Kasfir, 1986, p. 345.
13. Hanzawa, 1993, pp.193-195.
14. Sugiyama, Yuko. "Agricultural Policy in Bemba Rural Areas" in T. Takane (ed.). Political-Economic Dynamics and Society. Chiba. The Institute of Developing Economics. (in Japanese). 2001.

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Reference Style: The following is the suggested format for referencing this article: Kazuhiko Sugimura. "The Changing Practices of Kibarua Employment: A Case Study of the Sagara, Tanzania." *African Studies Quarterly* 9, no.1 & 2: [online] URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1a6.htm>

# The Economy of Affection and Local Enterprises in Africa: Empirical Evidence from a Network Study in Burkina Faso and Senegal

TOMOMI TOKUORI

**Abstract:** This paper, based on the results of a quantitative and qualitative survey, investigates the role that networks play in the construction sector in Burkina Faso and Senegal. The aim of this study is to uncover the effects of the economy of affection among African owned-enterprises through a comparative study of networks. The results indicate that the networks embedded in the economy of affection have both costs and benefits to actors in the construction sector in Burkina Faso as well as Senegal. Moreover, the degree of those costs is likely to vary according to socio-cultural attributes. Through its informal institutions, the economy of affection facilitates business transactions and fosters networking. At the same time, it encourages relatives and friends to become dependent on the entrepreneurs and limits their chance of succeeding. They become, if not parasites, at least a burden that entrepreneurs have to cope with. These extra expenses may be compared with the legally imposed social expenditures that modern corporations in Japan and Western countries have to carry.

## Introduction

In countries like Senegal and Burkina Faso, two of the world's least developed countries, governments have consistently given a high priority to the improvement of basic social services such as education, health and food security. Therefore, local enterprises are still struggling without sufficient support from formal institutions. As a result, entrepreneurs use their own networks, that give rise to what Hyden has called "the economy of affection", to substitute for formal business supporting institutions.<sup>1</sup>

Due to their size and isolation, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (hereafter referred to as SMEs) face various obstacles: the lack of specialized skills or equipment, inaccessibility of formal financial institutes, and difficulty of obtaining relevant information.<sup>2</sup> In order to find the key to reducing these hindrances, in recent years the aggregate efficiency of clusters and networks has become a considerable tool and drawn increasing attention.<sup>3</sup> However, after the implementation of numerous experimental projects, the results show that the aggregate efficiency is not present among African clusters and networks.<sup>4</sup> The question is why not in Africa? Referring to six case studies in Africa, McCormick concluded that the small size of markets, over-supply of labor, and weak institutions characteristic of many African countries make external economies and joint action inefficient and non-functional. She also laid

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1-2a7.pdf>

stress on the absence of “complex industrial clusters,” which produce strong aggregate efficiency with diversified size structure and inter-firm linkages.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, Pedersen pointed out that the absence of very efficient large-scale enterprises may be one of the crucial causes. This is because small enterprises often obtain access to non-local resources and markets via the large enterprises.<sup>6</sup> Those two opinions explained what is commonly referred to as the “missing middle” in Africa.<sup>7</sup>

This study was designed to investigate further the socio-economic role that networks play in the construction sector in Burkina Faso and Senegal.<sup>8</sup> The discussion is based on the results of a quantitative and qualitative survey carried out in 2004 and 2005, sampling construction enterprises of various scales. The aim of this study is to uncover the effects of economy of affection among African owned-enterprises through a comparative study of these networks. The author’s working hypothesis is that the growth constraints on the private sector in Africa may grow out of the economy of affection. Therefore, this is a preliminary study for clarifying several aspects of networks that may explain the collective inefficiency of African entrepreneurs as well.

#### Implications of the network in Sub-Sahara Africa

Since Hyden stated that “there are no studies that have attempted to measure the quantitative and qualitative impact of the economy of affection on the national economy of a given country,” many scholars have been trying to fill this gap in different ways.<sup>9</sup> Since Hyden defined the economy of affection as being formed by differently attributed networks, any examination of networks should focus on these differences. Many efforts by scholars notwithstanding, the amount of empirical economic evidence still remains small.<sup>10</sup> This paper borrows from the existing literature to illustrate the characteristics of entrepreneurs’ networks in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Several case studies have been carried out. For the past three decades, Van Dijk has been working on the informal sector in Burkina Faso. His study concludes that “innovations, clustering and subcontracting are not yet the key characteristics of a dynamic informal sector entrepreneur.”<sup>11</sup> Van Dijk, however, also found that skilled women entrepreneurs are better adjusted and benefit more from cooperative types of business development than men.<sup>12</sup> Generally speaking, the present situation of informal entrepreneurs in Burkina Faso favors a good location, personal relations, and a number of other variables (such as initial investments, the choice of activity, and the chosen technology). Such elements are still more important than clusters of enterprises and networks of entrepreneurs for achieving collective efficiency.<sup>13</sup>

One of Van Dijk’s studies among small enterprises in Accra showed that in many cases, as can be seen elsewhere in Africa, access to employment opportunities and participation in a mutual co-operation are highly influenced by ethnic affiliation rather than professional association.<sup>14</sup> McCormick examines family and professional networks in the garment markets of Nairobi based on three characteristics of the firms’ owners: ethnicity, level of education, and gender. He concluded that poorly educated small-sized garment manufacturers tend to use their networks. Besides, social networks are generally sex-segregated and women’s networks tend to have less power and resources to stimulate a business than men’s networks. In many

cases, networks lead back to rural markets where incomes and profit margins are present, but they cannot change their business performance significantly. Furthermore, these networks appear to be based not on clustering, but on the entrepreneurs' other social and professional contacts.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, she explained theoretically how social relations are implanted and influenced in the entrepreneurs' economic relations: 1) different processes of development are used according to specific and interrelated historical, social, and cultural factors; 2) socio-cultural attributes create grounds for trust and reciprocity in inter-firm relations; and 3) the social environment, in which people live or work, strongly influences and is influenced by the processes of innovation and technological change.<sup>16</sup>

With econometric analysis, Fafchamps underlined that in a flea market economy, the emphasis on relationships and the sharing of information in communities and networks minimizes large-transaction expenditures and raise productivity. For instance, when it is difficult to identify reliable trading partners, relationships become their own security or guarantee and start to function as a business referral system.<sup>17</sup> However, his research on agricultural traders in Madagascar showed that once family members are involved in trade, it reduces a productive component of social capital.<sup>18</sup> His latest study (2002), a comparative survey in Benin, Malawi, and Madagascar, also investigated the effects of ethnicity, religion, and gender in agricultural trade. Many earlier sociological studies had stressed the importance of cultural attributes in African trade. Fafchamps, however, found that ethnicity and religion have only limited effects on start-up networks and the accumulation of network and capital over time. Gender matters more.<sup>19</sup> Although they cannot be generalized to all African countries, his results ran counter to the stereotype of strong ethnic, gender, and religious bias in African trading and business.

Noteworthy results have also been generated by numerous recent studies of Barr, which demonstrated econometrically the role played by entrepreneurial networks in the Ghanaian manufacturing sector.<sup>20</sup> Her study identified two types of networks: 1) innovation networks that are large, diverse, less cohesive and best suited to providing access to information about technology and market; and 2) solidarity networks that are small, homogeneous, cohesive, and best suited to reducing information asymmetries and supporting informal credit and risk-sharing arrangements. Using data from the Ghanaian manufacturing sector, she found that in contrast to innovation networks, solidarity networks may have a marginal effect on enterprise productivity which can be seen in the smaller sized enterprises. This is because small enterprises are more likely to focus on reducing uncertainty rather than enhancing enterprises performance.

Besides the above studies, moving from theory to practice, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has undertaken many initiatives to promote development projects based on networking.<sup>21</sup> However, compared to those in Asian countries, most of these projects in Sub-Saharan Africa have not been implemented successfully.

Thus, the above studies have produced detailed new evidence of networks in Sub-Saharan Africa and raised several important questions in the context of development policy: (1) Do networks help local enterprises to overcome the growth constraint? (2) Do networks negatively affect the larger leading enterprises?

## The Structure of the Construction Industry in Burkina Faso and Senegal

The importance of the construction industry in developing countries as a contributor to socio-economic development has been addressed by policy organizations and several researchers.<sup>22</sup> The author's previous researches have focused on understanding segmented urban labor markets and the presence of horizontal networks and vertical linkages among differently scaled enterprises in specific sectors of Burkina Faso.<sup>23</sup> Although, the research was not detailed enough to illustrate the structure of strong linkages and networks among enterprises, it showed that particularly in the construction sector, larger local enterprises commit a large part of labor-intensive operations to micro and small enterprises through subcontracting. A recent study of Mlinga and Wells (2002), which was carried out in the construction industry in Tanzania, proved that there were strong links between formal and informal contractors in terms of labor, material and equipment supply.<sup>24</sup>

In this paper, due to a lack of time series data in both Burkina Faso and Senegal, only the recent role of construction sector from a macro-economic point of view is briefly discussed. A detailed discussion of situations and definitions of the construction industry in Sub-Saharan Africa can be found elsewhere.

### Burkina Faso

Data from the past decade clearly indicates a low demand for construction in Burkina Faso. For the fiscal years 1998-2002, the average contribution to GDP from the construction sector, which is comprised of both the building and the civil engineering sub-sector, was only 4.2%.<sup>25</sup>

A very recent official document showed that the total production of the modern sector of building and construction works more than doubled in value from 10.6 billion CFA Francs in 1999 to 25 billion CFA Francs in 2000.<sup>26</sup> This contribution is important for the secondary sector, which increased from 7% in 1995 to 10% in 1999, and stabilized at 12% in 2000.<sup>27</sup> This dynamism has been boosted by certain events, e.g., Sommet France-Afrique, Sommet de l'OUA, Coupe d'Afrique des Nations de Football de 1998.

The construction sector in Burkina Faso has seen an increase in informal employment opportunities within the sector from 10,682 in 1985 to 13,836 in 1995.<sup>28</sup> The decline in formal employment could be caused by a conversion to a flexible production strategy such as labor-only subcontracting. Whereas this kind of shift counterbalances the unstable construction demand, it cannot change the fact that the industry has, over the past decade, experienced a significant reduction in employment opportunities.

### Senegal

The construction sector in Senegal contributes an average of about 4.6% to GDP with an annual average growth rate of 11% for the fiscal years 1998-2001.<sup>29</sup> Although the current contributions are still low, the progressive increase should be seen over the next few years because of the following big construction projects: 1) a new airport; 2) modernization and extension of the port in Dakar; 3) a new industrial zone and residential area; 4) a new road

between Dakar and Thies; and 5) a hotel and conference center and urban road rehabilitation, maintenance and new construction (40km) for the Islamic Conference (OCI 2007).<sup>30</sup>

The construction sector employs 44,161 people, and about half of them (22,973) are from the informal sector.<sup>31</sup> More than half (58.7%) of total salaries (about 49 billion CFA Francs) go to the permanent employees, whereas temporary employees and assistants receive almost identical proportions: respectively 21% and 20% of the total salaries (about 17.7 billions CFA Francs and 16.8 billion CFA Francs respectively).<sup>32</sup>

The production of the construction sector was valued 479.5 billion CFA Francs in 2000, with intermediate goods at 323.5 billion CFA Francs and added value at 156 billion CFA Francs, which is 33% of total production. The account details are as followings:

- Production of construction sector: the modern sector contributes 59% of the total production against 41% for the informal sector (284 billion CFA Francs and 195.5 billions CFA Francs respectively);
- Intermediate consumption goods (ICG): the modern sector contributes 59% of ICG with 41% for the informal sector (192.2 billion CFA Francs and 131.3 billions CFA Francs respectively);
- Added value: like ICG, the modern sector created 59% and 41% for the informal sector (91.8 billion CFA Francs and 64.2 billion CFA Francs respectively);
- Workers' expenses (wages): the modern sector contributes 52.4% with about 44 billion CFA Francs and 47.6% for the informal sector with 39.7 billion CFA Francs.<sup>33</sup>

What has been said above leads several conclusions. The construction sector in both Burkina Faso and Senegal has the same level of low contribution to the GDP with gradual progress. However, thanks to the current remarkable international attention to African problems, the amount of investment for physical infrastructure can be expected to increase dramatically at least over the next five years. Regarding the value of the volume of production, the modern sector in Senegal generated about four times more than that of Burkina Faso (91.8 billion CFA Francs and 25 billion CFA Francs in 2000). Additionally, the great contribution of informal employment to the construction labor market was remarkable in both counties.

#### Findings of questionnaire survey

This study employed a questionnaire survey in order to identify characteristics and the role of networks in the construction sector of Burkina Faso and Senegal. This survey is a preliminary survey for networks. In the near future, a further detailed survey will be carried out according to the result of this survey.

#### Survey Site

In case of Burkina Faso, the data collection was carried out in Ouagadougou, the capital city, which has a population of 1,200,000 (2005) with a rapid growth rate of 9.8% per annum.<sup>34</sup> For the past couple of years, the production of construction and public works has been visibly active in Ouagadougou. Recently, there has been a remarkable presence of the informal sector, due to the crisis in the Ivory Coast and new city planning. Local construction material

producers have profited from the decline of imported construction materials from the Ivory Coast. Thus, the activities of construction and public works increased at a rate of 9.6% in 2002.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, the business district recently moved to a new area (Ouaga 2000), which is part of an urban development project. Many heavy constructions were carried out in order to prepare for the Francophone Conference held on November 2004.

In Senegal, research was conducted in Dakar, which is known as the most sophisticated and cosmopolitan city in West Africa. After the conflict in the Ivory Coast, Dakar became the center of West Africa economically and politically, both in name and in reality. Dakar had an estimated population of 1.9 million in 2002.<sup>36</sup> It covers only 0.3% of the country's surface area but accounts for 22% of its total population, with 4800 inhabitants per square km.<sup>37</sup> Due to its dense population, the city faces a serious shortage of potable water and electricity and suffers urban transport dysfunction. Like Ouagadougou, Dakar has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of projects dealing with construction and public works. In particular, a rush on building houses for the upper-middle class was very visible in certain new residential areas. However, since last summer, activity in this sector has fluctuated because of the disclosure of a bribery case with the former minister of construction being eventually arrested. Therefore, implementing the questionnaire in Dakar was much harder than Ouagadougou and many entrepreneurs were quite nervous to respond on subjects dealing with financial matters.

### Classification of Samples

All classifications of enterprises in Sub-Saharan countries are somewhat determined by subjective conceptualism, due to the lack of accurate statistical data and standard typology. Particularly, for the construction sector, ministries that deal with a construction project have their own classification system, which is governed by criteria such as 1) quality and quantity of qualified engineers, assistant engineers, and workers; 2) quantity of construction machinery and equipment; 3) financial capacity, and so on. Therefore, this study does not address questions of definition pertaining to each segment. The author has classified enterprises simply according to their way of taxation and registration, and their annual turnover, based on the standards used by each ministry. In particular, the maximum annual turnover in each segment varies from ministry to ministry and from Senegal to Burkina Faso. Thus, the author modified the maximum turnover and divided enterprises into two groups: (1) small and medium-sized construction enterprises (SMCE) with a maximum turnover of 500 million CFA Francs; and (2) informal construction enterprises (ICE) with a maximum turnover of 25 million CFA Francs.

As there is no large-sized construction enterprise in Burkina Faso, after the liquidation of two public construction companies, this category was excluded in Senegal as well.<sup>38</sup> In this study, ICE refers to the micro enterprises, which submitted a taxation form for the informal sector. In addition, those who do not register with the taxation office and do not have a formal accounting record are also included in ICE.

### Method

Data were collected with structured questionnaires in Burkina Faso (from February to August 2004) and Senegal (from April to June and from October to December 2005). A total of eighty

five and sixty five enterprises in Burkina Faso and Senegal respectively were interviewed for this study with the assistance of two graduate students from University of Ouagadougou and ISM (Institut Supérieur de Management) in Dakar. The numbers of small and medium-sized enterprises were obtained from DGR in Burkina Faso and DCH in Senegal.<sup>39</sup> Informal enterprises were identified and interviewed at the construction sites in both countries.

The first part of the questionnaire (Table 1) covered respondent's background characteristics (age, sex, birthplace, tribe, religion, marital status, number of children, level of education, number of employees) and their company's features (number of employees and turnover).

Table 1 Characteristics of Samples

Characteristic/Senegal	ICE	SMCE
Background		
*Mean age(range 21 -72 )	36	48
**% sex	100	92
1)Male	0	8
2)Female	0	8
**% tribe	49	67
1)Wolof	51	33
2)Other	0	8
**% religion	100	92
1)Christian	0	8
2)Muslim	0	8
**% married	82	96
*Mean no. of children(range 0-21)	2	5
**% by level of education		
1)Elementary School	32	14
2)General secondary school	8	14
3)Technical secondary school	10	0
4)University in BF	3	31
5)University abroad	6	29
6)Technical College	0	14
7)Muslim school	8	0
8)Illiterate	39	0

Source: Author's Survey

Characteristic/Burkina Faso	ICE	SMCE
Background		
*Mean age(range 28-75)	36	43
**% sex	100	93
1)Male	0	7
2)Female	0	7
**% tribe	77	63
1)Mossi	23	37
2)Other	52	45
**% religion	48	55
1)Christian	71	93
2)Muslim	25	35
**% married	25	35
*Mean no. of children(range 0-20)	2.5	3.5
**% by level of education		
1)Elementary School	23	7
2)General secondary school	23	20
3)Technical secondary school	23	13
4)University in BF	3	0
5)University abroad	0	13
6)Technical College	5	23
7)Muslim school	10	7
8)Illiterate	15	17

In addition, Table 2-3 summarizes the second part of the questions, which ascertain characteristics of entrepreneurial networks and social networks.<sup>40</sup>

Table 2 Characteristics of Entrepreneurial Networks

Entrepreneurial Networks/Senegal			
Firm size	ICE	SMCE	
No. of firms	40	25	
Mean no. of full-time employees	3	7	
Mean no. of part-time employees	7	30	
Mean no. of qualified engineers	0	2	
Mean monthly turnover (0-83,000,000 CFA Francs)	1,750,000	16,700,000	
Mean no. of family or relatives in construction industry (range 0-20)	4	2	
Mean no. of close friends in construction industry (range 0-20)	5	5	
Cooperation with local enterprises in construction industry(%)			
Yes	92	87	
No	8	13	
What kinds of cooperations(##)			
1 Lending/borrowing machinery	19	5	
2 Lending/borrowing equipment	21	6	
3 Lending/borrowing automobile	9	3	
4 Lending/borrowing skilled worker	20	4	
5 Product development	5	5	
6 Marketing Research	15	4	
7 Purchase of inputs	6	3	
E.Network is important for your business or not(%)			
Yes	87	96	
No	13	4	

Source: Author's Survey

Entrepreneurial Networks/ Burkina Faso			
Firm size	ICE	SMCE	
No. of firms	43	42	
Mean no. of full-time employees	3	10	
Mean no. of part-time employees	16	30	
Mean no. of qualified engineers	0	1	
Mean monthly turnover (0-125,000,000 CFA Francs)	300,000	7,300,000	
Mean no. of family or relatives in construction industry (range 0-5)	1	0	
Mean no. of close friends in construction industry (range 0-25)	4.5	5	
Cooperation with local enterprises in construction industry(%)			
Yes	80	85	
No	20	15	
What kinds of cooperations(##)			
1 Lending/borrowing machinery	14	22	
2 Lending/borrowing equipment	10	18	
3 Lending/borrowing automobile	12	15	
4 Lending/borrowing skilled worker	5	14	
5 Product development	1	1	
6 Marketing Research	25	18	
7 Purchase of inputs	0	9	
E.Network is important for your business or not(%)			
Yes	92	90	
No	8	10	

The questionnaire was partially borrowed from Barr's study and modified in accordance with the purpose of this study, *viz.*, an interpretation of the essential mechanism of networks.<sup>41</sup> Her questionnaire module was designed particularly for inclusion in an econometric model to clarify the economic role played by entrepreneurial networks in the Ghanaian manufacturing sector. The present study focused on the construction sector. In addition, Barr emphasized that to identify general patterns linking enterprises and network characteristics, a case study methodology is not an appropriate tool.<sup>42</sup> However, since the author's goal is to uncover the more profound parts of cultural endowment, a case-study methodology was employed intentionally.

### Characteristics of Samples

Table 1 indicates that characteristics of the samples in Burkina Faso. Data from eighty five construction enterprises, including forty three of ICE and forty two of SMCE, were successfully gathered. Respondents' average age was about thirty six for ICE and forty three for SMCE, and most of them were married with an average of 2.5 and 3.5 children, respectively. Given the fact that most of the enterprises selected for this study were male-dominant, the proportion of men in the sample is relatively high: 100% of ICE and 93% of SMCE were male. About 80% of ICE

and 60% of SMCE belonged to Mossi, the main tribe in Burkina Faso. Levels of education for ICE were quite high compared to the average level of education for urban informal sector in Burkina Faso where more than 50% are illiterate.<sup>43</sup> Characteristics of firms are shown in the first part of Table 2. Sampled ICE had three full-time workers and sixteen part-time workers, compared with ten full-time workers and thirty part-time workers for SMCE. The mean monthly turnover was 300,000 CFA Francs for ICE and 7,300,000 CFA Francs for SMCE.

In case of Senegal, the number of samples was sixty five construction enterprises, including forty of ICE and twenty five of SMCE. Respondents' average age was about thirty six for ICE and forty eight for SMCE, and more than 80% of samples were married with an average of two and five children, respectively. Like Burkina Faso, 100% of ICE and 92% of SMCE were male. Concerning ethnic and religious attributions, about 49% of ICE and 67% of SMCE belonged to Wolof, the main ethnic group in Senegal while 100% of ICE and 92% of SMCE are Muslim, the main religion (more than 90% of the population). Regarding to the level of education, about 40% of ICE were either dropouts from elementary school or completely illiterate. On the other hand, more than 70% of SMCE had higher educational backgrounds. The internal conditions of firms are as followings: Sampled ICE had six full-time workers and seven part-time workers, compared with seven full-time workers and thirty part-time workers for SMCE. The mean monthly turnover was 1,750,000 CFA Francs for ICE and 16,700,000 CFA Francs for SMCE.

#### Characteristics of Entrepreneurial Networks

To identify characteristics of entrepreneurial networks, first of all, respondents were asked how many people they knew in each of eight groups: governmental organization, foreign consulting construction enterprise, large construction enterprise, small and medium sized consulting construction enterprise, small and medium sized construction enterprise, registered informal construction enterprise, unregistered informal construction enterprise and informal construction day labor. After this question, the entrepreneurs were also asked how long they had known these people.

In case of Burkina Faso, both ICE and SMCE have quite a similar pattern of widespread networks with a range of one to ten acquaintances in each groups. However, around 40% of SMCE know more than twenty people in governmental organization. Moreover, the majority of ICE have a one to five-year relationship with all the groups, while SMCE have six- to ten-year relationships. In Senegal, the diversification of networks is very much like Burkina Faso. However, in terms of the length of relationships, SMCE have more profound relationship with formal larger enterprises, while ICE have a much weaker link with all the groups.

One of the findings indicated that the networks of both ICE and SMC in Burkina Faso tended to be created by the same groups, such as: 1) family members or relatives; 2) friends from school; and 3) people from the same village or area. However, in Senegal, the networks of two stratified groups seem to be generated by different criteria. For instance, ICE mentioned the groups in this order: 1) friends from school; 2) the same religious group; and 3) from the same village. SMCE responded differently: 1) same business association; 2) former colleague; and 3) friends from university.

The entrepreneurs were also asked how many members of their close family and close friends were in the construction industry. ICE had a mean of one close family member and SMCE had none in Burkina Faso. ICE had a mean of four close family members and SMCE had two in Senegal. Both ICE and SMCE had a similar result of five close friends in the construction industry in Burkina Faso and Senegal.

The questionnaire also asked about the types of cooperation with local enterprises. For both countries, ICE and SMCE showed strong cooperation in lending and borrowing necessities including machinery, equipment, automobiles, and skilled workers. At the end, respondents were asked whether entrepreneurial networks were important for their business. 92% of ICE and 90% of SMCE in Burkina Faso and 87% of ICE and 96% of SMCE in Senegal replied affirmatively (Table2).

These results lead to the conclusion that the entrepreneurial networks for ICE and SMCE in both countries are very much diversified in the same way, but with a different degree in terms of the number of acquaintances. In Senegal, 50-60% of SMCE know more than twenty people in all formal larger enterprises, (except the foreign consulting construction enterprises), while SMCE in Burkina Faso know more than twenty people only in governmental organization. In addition, relationships for SMCE in Senegal are much more profound with all the other groups, compared with SMCE in Burkina Faso. However, ICE in both countries have relatively weak relationship with other groups. Moreover, the places where they established these relationships vary greatly. The networks of both groups in Burkina Faso tend to be established through family members or relatives, friends from school, and the same village. A couple of interesting results appeared from Senegalese respondents. While friends from school, the same religious group, and people from the same village are the main tools for making the entrepreneurial networks for ICE, SMCE emphasized the importance of the same business association, former colleague, and friends from university. As Senegal is a Muslim country, the religious groups are one of the tools to create smaller-sized entrepreneurial relationships. On the other hand, larger-sized entrepreneurs may count on professionally interrelated groups rather than affectively interrelated group. Within these networks, both ICE and SMCE had strong cooperation for lending or borrowing requisites in order to pursue construction works. Lastly, most entrepreneurs in both countries considered that entrepreneurial networks were important to stabilize or improve their business performance.

### Characteristics of Social Networks

The features of social networks were examined with several questions, and the results are presented in Table 3. In the first place, respondents were asked how many people came to see them with social problems. While both ICE and SMCE in Burkina Faso received around five visitors per month, ICE and SMCE in Senegal had sixty two and twenty visitors per month, respectively. In the second place, respondents were also asked how much time they spent consulting about social problems. In Burkina Faso: ICE spent sixteen hours per month and SMCE thirty one hours per month. In Senegal: ICE spent thirty one hours per month and SMCE sixteen hours per month. The third question asked the amount of money respondents spend solving social problems. While ICE spent 15,000CFA per month, and SMCE spent 50,000CFA

per month in Burkina Faso, Senegalese ICE spent 77,500CFA per month, and SMCE spent 137,500CFA per month.

In addition to the above questions, firms were asked who brought social problems and what kinds of problems. In the case of Burkina Faso, both ICE and SMCE gave almost the same answers. Most cases concerned a family member or relatives, people from the same village, and friends from school (in that order). The three most common problems were health, work, and money. In Senegal, both types of entrepreneurs handled problems with similar groups such as family members or relatives, people from the same village, and former colleagues. Besides, many respondents mentioned that their neighbors very often came to see them for social problems. The top three social problems in Senegal were health, daily expenses, and transport for ICE with money, health and ceremony for SMCE. The last question was whether social networks affected their business negatively. While 23% of ICE and 18% of SMCE in Burkina Faso answered affirmatively, 55% of ICE and 35% of SMCE in Senegal also answered “yes”.

To conclude and emphasize the above information, respondents were also asked about their working hours and working days. The aim was to calculate total hours worked and total hours spent for social problems.<sup>44</sup> In Burkina Faso, ICE and SMCE worked an average of six hours and eight hours per day, respectively. Both ICE and SMCE worked an average of eight hours per day in Senegal. As a result, ICE and SMCE spent about 2.6 and 3.9 working days respectively for social problems in Burkina Faso and about 3.9 and 2.0 working days in Senegal. Furthermore, ICE and SMCE spent about 5% and 0.7% of monthly turnover respectively for social problem in Burkina Faso and about 4.4% and 0.8% in Senegal. These social problems are overwhelmingly brought by family members or relatives. Under these circumstances, the majority of entrepreneurs in Burkina Faso did not feel that social networks affected them negatively, whereas 55% of ICE and 35% of SMCE in Senegal felt a negative effect from social networks on their business. Interestingly, this discrepancy does not seem to be reflected in the statistics shown above. In spite of money and time they spent for social networks, 78% of ICE and 82% of SMCE in Burkina Faso responded that social networks do not have a negative affect on their business. An explanation of this discrepancy between respondents’ opinions and reality is offered in the next section.

## Findings of interview survey

### Method

Only a small number of in-depth qualitative interviews (summarized in Table 4 and Table 5) were conducted to supplement or confirm the questionnaire survey.

A total of eight respondents (four samples from ICE and four samples from SMCE) were interviewed. These samples were selected from respondents to the quantitative questionnaire survey, which was carried out in advance. This survey was piloted and then administered solely by the author in order to gain a better understanding of the characteristics of networks. The following questions were asked:

**Table4 Negative and Positive Aspects of Entrepreneurial and Social Networks**

	Burkina Faso				Senegal			
	Negative		Positive		Negative		Positive	
	ICE	SMCE	ICE	SMCE	ICE	SMCE	ICE	SMCE
ENW	*underpayment  *no respect of contract duty  *no reward or collateral	*too much reliance on someone's help  *lack of motivation to make an effort  *one-sided burden	*effect usage of idle equipment & employee  *enhancement of young contractor  *solving financial difficulty  *mutually beneficial	*effect usage of idle equipment & employee  *maximizing one's chance  *overcoming one's obstacle  *obtaining of financial resources  *solving a problem	*minimizing my own financial and physical capability  *no respect of deadline for returning material or equipment  *equipment can be returned with a defective condition  *sometimes, it's obligation to take one's request, even you are unwilling.	*minimizing my own financial and physical capability  *sometimes, obtained information is not collect.  *equipment can be returned with a defective condition  *sometimes, it's obligation to take one's request, even you are unwilling.	*making rapid transaction  *availability of needs  *reinforcing the capacity of entrepreneurship  *getting profit from lending equipment  *getting some work	*functioning like lobby  *short-cut to solve certain problems  *availability of needs  *obtaining of needs such as equipment, machinery and employee
SNW	*delay or lack of reimbursement  *no interest for lending money	*loss of time & money  *corrupting company's discipline  *difficulty of managing budgets  *difficulty of making a daily schedule or overall plan for business  *impossible to ignore because it damages one's reputation in society	*mutually beneficial  *solving a problem  *encouragement of staffs	*nothing  *self-satisfaction	*too much dependence on particular person  *failure or delay of repayment  *wasting of time and money  *too much intimacy can be harmful	*loss of time  *making people think that getting money is easy  *too much dependence  *can be a source of conflict  *reciprocation is always expected	*solving urgent problem  *development of aid for individuals  *If you do something good, someone pray for you.  *religious recommendation to help each other  *something can be proud of or pleasure helping poors or family member	*solving certain problems easily  *self-satisfaction  *something can be proud of or pleasure helping poors or family member

Source: Author's Survey

**Table 5 Selected Keywords of Entrepreneurial and Social Networks**

	Burkina Faso				Senegal			
	ICE		SMCE		ICE		SMCE	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Entrepreneurial network	trump card		lobby		solidarity	difficulty	syndicate	Burden
	support		partnership		mutual aid	resistance	mutual interest	
	mutual help		informal institute		cooperation		partnership	
	organization		additional tool		advantage		solidarity	
					relation		lobby	
Social network	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
	confidence	burden	mutual assistant	constraint	mutual aid	difficulty	social balance	
	motivation	obligation	social security	duty	solidarity	waste	God's recommendation	
	help		moral contract	negative	progress		Human responsibility	
				obligation	chaine		Mutual aid	
					support		Line	

Source: Author's Survey

- What is the negative aspect of using entrepreneurial networks?
- What is the positive aspect of using entrepreneurial networks?
- What is the negative aspect of using social networks?
- What is the positive aspect of using social networks?
- Do you think that social networks affect your business negatively? (Yes/No)
- Why?
- Describe the entrepreneurial network in a few words?
- Describe the social network in a few words?

### Negative and Positive Aspects of the Entrepreneurial Network

ICE and SMCE in Burkina Faso expressed quite different opinions. Concerning negative aspects, many respondents from SMCE felt that the presence of networks made people too dependent on other's assistance and caused them to lose motivation. Instead of being mutually beneficial, most of these relationships are burdensome and one-sided. More simply, if you help someone, the gesture is unlikely to be reciprocated. The ICE seems to have faced some problems with contractors. As most of the contracts with ICE are "unwritten" and "tacit consent," very often contractors do not respect the contractual clauses. Consequently, it causes delay or refusal of payment. On the other hand, one of positive aspects of the network for both ICE and SMCE was the effective usage of idle equipment and employees. Although they do not have formal contracts, they can earn money by temporarily employing their staff and equipment. Additionally, they consider that entrepreneurial networks help them overcome obstacles, especially financial difficulties.

In the case of Senegal, unlike Burkina Faso, lending equipment or materials can be a negative factor causing a reduction of the enterprise's physical capacity. In many cases equipment was reportedly returned in a defective condition. Moreover, respondents said that lending money reduced their financial capacity as well. In other words, they are facing some difficulties of availability. Delaying or failing to return equipment and returning defective equipment deprived them of use for their own work. Regarding the positive aspects, most respondents stated that using their networks is an easier and faster way of fulfilling their needs and solving their problems.

We can conclude from what has been said above that unwritten and tacitly consented to contracts were both positive and negative for entrepreneurial networks in both Burkina Faso and Senegal. As respondents of Senegal stated, it is an easier and faster way of reaching agreement by eliminating complicated formalities, which are normally time-consuming and costly. Informal institutions reduce transaction costs. Furthermore, in many cases lending or borrowing construction-related materials and equipment seemed to function as an important support institution and complement entrepreneurs' needs. On the negative side, lack of care and maintenance of equipment, lent on an informal basis, was the most frequently cited problem.

#### Negative and Positive Aspects of the Social Network

Interviewees were asked about the negative and positive aspects of their social networks. Respondents from ICE in Burkina Faso said that, as in entrepreneurial networks, underpayment affects their businesses negatively. The view of SMCE was that the presence of social networks affects their profit, plan, and their company's discipline. These factors make it difficult for entrepreneurs to budget their time and money. The only positive aspects found seem to be the "self-satisfaction" of SMCE. This means that they can feel satisfied for having fulfilled their social obligations (such as lending money or materials to participants of their network). This achievement enables them to secure their reputation and present position in their society. However, for ICE, just like the entrepreneurial network, the social network is mutually beneficial in terms of reciprocated financial aid and encouragement in the continuation of business.

In the case of Senegal, both ICE and SMCE mentioned that too much dependence or too much intimacy might hurt both the recipient and the provider of help. In addition to this, they felt that sometimes it is a waste of time and money to deal with the social network. On the other hand, the positive aspects mentioned by ICE were very much related to their religious beliefs. All respondents of ICE stated that mutual aid is a religious obligation and what they do normally in their daily life.

The difference between Senegal and Burkina Faso is in the degree of religious influence on the social network. Compared to Senegal, a Muslim-dominated country, no religious bias is found in Burkina Faso, where Muslims represent only half of the sample. In particular, some of the SMCE respondents in Burkina Faso questioned why they were asked about their religious and ethnic attributes, implying that these criteria make little or no difference.

### Do Social Networks Affect their Business Negatively?

Additionally, interviewees were asked whether social networks affect their business negatively. Six respondents answered “no”. However, there were some exceptional views in response to this question, for instance “Answer is No, but I wish I didn’t need to deal with such networks.” OR “Answer is No, because if I don’t want to cooperate, I do refuse. It all depends on me.” These answers reflect what Hyden asserts, “There are many who reject it because it is such a burden or it goes against their professional belief. It is sufficiently pervasive, however, that those who reject it find it very hard to live and work in their country.”<sup>45</sup> These two respondents are highly educated and very skilled engineers. However, as it is hardly possible to make a clear-cut distinction between personal affairs and business affairs in African society, people very often have a hard time working professionally and independently. The author also realized that respondents from ICE expressed very similar viewpoints of the negative and the positive effects of both networks. We may say that entrepreneurs of ICE tend to intertwine their personal and business matters.

In Senegal, six respondents answered “No” as well. However, the reasons are quite different. Most of those respondents who said “No” gave the following religious reasons: “helping the poor or family members is something we are recommended or obligated to do by God”; “if you do something good, you will get a reward from God”; “we are Muslims so we have to help each other”; “helping others is like helping myself.” Two respondents who answered “Yes” commented as follows: “Even though I myself face some financial problem, if someone asks me to help, I have to spend what little money I have. It undoubtedly affects my business. Money I contribute to social networks is a kind of sacrifice to the society. But it very often blocks my business.” Besides those questions, the author spontaneously added another question which is related to their religious brotherhood. Two respondents of ICE, out of eight including SMCE, remarked that the brotherhood (Mouride) to which they belong affects their business somehow. For example, friends from the same brotherhood gave them some work to do or a workshop. However, the rest of the respondents, especially SMCE, emphasized that brotherhood cannot do anything for their business and has no influence at all.

Strong informal social pressures shape the role that social networks play in Burkina Faso. This situation reflects the society in Burkina Faso as described in the literature. For instance, the Mossi (the main ethnic group), are known as a feudal and highly hierarchical society. Their mutual solidarity derives from a sense of common identity, belonging, unity and kindness.<sup>46</sup> Additionally, communal sharing is typical within lineages, especially in the extended-family. Within one lineage, seniority forms the basis of ranked authority and has a good deal of influence upon people in both rural and urban areas.<sup>47</sup> Consequently, this kind of cultural endowment is likely to exercise a definite degree of social pressure to entrepreneurs. On the other hand, the existence of numerous religious practices and beliefs seems to have little pressure on entrepreneurs in Burkina Faso. Therefore, we can say that in Burkina Faso, ethnic, kinship and family ties have stronger influence and pressure on social networks there than any other attributes, while religious ties have a greater effect in Senegal.

### Description of the Entrepreneurial Network and Social Network

Respondents were also asked to describe the entrepreneurial network and social network in a few words. Table 5 shows that in contrast to the negative effect of the entrepreneurial network, half of the respondents described social networks as “obligation,” “burden,” “constraint,” and “duty.” What has to be noticed here is that even though six of the interviewees said social networks do not affect their business negatively, they are not willing to get involved with the network. One interviewee added that “personal affairs are already included in my business schedule and no matter how busy I am, it is my obligation to deal with them.” To put it another way, entrepreneurs accept negative effects on their business and try to incorporate this reality into their routine as “obligation.” Of course, a few respondents answered positively, using terms such as “confidence,” “motivation,” and “social security.” But, this is because these respondents also accept assistance. There are takers and givers in the network. In reality, however, distribution through the network is not really equal or well-balanced. Table 5 also indicates that while entrepreneurs of SMCE make a clear-cut usage between two networks, respondents from ICE do not distinguish between them.

In the case of Senegal, ICE described both the entrepreneurial network and the social network with similar words. For instance, “solidarity” and “mutual aid” are common positive words and “difficulty” is a common negative word that they used for both networks. In contrast, most of SMCE respondents used different words for the two networks. “Syndicate,” “mutual interest,” “partnership,” and “lobby” were mentioned for the entrepreneurial network, and “social balance,” “God’s recommendation,” and “Human responsibility” were used to describe the social network.

Even though the social value of equity and solidarity are deeply rooted in both countries, informal social pressure on participants of the networks in Burkina Faso seems to be much stronger than in Senegal. As proof, Senegalese described their “social network” with fewer negative words and with a more moderate meaning. As social involvement and contribution are among the religious sanctions in a Muslim country, “obligation” may not be a forced pressure in Senegal. It is a kind of deep habit in their society.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, it may be worth returning to Van Dijk (1997), who writes: “many people seem to face a psychological barrier in the sense that, in many instances, they depend on relations. They lack the initiative to search for other opportunities and rely totally on family and friends.”<sup>48</sup> In the middle of the survey in Burkina Faso, the author also started to realize that their reluctance to answer according to their actual beliefs in a sense shows that entrepreneurs recognize the existence of Van Dijk’s “psychological barrier.” They understand that over-reliance on social networks can negatively affect their business, but to say so would run contrary to the African concept of how society operates. It means that social pressures can conceal the reality of the situation and in the case of Burkina Faso a significant source of this pressure comes from kinship and family relations.

However, in the case of Senegal, even though the socio-cultural components are much more complicated and interwoven, religious affiliation has the most striking influence on the networks. As several findings from the literature demonstrate, the influential Islamic economic

organization called the Mouride Brotherhood contributes significantly to the Senegalese economy and has a strong linkage with the informal sector in Dakar.<sup>49</sup> However, due to the limited time for fieldwork in Senegal, more extensive research on this matter needs to be done in the future. Assuming though that religious affiliation is something people can choose, whereas ethnic, kinship, and family relation are givens, the conclusion is that the degree of social pressure on entrepreneurs is stronger in Burkina Faso than in Senegal.

Social networks and entrepreneurial networks become more active when public institutions do not function efficiently. Instead of getting support from public institutions, the management of social and business problems fall directly on the person who is capable of solving the problems. This is an unavoidable reality that may cause the deterioration of their business performance. Entrepreneurs have to accept even negative effects and try to incorporate this reality into their routine. In the construction sector of Burkina Faso and Senegal, there is a “missing middle” between large and small enterprises. Those individuals, who studied abroad and gained enough experience in the governmental sector or in a foreign company, are usually technically capable of dealing with a big public tender offer. However, as local enterprises they have difficulties competing independently against foreign enterprises, due to size, lack of skilled employees and equipment, and the inaccessibility of financial institutions. Thus, highly skilled entrepreneurs subcontract with foreign companies as the local expert or as the local representative of a foreign company. Only a few construction companies can participate in public tender offers in their own capacity in Burkina Faso and a few more in Senegal. Therefore, the only option left to local construction companies is using entrepreneurial networks, lending or borrowing skilled engineers and good equipment, in order to be eligible for tenders. Yet, because of shortage of capital, they are rarely capable of competing with foreign companies.

Finally, as this study has shown, the economy of affection has both costs and benefits to actors in the construction sector in Burkina Faso as well as Senegal. Through its informal institutions, the economy of affection facilitates business transactions and fosters networking. At the same time, it encourages relatives and friends to become dependent on the entrepreneurs and limit their chance of succeeding. They become, if not parasites, at least a burden that entrepreneurs have to cope with. These extra expenses may be compared with the legally imposed social expenditures that modern corporations in Japan and Western countries have to carry. The issue for further research may include more detailed studies of how these informal social burdens can be regularized or kept at such a level that their adverse impact on business is reduced.

#### Notes:

1. See, Hyden, G. *No Shortcuts to Progress: African Development Management in Perspective*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, p.8. In this book, Hyden defined the “economy of affection” as “a network of support, communications and interaction among structurally defined groups connected by blood, kin, community or other affinities.” See also, Barr, A.M. “Do SMEs network for growth?” *Enterprise in Africa: Between Poverty and Growth*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1999, p.122.

2. See, Ceglie, G. and Dini, M. "Clusters and Network Development in Developing Countries." *Business Development Services*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1999, p. 208. and Kennedy, R.M. and Hobohm, S. "Capacity Building for Private Sector Development in Africa." *PSD Technical Working Papers Series 3*. United National Industrial Development Organization(UNIDO), 1999.
3. See, Van Dijk, M and Rabellitti R. "Clusters and Networks as Sources of Co-operation and Technology Diffusion for Small Enterprises in Developing Countries." *Enterprise Clusters and Networks in Developing Countries*. London: Frank Cass, 1997, p.7. and Barr 1999, op.cit., p.121.
4. See, McCormick, D. "African Enterprise Clusters and Industrialization: Theory and Reality." *World Development* Vol.27, No.9, 1999, p.1547; Schmitz, H. "Collective Efficiency and Increasing Returns." *IDS Working Paper 50*. 1997, p.5; and Pedersen P.O. "Clusters of Enterprises Within Systems of Production and Distribution: Collective Efficiency and Transaction Costs." *Enterprise Clusters and Networks in Developing Countries*. London: Frank Cass, 1997, p.26.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. The inability of micro- and small-sized enterprises to graduate to medium-sized enterprises has generated an empty stratum in the labor market generally referred to as the "missing middle".
8. A part of results was published *Tanzanian Journal of Population Studies and Development. Special Issue: African economy of Affection. Vol.11, No.2, 2004, p.69.*
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10. Kosfeld, M. "Network Experiments." *Working Paper Series 152*. Institute for Empirical Research in Economics, 2003, p.1.
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13. Van Dijk 1992, op.cit., p.47.
14. Van Dijk, M. P. "Small Enterprise Associations and Networks: Evidence from Accra." *Enterprise Clusters and Networks in Developing Countries*. London: Frank Cass, 1997, p.142.
15. McCormick, D. "Industrial District or Garment Ghetto? Nairobi's Mini-Manufacturers." *Enterprise Clusters and Networks in Developing Countries*. London: Frank Cass, 1997, p.121-122.
16. Ibid.
17. Fafchamps, M. "Networks, Communities and markets in Sub-Saharan Africa: implications for firm growth and investment." *The Centre for the Study of African Economies Working Paper Series 108*, The Berkekey Electronic Press, 1999, p.6, available at <http://www.bepress.com/csae/paper108>
18. Fafchamps, M. and Minten, B. "Returns to Social Capital among Traders." *Oxford Economic Papers 54*. Oxford University Press, 2002, p.203.

19. Fafchamps, M. "Ethnicity and Networks in African Trade." *Contributions to Economic Analysis and Policy*, Vol.2, no.1, article 14, 2002, p.23-25.
20. See, Barr, A.M. "The Missing Factor: Entrepreneurial Networks, Enterprises and Economic Growth in Ghana." *The Centre for the Study of African Economies Working Paper Series 29*. The Berkeley Electronic Press, 1995, available at <http://www.bepress.com/csae/paper29>; Barr, A.M. "Enterprise Performance and the Functional Diversity of Social Capital." *The Centre for the Study of African Economies Working Paper Series 65*. The Berkeley Electronic Press, 1998. available at <http://www.bepress.com/csae/paper108>; and Barr 1999, op.cit.
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32. Ibid.p.8.
33. Ibid.p.9.
34. available at the site of Mairie de Ouagadougou: <http://www.mairie-ouaga.bf>
35. Direction Générale de l'Économie et de la Planification. *Rapport sur l'Économie 2002: Commerce Extérieur, Croissance Économique et Lutte contre la Pauvreté*. Ministère de l'Économie et du Développement. Ouagadougou: 2002, p.18.
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37. Ibid. p.5.
38. Two liquidated companies are ONPF (Office National des Puits et des Forages) and ONBAH (Office National des Barrages et des Aménagement)

39. DRG is abbreviated name for The Direction Général des Routes, Ministère des Infrastructures des Transports et de l'Habitat and DCH is for the Direction de la Construction et de l'Habitat, Ministère de l'Urbanisme et de l'Habitat.
40. Entrepreneurial network function as business-supporting institutions to exchange information, human resources and equipment for accelerating profit-making. Social network function as a social security system to give mutual assistance within the family and community.
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Reference Style: The following is the suggested format for referencing this article: Tomomi Tokuori. "The Economy of Affection and Local Enterprises in Africa: Empirical Evidence from a Network Study in Burkina Faso and Senegal." *African Studies Quarterly* 9, no.1 & 2: [online] URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1a7.htm>



# African Imaginations of Moral Economy: Notes on Indigenous Economic Concepts and Practices in Tanzania

TADASU TSURUTA

**Abstract:** In response to economic influences emanating from abroad, African people have always created unique socioeconomic relationships and ideas. Examining four well-known Swahili words, *utani*, *chama*, *ujamaa*, and *ujanja*, this paper offers some tentative and exploratory comments on 'indigenous' moral-economic concepts in Tanzania. These terms convey not only notions about social relations but also relations, which one could consider economic, along with unique cultural connotations. Various things Westerners consider separate are impossible to disentangle in these concepts; joking and mutual aid, dance and politics, wit and cunning, all related to people's subsistence economy. These phenomena cannot easily be put into pre-arranged Western categories nor should they be disregarded from a modernist perspective, because these concepts and practices reflect a rich tradition of self-help solutions in Africa, thereby serving as a source of imagination for alternative visions of economic development.

*We start from a full acceptance of our African-ness and a belief that in our own past there is very much which is useful for our future.*

(Julius K. Nyerere "The Purpose is Man")

*L'imagination au pouvoir! ("Power to Imagination!")*

(A popular slogan coined in 'May 1968' uprising in France)

## Introduction

On any estimate, sub-Saharan Africa is the poorest region on the planet. After a fruitless attempt of each nation to gain economic independence, there is a growing sense that free-market prescription is the only solution to get out of poverty, however difficult it may be. At present, however, deregulation of national economies in general has resulted in appallingly uneven distribution of wealth, both in the region and worldwide. At the same time, given the notorious inefficiency of governments, Africans cannot safely rely on the protection of the state against rampant market forces. The only remaining option for the majority of people is to take refuge in the existing communal ties.

That is why we are concerned with the economy of communities, i.e. economy based on moral considerations or 'moral economy' in Africa. Moral economy is not the 'traditional' or

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<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1-2a8.pdf>

'indigenous' norm *per se*, as often alleged by critics of the concept. Rather, this is the norm created in response to external forces, such as harsh climate, clamorous government, and most specifically, capitalist economy. We have to note, at the same time, that it does not spring up in a vacuum, but takes shape as collective imagination inspired by the existing communal values, as demonstrated by the works of two eminent proponents of the moral economy concept, E. P. Thompson and James Scott. Both described how the populace behaved resolutely but sensibly to defend inalienable rights of subsistence amidst the upheavals brought about by the capitalist economy.<sup>1</sup>

As Karl Polanyi convincingly argued in his classic work, a large part of the significant social changes that occurred since the 18<sup>th</sup> century can be understood in the context of a countermove of society against the stormy forces of a self-regulating market.<sup>2</sup> Africa is no exception. The capitalist economy, which expanded rapidly since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, did not leave even the Africa's deep interior immune from it. To take today's Tanzania as an example, its history may be grasped from the viewpoint of constant pressure from world capitalism; from slave and ivory trade in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, through the colonially imposed modern economic system and ensuing socialist backlash, to the present-day economic liberalization. Along the way, people have become increasingly involved in commercial activities.

Looking at the situation from the increasing cash or wage nexus, however, gives us only half of the picture. In each stage of these economic changes, people in Tanzania devised a variety of unique forms of economic relations and concepts, which grew alongside the increasingly powerful market economy. In this paper, I would like to focus on four social/economic concepts which have come to my notice. They are *utani*, *chama*, *ujamaa*, and *ujanja*, all of which have been among the familiar vocabulary of KiSwahili, the lingua franca of East Africa. While *ujamaa* (socialism) will be regarded as an economic concept, some may be surprised that the terms such as *utani* (joking relationship), *chama* (association or club), and *ujanja* (craftiness) are also regarded here as such. Admittedly, they are not straightforwardly 'economic' concepts in a modern sense, but they certainly have elements of economic arrangement or transaction as well as a social function.

In his thought-provoking works, Goran Hyden argues that underdevelopment of Africa is mainly due to the structural constraints inherent in the peasant economy, which he calls the 'economy of affection.'<sup>3</sup> Economy of affection is, as he stresses, not based on traditional or backward value itself. Rather, it is a creative action based on imaginative qualities inherent in man (because the affection is the product of imagination), to deal with ever-changing political and economic situation. Hyden also suggests that this imaginative ability manifests itself in a very unique way in Africa, besides urging us to be sensitive about the difference between African and Western perceptions. It is this insight that my paper attempts to build upon. I will try to shed some light on Africans' unique imagination and practices of economic relations, by examining some indigenous concepts, which are not easily translated into Western notions and ideas. Such an attempt must have a contemporary relevance, as these concepts can in turn offer inspirations for alternative forms of desirable economic relations to those associated with Western-derived models of capitalism or socialism. I shall discuss the four concepts one by one drawing on existing literature.

## UTANI: THE JOKING RELATIONSHIP

### *Origin and Traditional Practices of Utani*

*Utani* is an extraordinary custom which can be found across Tanzania. Since *utani* is characterized by exchange of jocular abuse, it has always been referred to as the 'joking relationship,' as with the cases in other parts of Africa.<sup>4</sup> It is, however, not a mere symbolic interaction, but often entails sharing of goods and money among *watani* (sing. *mtani*), or joking partners. Thus *utani* performs an economic as well as a social and political function. Here we are mainly concerned with the former aspect. It may be convenient to divide *utani* into two large categories: external and internal *utani*. The former, or inter-'tribal' *utani*, has been practiced between different ethnic groups, while the internal *utani* is found between different clans (or families) within one particular ethnic group. The privileges and obligations of internal and external *utani* appear to have been basically the same, though not always so.<sup>5</sup>

External *utani*, seemingly more recent than the internal one, probably became widespread in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, an era of "widening horizons" marked by a rapid expansion of the long-distance caravan trade.<sup>6</sup> At the time, there were increased contacts between different ethnic groups due not only to the expanding internal trade which linked the interior and coastal entrepôts, but also due to ethnic warfare. Under the German colonial rule, which lasted from the 1880s to 1910s, plantation agriculture and other employment opportunities further enhanced labor migration mainly from inland to the coast. External *utani* originated from either inter-ethnic warfare and ensuing armistice or regular movement of people including both caravan trade and labor migration. For example, the warlike Ngoni tribe had the most extensive *utani* ties with various ethnic groups, reflecting its bloody history of raiding and warfare.<sup>7</sup> The Nyamwezi, which has a long history of long-distance trade and migration, had *utani* relationships with those groups which reside on their way to the coast.<sup>8</sup> In both cases, *utani* may have allowed one to secure assistance and hospitality in foreign soil, when traveling beyond the confines of one's own ethnic group. If the traveler died in his *watani*'s territory, he would be reverently buried by them. Thus external *utani* ties developed as a kind of mutual aid institution among people who had been forced to move from their home villages to alien environment. Significantly, the external joking relations were always called by the same word (*utani*) by every ethnic group.<sup>9</sup>

Based on extensive interviews, Moreau gives the most detailed account on *utani* custom in Tanganyika.<sup>10</sup> A point of great interest is the way property is shared between *watani*. It is marked by astonishing display of generous hospitality, in that one can take his/her *mtani*'s possessions "without asking permission or without being blamed for it," though "such sharing of property is mutual and restricted by the laws of custom."<sup>11</sup> An *mtani* can ask you whatever and whenever he likes. He may demand foods, a shirt, a goat, even a cow or a daughter (as wife). He may even break into your locked house to eat and drink. You cannot refuse your *mtani*'s request, because of the fear of witchcraft.<sup>12</sup>

Another way of sharing property is forfeiting. Examples of property that may be forfeited include meat carried in the hand without wrapping, clothes which are put on inside out, new clothes worn before they have been washed, clothes put out to dry on the roof of a house, etc. Some of these items are taken because they have ominous appearances and can cause bad

consequences to the owner. If one finds his clothes eaten by rats, which is also a very ill omen, he must seek an *mtani* and press the sinister object on him. This way the *mtani* saves his friends from bad luck. In the event of forfeiture, the owner can ransom the confiscated object afterwards by paying a proper sum of money.<sup>13</sup>

Probably the most important occasion for *watani*'s interaction is burial, which constitutes an essential part of *utani* concept. When a death occurs, *watani* of the deceased within reach have an obligation to attend the funeral and are expected to play some important ritual roles. *Watani* are often preferred to a relative for digging the grave. In many ethnic groups, *mtani* performs the ritual obstruction of the burial process, by entering the open grave and lying down in it, or lying on the bed where the corpse is to be placed. He refuses to move until he is given a customary fee. *Watani* may bring money or a beast as a contribution to the funeral expense, and in turn earn the right to some particular parts of the slaughtered animal. The *mtani* also acts as the deceased's executor by disposing of his property, a share of which the *mtani* himself has the right to claim. As has been mentioned, if one were to die away from his homeland, he would be buried by his *watani* there.<sup>14</sup>

Some examples may help to clarify the picture. Moreau personally observed the following at Amani, a settlement in the present Tanga region:

(1) At Amani when a Nyamwezi died his funeral was conducted not by his fellow-tribesmen, who are quite numerous in the neighborhood, but by Ngoni living here. (2) A Nyaturu, representative of a tribe very rarely seen at Amani, when he arrived as servant of a visiting European, sought out the only man with whom he could claim *utani*, a Nyiramba, and received hospitality from him. (3) My cook, Ngoni, on a week-end stroll, seeing shoes put out to dry on the roof of a hut here inhabited by a Nyamwezi, made forfeit of them, later accepting a hen as ransom.<sup>15</sup>

#### *Transformation of Utani*

Spies, who studied *utani* among the Ngoni, confirms the outline described above, and adds some interesting details especially on the changing nature of the custom. He states that, by the early 1940s, conflicts of opinions between the older and younger generation had arisen, in that the latter became increasingly disrespectful of the custom. He cites as evidence two court cases of 1942 to resolve a dispute over property taken by one's *mtani*. In both cases, there was a lack of recognition of the right of the *mtani* to seize somebody else's belongings without asking permission. Spies also suggests that there was an alternative explanation for forfeiture, which looks more modern than the interpretation based on supernatural beliefs. According to this, one will take meat or clothes laid out on the roof away to punish the person who "wants to show that he is richer than other people."<sup>16</sup>

Moreau states that, in the 1940s, it was already impossible to practice the external *utani* custom as formerly done in full-scale, because the modern environment would not allow frequent violation of individual property rights.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, the notion of *utani* was still alive in mid-century Dar es Salaam, the capital where various ethnic groups intermingled. Based on observations made in the late 1950s, Leslie argues that *utani* ties contributed to bind several different ethnic groups together, which shared the same route of migration to Dar es

Salaam.<sup>18</sup> According to him, the long-established *utani* institution might have not only assisted the migrant in his journey through alien areas, but also facilitated inter-ethnic alliance and even had an influence on residential patterns in Dar es Salaam. Although Leslie further suggests that *utani* ties could relieve difficulties and loneliness of those hailing from remote areas, it was not clear to what extent *utani* was actually important in their everyday life at the time, as Leslie offered no coherent evidence except for a brief reference to *utani* in a burial occasion.<sup>19</sup> At least in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, *utani* seems to have functioned as a practical way of mutual assistance in urban life, as seen in Scrivenor's account: "[T]he writer's personal boy (a Nyamwezi) claims that when in Dar es Salaam he can always rely upon the hospitality and assistance of his Zaramu *watani* even to the extent of a gift of four or five shillings in cash if he is in real need of it."<sup>20</sup>

In the post-independence Tanga region, an interesting observation was made on the relationships between the indigenous Bondei people and other migrant workers from outside Tanga. The Bondei were said to have almost no external *utani* with other ethnic groups, and their internal *utani* was perhaps already on the decline in the early 1940s.<sup>21</sup> But according to Lucas, the verbal or behavioral exchange between the Bondei and *wanyika* (a pejorative term referring to migrant workers from the upcountry) tended to take place in terms of *utani*, though the Bondei considered themselves superior to the migrants, who were less civilized in terms of Swahili coastal culture. Interestingly, he added that the *utani* relations between the two groups might have reflected a situation of little economic differentiation, where few opportunities exist for exploitation by one or the other.<sup>22</sup> This seems to resonate with the suggestion that *utani* ties were often based on the supposed equal relationship between partners. An *utani* contract was usually made between the two warring ethnic groups, only when the fight was fair.<sup>23</sup> When one group had been defeated by another, *utani* bonds as a set of mutual obligations may have arisen to replace "a potential master-slave situation," and this eventually contributed toward "dissipating hostility and maintaining harmony between groups."<sup>24</sup>

Though external *utani* custom as practiced in the past is dying out today, the term is still frequently mentioned in people's daily conversation, as a playful remark referring to inter-ethnic fellowship. It is also still practiced at funerals, albeit in vestigial terms. The liveliest display of the *utani* concept today, however, is seen in the field of urban popular culture. There the term is used to refer to rivalry between popular music groups or football teams. Sometimes the fierce rivalry or *utani* relations between particular musical groups or dance bands, which abuse each other in their songs, are deliberately produced in order to achieve popularity and increase commercial gain.<sup>25</sup> In the case of football, the most notable example of *utani* relationship is the longstanding rivalry between two popular football clubs, the Simba and the Yanga, which are often referred to on a nationwide scale as longtime joking partners (*watani wa jadi*). While the supporters of the two teams often exchange playful insults with each other, they also attend each other's funerals, which they express as the relation of *ku-zikana* (to bury each other).

The *utani* custom flourished in one particular time in Tanzanian history, as a very complicated way of sharing goods and services especially in case of need and burial occasions. It was also a remarkable system to avoid all-out confrontation and social tension between groups, as seen in the dramatic inversion from past enmity to openhanded hospitality. It is no

longer a practical mutual-aid institution, but is still inspiring people's imagination when referring to friendly rivalry between equals in inter-*chama* (club) relations, to which I now turn.

#### CHAMA: URBAN WELFARE SOCIETY

##### The Origin of Chama in *Tanganyika*

*Chama* (plural: *vyama*) is a widely used generic term for association, guild, or club. It can stand for all sorts of associations ranging from political party to dance club, though, after independence, *chama* often came to be used as a synonym for the ruling party TANU (the Tanganyika African National Union).<sup>26</sup>

The word *chama* is said to have originally meant a secret society or witches' coven.<sup>27</sup> In former Swahili coastal communities, witches were believed to belong to associations of evildoers known as *vyama*, which also stood for associations of people possessed by spirits.<sup>28</sup> However, *chama* seems to have acquired a much wider and more secular sense, covering any voluntary associations including even football teams by the 1920s, the early years of British rule.<sup>29</sup> The term became particularly popular during the subsequent three decades under the colonial order, when welfare societies and quasi-political associations flourished among Africans. These *vyama* sprouted especially in urban areas, where communal assistance and hospitality would not easily be provided.

Writing shortly after independence, Whiteley seems to have been puzzled by the flexibility of the term *chama*, which could denote all organizations with specific aims, ranging from political parties, trade unions, cooperative societies, to dance bands.<sup>30</sup> As a linguist with much concern about KiSwahili's future, he may have worried that the blanket use of the term would impair the language's precision, by blurring distinctions between different kinds of clubs and associations. At the same time, he also attributed the widespread use of the term and actual proliferation of *chama* to the success of the political party TANU and trade unions. But he overlooked the fact that the word *chama* had been used long before political groups thrived, and earlier *vyama* combined various elements including mutual assistance, companionship, pastime, education, political activism, and even entrepreneurship. Before criticizing the usage of the word as inaccurate or unrefined, we have to explore why these apparently different categories are compressed into the same word.

I suspect that the direct precursor of today's *chama* is an institution widely seen in the pre-colonial communities on the East African coast, from which its multiple functions derive. According to Glassman, *chama* was a social organization manned by subofficers of the *jumbe* (chief) in Swahili villages and towns in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>31</sup> *Chama* members took ranked titles, the highest of which was the *akida*, an immediate subordinate of the *jumbe*. *Chama* could also be translated as dance society or festive guild, because it played a crucial role in various ritual occasions marked by feasting and dancing, which was sponsored by *jumbe* or other wealthy families. Glassman suggests that, by the 1880s, the rapid growth of caravan trade and growing Arab domination in the area had put unprecedented strains on existing patrician-led hierarchies, and community rituals became increasingly competitive between patrons, including both impoverished patricians and the new-rich from outside. For example, around the turn of the century, each of two moieties of Lamu town had its own *chama* under the patronage of noble

families. The rivaling *vyama* competed actively in their dance performances, and in the number of cattle slaughtered for feast.<sup>32</sup>

Immediately after British and German invasion in the 1880s-90s, *chama*, as a competitive dance society, suddenly developed in a new fashion. Under the impact of the European military activities, a movement of dance called *beni ngoma* emerged in coastal Swahili settlements. *Beni ngoma* was an innovative form of existing *ngoma* (song-and-dance performance), adopting dance steps and instruments inspired by European military drills and their accompanying brass band, along with military titles such as king and general. *Beni* dance societies had spread all over Tanganyika by the late 1910s. The idea was disseminated by young Africans working for the colonial government (civil servants, police officers, and war veterans) through already existing Swahili communities built along the former caravan routes. In each urban community in Tanganyika, *beni* was always divided into two rival factions, with each achieving remarkable territory-wide networks. Joining a *beni* society was one of the ways to gain social and political clout within a given community, because it became an important means to express rivalry between groups in competitive dancing and feasting. At the same time, it functioned as a mutual aid association among members.<sup>33</sup>

Apart from the *beni* movement, derived from coastal communities, interior ethnic groups such as the Sukuma and its southern neighbor Nyamwezi invented their own dance society networks as "multi-purpose self-help organizations."<sup>34</sup> As these ethnic groups had long been involved in the long-distance caravan trade as porters, rapid expansion of ivory trade in the 19<sup>th</sup> century threatened social cohesion in their homeland. In response to the crisis, secret or dance societies flourished as mutual aid associations. In Sukumaland, along with dance societies, there were secret societies of snake charmers, porcupine hunters, elephant hunters, and diviners, each with strong magical and medicinal concerns. Among the Nyamwezi, the ivory trade increased the importance of hunters' guilds, and such secret societies came to acquire a new function of mutual aid. Both among the Sukuma and Nyamwezi, these societies had wide connections, and a traveler could expect help and hospitality in their branches located far from home. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a competitive relationship between two dance societies developed and spread rapidly across Sukumaland, each absorbing other existing societies.<sup>35</sup> Competitive *chama* dancing was brought from Sukumaland by the Iramba people (neighbors of the Nyamwezi) to a multi-ethnic pioneer settlement in the Arusha region, where the dance contest with medicinal practices was observed until the 1950s. A *chama* had to take care of its member's families, and also issued 'passports' to members traveling to an alien land so that he could get hospitality from members of the same *chama* there.<sup>36</sup>

Thus as in *utani*, the spread of *chama* (dance societies with welfare and other social functions) was a direct outcome of "enlargement of scale" of socioeconomic activities from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century, which was marked by rapid expansion of caravan trade and eventual European incursion.<sup>37</sup> A greater number of people began to move between the coast and the interior, with increasing contacts between alien ethnic groups. *Beni ngoma* achieved its far-flung development across the territory, partly because of its integrating role to create social cohesion amid a socioeconomic upheaval, especially in disorderly urban situations. It was also the first modern grass-roots organization with a Western makeup in Tanganyika. Immediately after the *beni* frenzy was gone, other kinds of *chama* with various 'modern' purposes flourished

in urban areas on an unprecedented scale, as we shall see below.

#### Proliferation of *Chama* in Urban Areas 1930s-1960s

It seems that *beni* dance societies made a decisive and lasting impact on succeeding patterns of forming *chama* in Tanganyika. After the 1920s *chama* no longer referred just to an association of dancers but also to a welfare society, ethnic association, trade union, dance club, football club, semi-political group or mere social club for discussion. However, despite its different purposes, each *chama* had important features in common. They were generally multi-ethnic (except for ethnic associations) and each *chama* was run by contributions from its members (*wanachama*), including some elected officers (president, treasurer, and secretary). These *vyama* often combined different functions together (notably recreation and welfare), and also formed networks of alliance linking similar clubs in different city centers. They would open a clubhouse, sometimes as their own property, which functioned as an important meeting place for townspeople. *Vyama* would organize special events and parties as festive occasions.

The first modern organization by Africans after the *beni* movement probably was TTACSA (Tanganyika Territory African Civil Service Association), which was established in Tanga in 1922.<sup>38</sup> It was a "half welfare society and half trade union" mainly for governmental clerks. It ran a library, evening classes and a football team, and raised funds to build their club house.<sup>39</sup> TTACSA inspired the establishment of similar elite clubs in other urban areas. Most members of its branch in Dar es Salaam eventually joined the African Association (AA, or *Chama cha Umoja wa Watu wa Afrika* in KiSwahili), itself the ancestor of TANU. Founded in 1929, AA recruited some 300 members by 1931 and began to build a clubhouse. Probably inheriting the pre-existing network of *beni* dance societies, AA branched out rapidly throughout the territory, claiming 39 branches by 1948. Branches held tea parties, built up libraries, and organized festivities and dance parties, besides intervening in local politics from time to time. Members who visited another branch enjoyed its hospitality and "were treated like officials on tour."<sup>40</sup> A local branch of AA in North Pare was derived from the Usangi Sports and Welfare Club. Established by local modernist elites in 1935, it built a clubhouse, ran a football team, and voiced their concern about education of native adults and children.<sup>41</sup>

In the 1930s and 1940s, there was economic distress resulted from the Great Depression and later World War II. The years of austerity witnessed the flourishing of *vyama* as welfare societies for ordinary Africans, alongside inactive elite clubs such as TTACSA and AA. One such association was the Tanganyika African Welfare and Commercial Association (TAWCA), a trade union for small African retailers in Dar es Salaam, launched in the mid-1930s with the aim to unite against rival Asian merchants and government restrictions. Influenced by Pan-Africanism, the association also undertook to bury any African townspeople without relatives (indeed it buried 54 people), and planned to care for orphans and provide schooling for children.<sup>42</sup> Members of TAWCA also had the benefit of using post box of the association as their postal address, an important function of *chama* as the hub of communication, which is still observable today.<sup>43</sup>

Some Dar es Salaam dockworkers launched the African Labour Union in 1937. In spite of its militant-sounding name, this *chama* was primarily intended as a modest mutual aid society

to help members who were sick, unemployed, or in distress. Though it probably did not last long, its proposed rules reveal what kind of welfare society they wished to establish. The members were to pay a monthly subscription, and all the newspapers in the town were to be bought every day. It had a plan to have a clubhouse, and open a shop for members to buy things at affordable prices. The rules also promised that there would be a class to teach the members to read and write, besides exhorting them to save money in a bank for use in the event of unemployment or reaching old age.<sup>44</sup>

In the mid-1940s, a trade union of domestic servants (*Chama cha Maboi*) was formed in Dar es Salaam and soon acquired a wide following, though it was also short-lived. The *chama* sought government assistance to establish members' entitlement to better wages and other benefits (medical benefits, gratuity, etc.), and even desired to have an office, a shop, and a hostel of its own, for the sake of the domestic servants in general.<sup>45</sup> It is worth noting that its key organizer was the leader of Arinoti, a *beni* dance faction in Dar es Salaam.<sup>46</sup> In a similar association in the southwestern town of Mbeya, members paid a monthly subscription, and one of the aims of the fund was to provide "financial assistance to unemployed servants."<sup>47</sup>

Ethnicity, place of origin, and hobby were also very important catalysts for forming a *chama*, along with the affiliation based on occupation or workplace. In Dar es Salaam, a number of ethnic associations had been established from the 1910s mainly as mutual aid societies especially for burial purposes, an important function for long-distant immigrants. They often served other purposes as well such as ethnic dancing and promotion of education.<sup>48</sup> During the British colonial period, dance clubs and football clubs also proliferated in towns, often with mutual aid functions such as finding accommodations or jobs and assisting a member in a difficulty.<sup>49</sup>

A *chama* would sometimes embark on commercial enterprises, though often without success. As early as the 1930s, a dance society opened a cooperative shop "with an advertisement board" in the remote inland town of Tabora.<sup>50</sup> From the 1930s to 1950s, cooperative societies for marketing burgeoned in rural areas where cash crop production (coffee, cotton and tobacco) had expanded. Some of them were established by African businessmen to compete with dominant Asian traders. These cooperatives, including government-sponsored ones, were also referred to as *vyama*.<sup>51</sup> The Uzaramo Union, established in the late 1930s by indigenous Zaramo people in Dar es Salaam, aimed at the economic and political development of the whole Zaramo region. In an attempt to challenge Asian domination on rural trading and transportation businesses, the union launched a cooperative shop to deal with agricultural produce and purchased lorries to carry passengers between the capital and countryside in the late 1940s.<sup>52</sup>

Even when it did not venture into commercial undertakings, the *chama* served as an economic organization with its own fund and property. While such assets enabled a club to extend practical assistance to its members, its financial management system sometimes undermined its very existence. First, most *vyama* relied only on *ad hoc* collection from poor members, who were not always willing to pay their dues. Secondly, mismanagement of the club fund often led to the collapse of the *chama*. Many did not last long because they were prone to embezzlement. An article in a privately-run Swahili magazine stressed the importance of

administering funds properly, and that the role of secretary and treasurer is crucial in order not to lose members and money, a problem which was bedeviling many clubs at that time.<sup>53</sup>

*Vyama* developed as remarkable multi-functional welfare societies under colonial rule, though many of them were short-lived because of their poor financial basis and administration. Yet a handful of them not only survived after independence but even achieved nationwide popularity. Among them were football clubs and dance bands, but the most notable example is the TANU party, the direct successor of AA. With the anti-colonial struggle gathering momentum in the late 1950s, TANU moved into the forefront of the nationalist movement, involving various other *vyama* in its campaign.<sup>54</sup> After independence in 1961, TANU became the single ruling party in Tanzania, and a variety of trade unions and cooperative societies were eventually merged under its nationwide umbrella. In this process, the term *chama* acquired connotation of nationwide organization, in close association with the official *ujamaa* or socialist ideology.

### UJAMAA: AN AFRICAN SOCIALISM

*Ujamaa* is the only concept in this paper that can be defined by explicit theory enunciated in various political statements of the late president Julius K. Nyerere. First formulated in an essay of his published in 1962, it was officially adopted as state policy when the landmark Arusha Declaration was issued in 1967. In the outside world, *ujamaa* is known as one of many forms of African socialism, which were advocated across the continent immediately after independence. African socialism in Tanzania, however, is unique and outstanding in that it was a deliberate attempt to redefine the Western concept of socialism in an African context, and importantly, expressing it in an indigenous language, KiSwahili.

*Ujamaa* derives from *jamaa* (relative or companion), which had long been a very familiar word for KiSwahili speakers. The original meaning of *ujamaa* (to be *jamaa*) is family ties/relationships, or it could also be translated as familyhood.<sup>55</sup> Nationalist leaders of independent Tanzania intended to build socialism as the extension of traditional communal values inherent in rural extended families, which they found 'socialistic.' Therefore, the term *ujamaa* does not escape "the connotations and associations of bonds of kinship, tribal hospitality, and the welfare obligations of the extended family," even when it is used simply to mean 'modern socialism.'<sup>56</sup> In his classic essay *Ujamaa - The Basis of African Socialism*, Nyerere emphasizes that the new nation must be built upon the already existing 'tribal socialism,' which is marked by classlessness and egalitarian distribution of benefits.<sup>57</sup> He admires the traditional social security system, in which every member of the community has a right to basic needs, and denounces indolent persons who would abuse others' hospitality, quoting a Swahili adage *Mgeni siku mbili; siku ya tatu mpe jembe* (Treat your guest as a guest for two days; on the third day give him a hoe). This quotation is made to forestall possible parasitism, by emphasizing the importance of reciprocal obligations. Thus *ujamaa* ideology seems to represent two basic principles of moral economy defined by Scott; the right to subsistence and the norm of reciprocity.<sup>58</sup> As Nyerere reiterates, *ujamaa* is essentially an attitude of mind, or ethic, based on three key elements, i.e. mutual respect, sharing of property, and work.<sup>59</sup>

Apart from the theoretical contents of *ujamaa* policy, its most unique feature is that new KiSwahili political terminologies with rich cultural connotations were elaborated to disseminate the doctrine. A set of political rhetoric or slogans was created mainly by using colloquial idioms to capture public imagination. For example, to make people realize the unfairness of capitalism, feudalism and imperialism, three villains who personified these vices frequently appeared in nationalist discourses. They were *bepari* (capitalist), *kabaila* (feudalist), and *beberu* (imperialist), each shifting away from its original meaning. *Bepari* is a Gujarati-derived word with the denotation of a wealthy merchant, while *kabaila*, a loanword from Arabic, had originally been used to denote a noble person or a landlord.<sup>60</sup> *Beberu* in everyday usage means a he-goat, or "a man who takes a thing by force or by fighting."<sup>61</sup> *Darubini*, a series of propagandist pamphlets issued by TANU, carried stories criticizing *mabepari* (capitalists) and *makabaila* (feudalists) who had been engaging in the exploitation (*unyonyaji*) of the African underclass. Reflecting the actual connection between race and social stratum, many *makabaila* are described as Arabs and one of the *mabepari* carries an Indian name.<sup>62</sup> *Unyonyaji*, derived from a Bantu verb *ku-nyonya* (to suck), was one of the most frequently used terms in anti-capitalist/feudalist rhetoric. According to Brennan, *unyonyaji* was often associated with vivid images such as the tick (*kupe*), a biological embodiment of parasitism, and persons sucking another's sweat or blood with straws.<sup>63</sup>

The *Ujamaa* ideology is by no means a simple extension of traditional values. Besides talking about the socialist belief or way of life, Nyerere also addresses the practical measures to build a socialist and self-reliant national economy, such as nationalization of major companies and promotion of 'import substitution.'<sup>64</sup> Such nationwide industrial programs, however, sound strange in the whole argument of *ujamaa*, even though Nyerere stresses that wider communities, including the nation, exist as the extension of the extended family as a basic social unit.<sup>65</sup> The essence of the *ujamaa* ideology, therefore, is well embodied in his argument about rural development, but again not without contradiction with the reality. For example, the universal virtue of hard work, one of the key elements of the *ujamaa* doctrine, may not have fitted well in the actual village situation, where, as Nyerere himself points out, men worked far fewer hours than urban men and rural women.<sup>66</sup> A real conflict arose after 1967, when the policy was especially focused on achieving the ambitious goals of discouraging capitalist agriculture and increasing production at the same time by creating '*ujamaa* villages.' In an *ujamaa* village, individuals were expected to work together for the sake of village community as a whole, whereas the traditional allegiance of rural residents was basically confined within the limits of extended family. The pre-existing way of cooperation beyond family was *ujima* or labor exchange, which was based on bilateral reciprocity between neighbors rather than on the local community as a collective entity.<sup>67</sup>

The mainstay of *ujamaa* policy was this village collectivization scheme but it ended in a spectacular failure, especially in terms of increased production. The main reason for this fiasco seems to have been the glaring contradiction between Nyerere's emphasis on community initiative (which itself contradicts existing social relations) and actual central control by the government.<sup>68</sup> In the 1980s, the socialist policy was eventually renounced altogether. For today's Tanzanians, *ujamaa* ideology may be a relic of a nostalgic bygone age, or an outmoded ideology, or an otherwise disgusting symbol of the dark past. Nonetheless, Nyerere's writings are still impressive in his honest endeavor to interpret the Western concepts of political economy such

as socialism and capitalism for ordinary Africans. For better or worse, it was a serious attempt to seek an alternative based on African experience and perceptions, which is not very dissimilar from the community-based development approach of today.

#### UJANJA: A SURVIVAL STRATEGY IN THE CONTEMPORARY URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Facing serious economic crisis, Tanzania's *ujamaa* socialist policy was formally abandoned in the mid-1980s. From then onward, the government accepted the structural adjustment programs of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and implemented various measures to deregulate economic restrictions. Prolonged economic stagnation adversely affected people's daily life especially in urban areas at the time. There was a large gap between real wages and inflated consumer prices, making people leave wage employment and become part of the 'informal economy.' Tripp describes how residents in Dar es Salaam coped with the harsh economic reality, in which it appeared to be statistically impossible for them to survive.<sup>69</sup> It was in informal sectors of the economy that hitherto marginalized people, especially women, made the most of their informal networks to fend for themselves. In line with the arguments made by Scott and Hyden, Tripp also stresses that people displayed considerable savvy, especially in resisting or evading irksome state controls on the informal economy. Such an 'everyday forms of resistance' eventually led to the relaxation of government controls on the informal sector.

I would like to add another dimension to Tripp's argument on urban moral economy in Tanzania. This is well-expressed in the term *ujanja*, which may encapsulate survival strategies in contemporary urban situations, particularly in relation to the booming informal economy. *Ujanja* can be translated variously as craftiness, roguery, deceit, cunning, and cleverness.<sup>70</sup> *Mjanja* (a person with *ujanja*) is a sly, cunning, or wily person, but sharp and clever as well. So the term *ujanja* is not straightforwardly negative or positive concept, and may be tinged with either disapproval or admiration according to context, or sometimes both. In the context of today's urban environment, *mjanja* may mean a person who knows how to succeed by using his/her wit, which sometimes comes closest to cheating and deceiving. Ogawa, who conducted research on the informal economy in Mwanza (see her article in this volume) argues that *ujanja* is one of the most admirable qualities among traders of secondhand clothes.<sup>71</sup> In their frame of reference, *ujanja* means the skill of negotiation with wholesalers, business partners, and consumers, or more generally, the art of survival of the underprivileged. For them, to be *mjanja* is synonymous with being a full-fledged secondhand cloth trader.

For Swahili-speaking people, *ujanja* is closely associated with the image of the hare (*sungura*). In African folk tales in general, the hare tends to be described as a sly and cunning character, as the fox is in Western folklores. There are a variety of Swahili folk tales in which the cunning hare deceives fellow animals stronger than itself, such as the hyena, lion, and elephant, in order to have something valuable all to itself.<sup>72</sup> That is, in a sense, the reversal of the normal order of the world where the stronger prey upon the weaker. Every Tanzanian is familiar with such *sungura mjanja* ("hare the trickster") stories, which also appear in textbooks of KiSwahili. A primary school text first published in 1971 carries a story entitled "*Mchoyo hana Rafiki* (A miser has no friend)."<sup>73</sup> The story is about a hare and a hyena traveling together. The hare repeatedly

employs cunning to take food away from the hyena, which is finally infuriated and breaks off their friendship. As with the other stories in the same textbook, this tale was probably expected to have a didactic function to instill the ideal of *ujamaa* socialism into students. *Ujanja*, itself stemming from *uchoyo* (avarice), may have been seen as inconsistent with *ujamaa* ideology, which stressed the virtue of hard work and reciprocity.<sup>74</sup>

Nevertheless, such a straightforward criticism of a cunning hare would not have been made by ordinary people who instead are often admirers of *ujanja*. To examine this concept from a cultural perspective, Wazaki's remarks on the association between *ujanja* and 'Swahiliness' are interesting.<sup>75</sup> Based on his fieldwork in a remote village in the Arusha region, he states that the word *ujanja* can bear both a positive and negative overtone, which is not easily understandable from the viewpoint of the Japanese or Western value system. Wazaki argues that such ambiguity of *ujanja* may stem from an unique attitude of mind inherent in Swahili culture, in which one's skill or ability (be it cleverness or cunning) is appreciated as an inseparable part of his/her personality as a whole. Another KiSwahili word *fundi* (an equivalent for craftsman), not only stands for a person skilled in one specific field but also refers to character or habit of individuals, be it positive or negative. For example, a drunkard is *fundi* of drinking alcohol, and a chatterbox is *fundi* of chatting, and they are not straightforwardly criticized. Thus each *fundi* (or *mjanja*) is equally regarded as an independent personality beyond merit or moral judgment, in contrast to the modern analytical view in which the human qualities are disaggregated and measured by moral, merit, efficiency, or other standards.<sup>76</sup>

The concept of *ujanja* is also deeply associated with urbanity. The following account made from the 1950s is revealing in this respect: "(When in home village I) had heard from my brothers of the big town at the coast (Dar es Salaam).the street lights, the cinemas, the dance halls..and the *clever town men*."<sup>77</sup>

In urban settings, where people from different backgrounds are living side by side, you cannot trust your neighbors or colleagues unreservedly. Anyone can deceive you any time, but, at the same time, you may have to hesitantly cheat somebody in order to survive a hostile environment. That is why people have ambivalent sentiment towards *ujanja*, oscillating between admiration and criticism. *Ujanja* may be morally criticized but can also be admired as the ability to draw personal gain out of social relations without causing serious confrontation.

*Ujanja* embodies moral dilemmas which today's urban Tanzanians face. One might think *ujanja* is part of an 'immoral' rather than a 'moral' economy, because it sometimes comes closest to deceit and fraud. Indeed, applying *ujanja* is not morally upright, but it could be justifiable and sometimes even an admirable action as a necessary strategy to survive, which may allow even have-nots to live by their own wits. Furthermore, the acquired gain may be used to help others or redistributed among relatives and friends. One *sungura mjanja* story is about a hare that helps a poor horse by cleverly tricking a lion.<sup>78</sup> *Ujanja* probably should not be regarded as a purely selfish act of jostling for success in a do-or-die struggle for survival. It is implicitly sanctioned by people, who even "enjoy the diversity of *ujanja*," as seen in the variety of amusing stories of the cunning hare.<sup>79</sup>

## Conclusions

This paper has argued that *utani*, *chama*, and *ujanja* may be regarded as forms of moral economy, if it is defined as people's undertaking to protect their well-being and dignity against the disintegrating force of a capitalist economy. *Ujamaa* as a state policy can be contrasted with these grass-roots actions especially when the ideology was translated into practice, but the *ujamaa* concept itself is built upon moral-economic principles. Notably, none of them is an ethnically bound concept that thrives in only one particular area. Instead, they are widespread among a large segment of population as a source of imagination. These concepts and practices reflect strong attachment to African 'traditions' concerning burial ceremony, collective dancing and feasting, mutual joking, and egalitarianism. Nevertheless, people have never clung tenaciously to such 'traditional' values as they were; they always discovered old methods and terminologies to achieve new ends, reformulating inherited customs and ideas, including Western-derived ones. There is no evidence that a globalizing capitalism will eliminate this reinvention of tradition. In fact, globalization may be enhancing it, leaving the door open to alternative institutional approaches to dealing with social and economic problems peculiar to African societies.

## Notes:

1. See Thompson 1971 and Scott 1976.
2. Polanyi 1957.
3. Hyden 1983 and 1980.
4. This word is said to be derived from the Arabic word *watan* ('to reside in'), though some cast doubt on this explanation. See Moreau 1944, 386; Moreau 1941, 3; and Spies 1943, 49.
5. Moreau 1944, 387.
6. Ranger 1969, 168-172.
7. Moreau 1944, 387-388. Gulliver asserts that external *utani* of the (Songea) Ngoni originated not from ethnic warfare, but from labor migration to the sisal plantations and other places of employment in the early colonial times, though, in most cases, only brave adversaries of them in former warring days were entitled to be their *watani*. See Gulliver 1957.
8. Moreau 1944, 388-389; Christensen 1963, 1323.
9. Moreau 1941, 3.
10. Moreau 1944 and 1941.
11. Spies 1943, 51.
12. Moreau 1944, 394-395 and 1941, 7.
13. Moreau 1944, 392-394.
14. Ibid., 395-397; Leslie 1963, 33.
15. Moreau 1941, 2.
16. Spies 1943, 51-52.
17. Moreau 1944, 398-399.
18. Leslie 1963, 2, 33-37.
19. Ibid., 41.

20. Scrivenor 1937, 72.
21. Moreau 1944, 389, 398 and 1941, 3.
22. Lucas 1972. As I could not obtain Lucas's original paper, I draw on Reeves for the quotation here. See Reeves 1979, 103.
23. Moreau 1944, 3-4.
24. Christensen 1963, 1325.
25. Gunderson and Barz 2000, 84, 302-317.
26. Since *chama* has a strong connotation with the ruling political party nowadays, the term *kikundi* is often used to refer to a small group of people which formerly would have otherwise been called *chama*. TANU later reorganized and renamed CCM (*Chama cha Mapinduzi*, the party of revolution) in 1977.
27. Whiteley 1964, 218; Iliffe 1979, 497.
28. Middleton 1992, 177, 182.
29. Football teams mainly from government sections are referred to as *vyama* in an article carried in a Swahili monthly *Mambo Leo*, December 1929.
30. Whiteley 1964, 218.
31. Glassman 1995, 146-174.
32. Ranger 1975, 25-30.
33. Ibid., *passim*.
34. Gunderson 2000, 417.
35. Ibid., 407-419; Ranger 1969, 167-168.
36. Wazaki 1966, 250-255.
37. Ranger 1969, 170.
38. Though its official KiSwahili name is unknown, it was referred to as *chama* in newspaper articles, including "Chama cha TTACSA, Tanga, Mwaka 1923," *Mambo Leo*, March 1923, and "Chama cha Wenyeji," *Mambo Leo*, April 1923.
39. Iliffe 1979, 267.
40. Ibid., 408-409, 413, 426. An article ("Vyama vya Waafrika") in *Mambo Leo*, June 1940, states that there were a lot of *vyama* in Tanganyika territory at that time, and their branch networks would help a teacher or clerk transferring to another workplace to travel through alien lands.
41. Iliffe 1969, 141.
42. Iliffe 1979, 393-394.
43. *Kwetu*, 21 February 1939.
44. The African Labour Union: Umoja wa Wenyeji Watumishi wa Kazi, etc. Sheria na kanuni za chama, TNA (Tanzania National Archives) 61/14/14/2. See also Iliffe 1979, 400 and 1970, 125-126.
45. Provincial Commissioner to the African Servants Association, 28 March 1944, TNA 61/679/1/22; Memorandum of a meeting with representatives of the Personal Servants Association, 23 January 1944, TNA 61/679/1/15.
46. Iliffe 1979, 397-398.
47. Director of Intelligence and Security to the Labour Commissioner (Dar es Salaam), 19 January 1945, TNA 61/679/1/28.

48. Tsuruta 2003b.
49. Tsuruta 2003a.
50. "Tabora Ngomas," Tabora District Book. See also Ranger 1975, 102-4.
51. Kifungu cha 4 cha sheria ya 7 ya mwaka 1932 (a Swahili translation of a section of the Cooperative Ordinance), TNA 61/450/47. See also Iliffe 1979, 296.
52. Tsuruta 2003b, 66.
53. "Clubs and Associations: Reserve Fund," by A. R. Ismail, *Kwetu*, 23 February 1941.
54. Tsuruta 2003a.
55. TUKI 2001, 337; Nyerere 1968a, 12.
56. Reeves 1979, 73.
57. Nyerere 1968a, 1-12.
58. Scott 1976, 167.
59. Nyerere 1968a, 1, 107-108 and *passim*; Nyerere 1969, iii.
60. TUKI 2001, 122; Brennan 2002, 322.
61. Scotton 1965, 537.
62. See, for example, TANU 1971a and 1971b.
63. Brennan 2002, 320-326.
64. Nyerere 1968a, 16, 27.
65. *Ibid.*, 12.
66. *Ibid.*, 30, 109.
67. Hyden 1980, 99.
68. *Ibid.*, 96-128.
69. Tripp 1997.
70. TUKI 2001, 337-338.
71. Ogawa 2005.
72. Steere 1870; Wazaki 1983
73. Ministry of Education and Culture 1971, 53-57.
74. Nyerere states definitely: "A man who cheats his fellows by dishonesty, who fails to do a full day's work..is exploiting other men." See Nyerere 1969, 33. To quote from another essay of him, "If you abandon the idea and the goal of equality, and allow the clever (*wajanja*) and fortunate to exploit the others.the temptations of individualism will be further increased." See Nyerere 1968a, 111 and 1968b, 108.
75. Indeed, a KiSwahili dictionary gives '*mjanja*' as one of definitions of a Swahili (*mswahili*). TUKI 1981, 192.
76. Wazaki 1983, 330-331.
77. Leslie 1963, 102. Emphasis is my own.
78. "Hadithi ya Sungura na Farasi," *Mambo Leo*, September 1929, p. 1144.
79. Wazaki 1983, 324.

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Reference Style: The following is the suggested format for referencing this article: Tadasu Tsuruta. "African Imaginations of Moral Economy: Notes on Indigenous Economic Concepts and Practices in Tanzania." *African Studies Quarterly* 9, no.1 & 2: [online] URL: <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1a8.htm>



## BOOK REVIEWS

**Mandela's World: The International Dimension of South Africa's Political Revolution, 1990-99.** James Barber. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004. 256 pp.

**Thabo Mbeki's World: The Politics and Ideology of the South African President.** Sean Jacobs and Richard Calland, eds. New York: Zed Books, 2003. 304 pp.

These two books share similar titles. That is about all that they share. James Barber's *Mandela's World* is a monograph that explores South Africa's foreign policy in the context of the peaceful transition from apartheid rule to multiracial democracy. *Thabo Mbeki's World* is a collection of essays assessing the politics and ideology of Nelson Mandela's successor as South Africa's president. Barber explores the outside world in the context of Mandela; Calland and Jacobs and their contributors explore Mbeki as a sun around which South Africa orbits.

In addition to thematic differences, these two books deviate strikingly in tone and approach. Where Barber provides a scholars' thorough and detached (as much as detachment is possible) view of South Africa's relations with the rest of the world in the 1990s, the contributors to Calland and Jacobs are polemicists who are anything but detached. Where Barber operates with clear if workmanlike prose, the essayists making their *j'accuse* against Mbeki (and almost all of them have come to their topics as prosecutors, and not defenders) are oftentimes not as successful. Several are clear and well written, but a number are turgid.

James Barber might be the most respected historian of sub-Saharan African foreign policy and diplomatic relations. *Mandela's World* can best be seen as the logical continuation of his work on South Africa's foreign policy since World War II. In 1972, he published *South Africa's Foreign Policy 1945-1970* and in 1990, he and John Barratt co-authored *South Africa's Foreign Policy: The Search For Status and Security*. This volume explores South Africa's remarkable transition in the 1990s through the lens of foreign relations.

Initially it is somewhat difficult to ascertain where Barber is going. He spends the first quarter of the book exploring the by now well-trodden ground of the negotiated settlement that led to the epochal 1994 elections that brought Nelson Mandela and the long *verboden* African National Congress to power. Barber surely could have truncated this first section in order to move into his exploration of the settlement in the international context in which De Klerk, Mandela and their underlings and allies jockey for international support, which occupies section two: "Negotiations and Competitions for International Support."

The book hits its stride in the last two sections in which Barber assesses the foreign policy challenges, achievements, and shortcomings of the Mandela years. After the initial euphoria about the country's transition to democratic rule, reality set in. Mandela miracle or no, South Africa's neighbors tended to fear it as both a potential threat and as the likely recipient of the

<http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i1-2reviews.pdf>

bulk of the precious investment coming in from the outside world. South Africa's economy and military made it a potential leviathan, and neighboring states felt that they needed to eye the "Rainbow Nation of God" warily.

The rest of the world, particularly the western powers, tend to have short attention spans. Once the self-congratulations were done, and Mandela's inauguration passed, the expected wave of aid that most expected would be forthcoming fell short of expectations. South Africa struggled somewhat to find its place in the region and on the continent, and did not always succeed in accomplishing its foreign policy goals. Nonetheless, as Mandela prepared to step down from office, he handed to new president Thabo Mbeki a country that, in international affairs, was able to "punch above its weight."

Barber of necessity has provided an overview that scholars in future years will supplant as new information and historical distance from events change our understanding of South Africa's role in the region, continent, and the world. Nonetheless, *Mandela's World* provides a model for contemporary history and offers a useful primer for understanding South Africa's role in the international community in its first years of freedom.

If Barber provides a model for scholarship on contemporary issues, Jacobs and Calland show some of the difficulties of making spot assessments *in medias res*. The two initially proposed the book in 2000 – Mbeki only entered office in 1999 – and published the final product in 2002. Many of the essays feel temporal, rushed, and not especially insightful in 2006, just four years after publication, when Mbeki still sits in office.

Given the staunch anti-Mbeki approach of the vast majority of the contributors, it might have been useful for the editors to have branched out to find someone who could have brought a perspective more sympathetic to the ANC to have tempered the opposition. In the wake of the publication of this book, after all, the ANC with Mbeki at its head did win another overwhelming election victory, and indeed the 2004 results gave stronger support to the party and its leader than they had received in 1994 or 1999. One need not believe that Mbeki has been an especially great leader, or even a particularly good one, to wonder if he could possibly be (or have been) as bad as this book makes him out to be. As it is, this book is the written equivalent of an echo chamber.

The main critiques essentially argue that Mbeki has been too willing to embrace "neocolonialism," or "global capitalism," or "western style capitalism" (none of which are especially clearly defined). This, according to the contributors, is bad. The respected Africanist John Saul, in the first essay after the editors' introduction, goes so far as to posit, "the phrase 'socialism or barbarism' has rarely had more meaning than in contemporary South Africa under Mbeki." This is a flabbergasting assertion. South Africa needs many things. Socialism in the year 2002 (or 2006, or I daresay 2016) is almost assuredly not one of them. Whatever criticisms one might have of the modern capitalist system, it would seem foolhardy for South Africa to withdraw from that system. Free markets are certainly no panacea in and of themselves, but rejecting free markets, or some semblance thereof, has universally led to disaster in Africa and elsewhere on the globe. One need not be a retrograde apologist for right wing politics to believe as much.

Jacobs and Calland divide the book into two sections, "Ideology" and "Politics." Perhaps because the section on "Politics" is driven somewhat less by ideology than the section on

“Ideology,” it is more successful. The six contributions to this section earnestly try to grapple with the political questions South Africa faced in the first years of Mbeki’s presidency, and while they do not always succeed, these essays may be of more use to future scholars trying to understand the transition from Mandela to Mbeki.

Nonetheless, on the whole, *Thabo Mbeki’s World* does not succeed in capturing Thabo Mbeki’s world. The contributors to this volume are almost universally respected, as well they should be, but because of the unbalanced tone of the book and the lack of historical perspective on the subject, this is probably not the book to which most of us will go to as a guide to South Africa at the turn of the 21st century.

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**Talk Left Walk Right: South Africa’s Frustrated Global Reforms. Patrick Bond. Scottsville, South Africa: University of Kwazulu Natal Press, 2004. 266 pp.**

Patrick Bond is one of the most prolific and insightful political economists writing on Africa today. In this book he sets out the ways in which the South African government has attempted to reform the global political-economic system towards greater fairness for the developing world. The chapters cover an extensive range of topics from the World Trade Organization to reparations for slavery; the New Partnership for African Development to water privatisation. The book is written in an accessible style and illustrated with many excellent cartoons by Zapiro, who humorously reflects on the South African condition. The text also includes many useful figures on debt repayments and corporate profits amongst other indicators.

In the era of globalization the power of the nation state to formulate and steer economic and social policy is commonly thought to have deteriorated. Consequently the South African state has sought to reshape the global context through institutional reform. However, Bond concludes this is a “great scam.” Over eleven chapters and in elaborate detail he goes through the ways in which the South African government has at times undermined collective African bargaining positions at the World Trade Organization and criticized the Iraq war, while selling arms to the U.S. and British governments. In this way he sees the state elite as having their cake and eating it too – talking left and walking right as a way to reconcile the demands of their electoral constituency with demands of the holders of global and national economic and political power. The implication from this is that the South African state elites are “corporate sell-outs” or, as Bond puts it, managers of the equivalent of a “global Bantustan.” However, while some of the South African state’s positions have been reprehensible, an alternative reading is also possible – that is that they have made a judgement on the balance of global class and state power and have concluded that an outright anti-system challenge is destined to fail. Bond talks of Thabo Mbeki’s lack of support from domestic social movements which

delegitimate him, but surely it is national elections which determine this, which the ANC continues to win convincingly?

Bond details shocking statistics such as the fact that from 1995-2000 average black incomes fell 19% contributing to mass evictions and water disconnections, whereas incomes for whites rose by 15%. However, the achievements of the post-apartheid era, such as new house construction, are perhaps underplayed. The extension of the social security system is not mentioned in the book.

This book offers an informed, fast paced and passionate snapshot of South Africa's current history. However, its analysis could be stronger in places. Bond relies on underconsumptionist theory to inform his analysis. That is that there is a contradiction between the productive capacity of capitalism and the immiseration of workers which it generates, who cannot afford to buy its products thereby leading to systemic crisis. While this approach has merit, it underplays the ability of the capitalist system to regenerate itself through the production of new products – supply creating its own demand. Consequently economic crisis tendencies tend to be regionally, rather than globally, manifested.

In places the argument appears contradictory, as when Bond argues that South Africa “benefited” from the US African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) much more strongly than other African countries through enhanced trade, while decrying the neoliberal approach on which AGOA is founded.

The decommodification of basic human rights such as “lifeline” water and electricity supplies and access to anti-retrovirals that Bond advocates are eminently sensible and just. However economic growth could facilitate such expenditures, whereas ineffective economic delinking *a la* Zimbabwe would bring the worst of both worlds – a contracting economy and worsening social conditions. Bond argues that controls over capital are just as applicable in Zimbabwe as in Malaysia. However, the empirical evidence would suggest otherwise. Issues of state capacity and state-society linkages are of critical importance in managing a more interventionist economic regime.

Part of the global social justice movement's problem is that it hops from place to place, meeting to meeting rather than creating alternative infrastructures of politico-economic power. Consequently Bond seems to favor a more localist turn; not overthrowing the capitalist mode of production, but the scale at which it operates. However, South Africa's economy is now growing strongly and there was substantial employment creation in 2005/6. As Alan Hirsh argues in an important book, *Season of Hope*, also published by University of Kwa-Zulu Natal press, the South African government has combined a variety of policy approaches, rather than just adopting a straightforward neoliberal one, which may be partially responsible for this turnaround. However, much of this growth is driven by Chinese and American deficit financed demand, and its sustainability is open to question.

This book deals with some of the most important issues facing South Africa. It is engaging, and packed with information and insight. It draws on both journalistic reporting and heavy hitting academic analysis, combined in a way which perhaps only Patrick Bond can, having straddled both of these worlds. As such it represents another valuable contribution to the literature on South Africa, although covering some of the same ground as Bond's other books

on South Africa. His most recent book on *Looting Africa* deals more explicitly with continental issues and is itself an excellent read.

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**Is Violence Inevitable in Africa? Theories of Conflict and Approaches to Conflict Prevention.** Patrick Chabal, Ulf Engel, and Annamaria Gentili (eds). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishers, 2005. 245 pp.

*Is Violence Inevitable in Africa* offers a survey of perspectives on collective violence and conflict prevention and resolution in Africa. The volume covers many subjects, such as ethnic conflict, decentralization, power-sharing, and peacebuilding. Political science is the primary disciplinary touchstone, but the chapters include anthropological, economic, and sociological perspectives. In the preface, the editors note that they asked the contributors to explicitly address the topical focus. The result, a multiplicity of literature reviews, can be a useful resource for scholars. However, the array of theoretical overviews could be bewildering for some readers, and it underlines a key problem, namely the need for more synthesis of the material.

In the introduction, Chabal uses the lens of political action to argue that African conflicts should be viewed in terms of embedded rationality rooted in precolonial neo-patrimonialism. Foregrounding African social patterns of the *longue durée*, Chabal parallels the recent trend of emphasizing African agency. His focus on scarcity, rationality, and neo-patrimonialism deserves serious consideration, but it leaves out major themes in the literature and the ensuing chapters. His piece would therefore be more appropriate either as a chapter or an introduction to a more focused body of work that clearly elucidated his thesis.

The book has many strong points. The chapters by de Bruijn, van Dijk, and Hesseling provide insightful anthropological analyses that nicely complement prevailing political and econometric perspectives. The literature reviews in many of the chapters are good references for readers seeking surveys of the theories in this subject area. Gentili's chapter, for example, offers a good discussion of the ethnic conflict literature. Another strength is the inclusion of an applied view in the piece by Idriss from the organization Search for Common Ground. In addition, Engel's conclusion provides an admirable overview of the policy-oriented literature. There has been insufficient cross-pollination between practitioners, policy-makers, and academics. One does wish that such a dialogue could have been included here and that the conflict resolution literature could have been addressed, but perhaps other works can take up these issues. Hopefully, they will include African authors.

Although typical of edited volumes, the lack of a synthetic analysis of the chapters does lessen the potential contribution of this valuable body of work. The title suggests what is promised in the introduction: a "systematic discussion of some of the root causes of violence" supplemented by case studies that also address resolution efforts. That goal would have been

furthered by posing central questions in the introduction and addressing them in the conclusion. The book's organization could also have been reworked. It has two parts; one concentrates on violence and conflict prevention and the second on conflict resolution. The volume could have been enhanced by dividing it between chapters on conflict causation and those on prevention and resolution. Each section could have an introduction and a conclusion that sums up the similarities and differences in the chapters and their significance in relation to the existing literature. Additionally, Chabal's introduction poses the key question of whether there is something unique to the African context which makes the continent particularly conflict-prone. That question should have been explicitly addressed in the conclusion.

Given the time demands on academic writers and the pressure to produce numerous publications, it may be unrealistic to expect that edited volumes will be either tightly focused or reasonably comprehensive. The fact that the volume leaves this reader eager to answer key questions may have its positive side. One might consider, for example, the hypothesis that scarcity (or abundance) produces widespread violence. The many empirical counter-examples demonstrate that the answer is "not necessarily." In the first chapter, Cramer alludes to a dynamic overlooked in Chabal's introduction, namely that abundance can be as significant as scarcity in conflict situations, as Collier and others have pointed out. However, although scarcity (and abundance) can increase the potential for violence, ultimately, it is social relations that matter the most. Several of the chapters underline this idea, which can be paraphrased as conflict and violence are fundamentally about meaning.

Cognitive or interpretive frameworks emerge out of a dialectical interaction of socially transmitted worldviews and lived experience. The symbolic, normative realm of conflict includes political, sociocultural, psychological, and economic dimensions. Cramer's excellent literature review implies what this anthropologist considers a vital point, namely that the causality of intergroup conflict cannot be reduced to a single variable or even a set combination of them. Econometric approaches and concepts such as relative deprivation and collective action have varying explanatory power, yet while certain situations may be more or less likely to produce violent conflict, there is no equation that can accurately predict widespread violence. The reason for this is deceptively simple; violence is produced by actors and not by situations or structures. Consequently, a nuanced ethnographic and sociohistorical perspective is essential for understanding conflict dynamics.

In summation, the volume would benefit greatly from a more robust framing of the material that explicitly addressed the questions implied in the title. However, this critique applies to most edited volumes. The breadth and depth of the literature reviews make this a worthy purchase. The book would not be an easy read for the uninitiated; however, due to the range of theoretical overviews and array of topics, it is a worthy addition to the collections of budding and seasoned Africanists interested in conflict and peacebuilding. The volume may also be useful for North American readers who are unfamiliar with prevailing themes in the European literature. Hopefully, this work can serve as a platform for sustained interdisciplinary efforts to enrich theory and practice.

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**The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism between the Two World Wars. Gary Wilder. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. 386 pp.**

Here's a fresh exploration of colonial overrule through the prism of social theory and literature: how did fervent minds, exercising their insightfulness and their hopes within the artifices of imperial political reason, ponder their world, in France, in West Africa, and in the French Caribbean space, in the 1930s? And what conclusions can we draw from their exertions, most notably in Africa? These are among the key questions which drive Gary Wilder's penetrating and meticulous account of colonial humanism and Negritude through the interwar period in the French West African empire.

Wilder studies two different but related "cohorts" of colonial intellectuals: French social and political theorists striving to infuse colonial political rationality with paternalist humanism, and Black writers proposing transformative projects of the French colonial empire which would be grounded in egalitarian humanism. Wilder demonstrates that although the two currents were inextricably interrelated at various levels, conceptual as well as personal, and were both contingent on the specific context of the colonial empire, their projects were distinct and converged only in the imagination of an ultimately unrealized political construct—the French imperial nation-state.

The French colonial humanists, most prominent among them such administrators-ethnographers as Maurice Delafosse, Jules Brévié, Robert Delavignette, Henri Labouret and Georges Hardy, articulated an epistemic formation derived from ethnological research and their administrative work to a vision of Greater France in which the cohabitation between metropolitan citizens and African national subjects would bolster France's international stature, serve its economic interests, and improve the economic conditions of the Africans while preserving their culture. In the context of the postliberal, Welfarist orientations of the 1930s, the colonial humanists associated France's greatness (economic and political) to the welfare of its colonial subjects, in ways, however, which revealed the inherent contradictions of the colonial project. A liberal democracy founded on republican values of active civism, liberty and equality, France developed in its colonial empire laws and policies predicated on political quiescence, subordination and racial/cultural hierarchy. Rather than asserting, as does much of the historiography on the subject, that these two aspects of the imperial French polity were distinct and mutually exclusive, Wilder posits that they were in fact two faces of the same coin, and mutually reinforcing in the making of a racialized imperial nation-state. At the same time that the equal human worth of Africans is proclaimed by republican universalism, their apparently obdurate cultural particularism is highlighted and denigrated by the associated notions of French cultural modernity or civilization. Colonial subjects are thus captured in a double bind which justifies their subservience through the task of their intrinsically delayed emancipation. As French nationals, they are dispossessed of a nationality that would be articulated to their own cultures, and as colonial subjects, they are deprived of the political rights associated with French citizenship.

While colonial humanism was being deployed within the instrumentalities of imperial government, Black students from Africa, the Antilles and Guiana confronted the ambiguity of republican racism in metropolitan France. Wilder traces the itinerary of a number of young

Black students from their tropical homes to Paris where both the dynamism and the oppressions of an exclusive cosmopolitan culture creates the climate of crisis that would lead to the birth of the Negritude movement. Léon Gontran Damas from Guiana, Aimé Césaire from Martinique and Léopold Sédar Senghor (Wilder calls him Leopold Senghor) from Senegal are the focus of Wilder's analysis. He shows how their intellectual evolution was shaped by the consciousness of the colonized, the contact with African American writing and radical outlook, and a tutelary dialogue with colonial humanists. By studying Negritude at its living sources, as it were, Wilder offers a fresh approach to a stale and, as he says, "calcified" idea. He conveys to us the sense of urgency which led these young Black intellectuals to invent the poetic forms and the theoretical *démarches* of a radical critique of colonization in an effort to break the double bind which defined their condition. Nonetheless, the aspiration to an egalitarian humanism and the celebration of African and Black particularity, which are emblematic of the Negritude movement, were overdetermined by the idiom of colonial humanism and French republicanism. The Negritude authors effectively recreated colonial humanism's discourse of incompatibilities between African and French cultures, while however asserting that modernity and French citizenship could transcend such deep-seated incompatibilities. On another level, Wilder's complex commentary on Damas, Césaire and Senghor's poetic oeuvre shows how these literary expressions worked both as corrosives revealing the bare, oppressive structures of colonial rationality and as the portent of an "alternative universalism, African humanism" which would have renovated Greater France. Yet Wilder leaves us also with the impression that Negritude's radicalism was indeed literary and that, politically and socially, it was ultimately an accommodation to colonial overrule. In that sense and although he rejects using the word "failure" regarding such projects and ideas, latter day, "calcified" Negritude at least can be considered a failure, as it ends up propping French neo-colonialist policies and its authoritarian African clients, as exemplified by the case of Togo's Eyadéma, which is discussed at the end of the volume. While not completely unwarranted, this assessment somewhat undervalues the key differences between the Negritude writers, and by insisting on the imminence of the movement to the French colonial enterprise, it underplays its alternative sense of African autonomy. For instance, it is clear that the appeal of Negritude writings has outlasted the French colonial empire (which cannot be said of the works of the colonial humanists) and it is poised to survive the declining French neo-colonial power as well.

Wilder's study is a serious and successful attempt at combining a macro level analysis of historical evolutions with political theory. He succeeds in this endeavor by adapting to his research the set of concepts and theoretical/methodological approaches derived from Foucault's work on political reason and governmentality. Wilder displays indeed the very Foucauldian suspicions against references to ideologies and pronouncements about success and failure based on the material achievements of programs and agendas. The liberating French imperial republic dreamed in different but related ways by colonial humanists and the Negritude authors failed to materialize, but the ways in which it was fought for, and in a sense, fought against, make for an enlightening tale. A substantial gain from reading this book is well summarized by Wilder when he writes that "inquiry into what might have been based on what actually existed may open possibilities for pursuing what might be beyond what is."

Wilder's writing style is crisply attuned to the complexity of the historical situations and the textual artifacts in which he weaves his argument. It can be occasionally dense, especially since his analytical narrative lacks colors and is deprived of impressions of the concrete and of the living context. Texts and theories dominate over facts and people. The reference to Marxist analysis invoked in introductory theorizations did not yield an exploration of the material basis of the world in which those texts and theories were produced. The important point however is that Wilder renews the historiography on the French colonial empire by compellingly arguing the identity between republican politics and colonial overrule, and by bringing to bear on his analysis a fertile and promising conceptual framework. We should look forward to new works from this historian.

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**Famine that Kills: Darfur, Sudan (Revised Edition). Alex De Waal. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. 258 pp.**

'It is deeply sad that Darfur should not only be a textbook study of famine, but of genocide as well.' (Alex De Waal)

From this deep concern over Darfur, Alex De Waal felt the need to assess and understand what has changed in a region currently considered to represent the world's worst humanitarian disaster. Almost twenty years after the first edition of *Famine that Kills*, and despite the author's recognition of some of the methodological limitations of the book and the evolution of humanitarian studies, the relevance of the book remains unquestioned. With an unchanged version of *Famine that Kills*, this new edition remains challenging for academics, practitioners and everyone concerned with the effectiveness of humanitarian relief. When it was first published and drawing significantly from the author's experience in the field, the book was a study of the famine which struck Darfur during 1984-85, focusing mainly on the tension between conflicting understandings of famine. It was, and to a certain extent still is, essentially a critical analysis of dominant literature and practice on famine relief and an attempt to change the way in which the affluent world understands and addresses famine crises in poor countries.

Refusing to be part of a new orthodoxy imposed on poor societies, De Waal assumes a rather critical stance, manifestly against a sterile agenda of relief to respond to famines and in favour of a redefined one, focused on the voiced concerns of rural people and the principles that underlie their actions. In 1989, the book aimed to start a fundamental dialogue between 'outsiders' and the rural people victims of famines. Today, this goal remains largely unchanged, as well as the book's main challenges, i.e. the need to problematize the concept of famine and challenge the assumption that outsiders naturally know what famine is and what is the best way to put an end to it. In a particularly interesting and acute new preface, De Waal seeks to understand what has changed since then and what lessons have been learned by the

international community in its responses to famine and crises of massacres and displacement. Despite an increased knowledge base about famines and the strategies to respond to them, as well as the adoption of codes of conduct and professional standards, the author argues that there are still important limitations, since there has not been a full translation of such increased expertise into more effective relief operations. The dialogue that Alex De Waal attempted to initiate between relief agencies and the people they serve remains tenuous, because the necessary preconditions— effective self-scrutiny, willingness to be patient and listen hard by those involved with famine relief— are still largely absent. Lamenting the lack of real progress in the analysis of the reality of rural people and also the continued neglect of the need to support their survival strategies, De Waal notes that most international writing and practice on the current famine in Darfur continues to mistakenly assume that relief food will make the biggest difference to the survival of these populations. In fact, to appreciate De Waal's critique of this ineffectiveness of international agencies' interventions, it is essential to understand and acknowledge that the impact of external relief programs may often be modest when compared to the far greater contribution to survival of traditional strategies and livelihoods maintained by people's own efforts.

In this new preface, and faced with the current tragic circumstances of the people in Darfur, De Waal also tries to understand the roots of current violence in the region and the origins of the massacres occurring ever since 2003. Acknowledging the existence of complex and overlapping identities in Darfur he thus examines, among other things, questions related to the roles of land, settlement disputes, national politics and ideology, which are key issues if one is to understand Darfur and the conflicts therein, and which must be addressed when responding to what is happening in the region. Recognizing an ongoing 'genocide' in Darfur, which fits the definition contained in the 1948 Genocide Convention, i.e. campaigns against ethnic groups with the intention of eliminating them in part or in a whole, as a consequence of a deliberate governmental military strategy, the author alerts us however to the mistakes of seeing it as a 'genocide' in the sense of absolute extermination of a population, and to the dangers of a refusal to respond appropriately.

But despite an unmasked scepticism, this revised edition ends with a note of hope: the hope that if the people of Darfur are provided with security, human rights, political representation, and the opportunity to pursue their livelihoods and develop their region, they will surely use their energy and determination to good effect. As De Waal so correctly observes, "outsiders should be humble in the face of the lived experience of surviving genocide. The people of Darfur have shown resilience in surviving famine: let us hope they have the same skills when faced with genocidal massacres."

*Famine that Kills* keeps on reminding us, then, that there is no universally applicable panacea to end famine or war, and that it is mainly people's own efforts, made possible by security in rural areas, effective health services and real international commitment that will help do that.

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**The Marketing of Rebellion: Insurgents, Media and International Activism. Clifford Bob. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 237 pp.**

In *The Marketing of Rebellion*, Clifford Bob poses a set of questions likely to find a broad audience among both scholars and practitioners. “How and why do a handful of local challengers become global *causes célèbres* while scores of others remain isolated and obscure? What inspires powerful transnational networks to spring up around particular movements? Most basically, which of the world’s myriad oppressed groups benefit from contemporary globalization?” (2).

Bob approaches these questions from the literature on social movements, to which he applies the concept of “exchange” to explain interactions between local movements and the external allies whose support they solicit—namely, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and transnational advocacy networks (TANs). A “market for transnational support” is created through the mutuality of interest between NGOs and TANS, on the one side, and domestic challengers, on the other— but the market is one where supply outstrips demand. Thus, the relative power of each party to the exchange almost invariably favors the NGO, as “their support has great significance for hard-pressed movements, yet NGOs have little reason to back any particular challenger” (20).

Indeed, Bob’s marketing perspective specifically omits the moral aspects of the insurgent-NGO transaction in favor of strategic elements in order to understand the success and failure of particular appeals for support. There is no “meritocracy of suffering” in this competitive global marketplace, where the degree of oppression rarely corresponds to the level of external acclaim. This marketing perspective is contrasted, awkwardly at times, with a “global civil society approach” celebrating the emergence of so-called principled forces arrayed against myriad injustices. In contrast, Bob underscores the elements of competition over cooperation, interest over principle, and strategic and structural advantage over the justice of a group’s cause.

To demonstrate the utility of marketing theory, Bob compares two cases of successful marketing in the Niger Delta and Chiapas—the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People and the *Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional*—with similarly-situated counterparts who failed to gain support, the Ijaw in Nigeria and the *Ejército Popular Revolucionario* in Mexico. “The transnational success of the Zapatistas and Ogoni were... complex, eminently political processes marked by strategic maneuvers and resonant framing on the part of insurgents and by careful assessment of mutual interests on the part of NGOs” (179).

The book’s account of MOSOP’s success in soliciting external allies illustrates these processes. Ken Saro-Wiwa, as with Subcomandante Marcos in the Zapatista case, emerges as a key figure in the story. Saro-Wiwa’s wealth and contacts facilitated MOSOP’s overseas activity and provided contacts with environmental and human rights groups that acted as “gatekeeper” NGOs. Their decision to back MOSOP activated other organizations to do the same (in addition to gatekeepers, Bob’s typology of NGOs includes, “followers” that rely on the recommendations of gatekeepers, and “matchmakers,” such as the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, that promote challengers to more powerful NGOs). Bob vividly describes MOSOP’s efforts to frame its goals to match supporter characteristics. Thus did the initial ethnonationalist agenda of political autonomy for the Ogoni translate into issues of human

rights and environmental destruction highlighting Shell's corporate malfeasance. Through a similar framing process, the Zapatistas went from defenders of Mexico's marginalized poor to a movement of indigenous resistance to all forms of "neo-liberalism". "These framings were not cynical inventions by power-hungry movements; instead, they corresponded to real though secondary elements of the underlying conflicts. For overseas audiences, however, these became the primary aspects, evoking feelings of familiarity, sympathy, and responsibility" (180).

The excellent conclusion examines the consequences of gaining transnational support. Here, Bob shifts from a focus on becoming a *cause célèbre*, the book's problématique, to more important questions about the consequences of outside support for the conflicts of local groups. His evaluation is pessimistic. Though the Ogoni campaign probably had some impact on Nigerian policy toward the Delta, the political marginality of the Ogoni and other minorities in Nigeria persists.

This leads to a series of recommendations on how to "tame the market," beginning with advice to insurgents to reconsider the prudence of internationalizing the struggle by seeking external aid. "Once gained, NGO assistance may promote unrealistic expectations both about an insurgency's prospects and its patrons' power to help achieve them" (116). This can leave insurgents even more vulnerable to domestic repression, whereupon they will find outsiders unable to help them at their moments of greatest peril. Such was certainly the case during the bloody crackdown against the Ogoni in 1995—at this moment, "the gravest crisis that MOSOP faced" its network of transnational support could not avert the disastrous execution of the Ogoni Nine, in spite of the networks successful lobbying of powerful governments and even Shell itself to place pressure on the Nigerian government.

With this book, Bob has provided a detailed portrait of how transnational support networks develop around local conflicts. No doubt his book will inspire passionate criticism from NGO and TAN practitioners who insist on the primary role of principle and morality in their work and perhaps they are correct. But Bob makes a strong argument that from the perspective of the group's soliciting outside aid, groups such as the Uyghurs, West Papuans, or India's Dalits (untouchables), hard-nosed calculations of costs and benefits in the competitive marketplace for recognition and aid appear to outweigh sympathy and emotion.

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**Practicing History in Central Tanzania: Writing, Memory, and Performance. Gregory H. Maddox with Ernest M. Kongola. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2006. 178 pp.**

Gregory Maddox's book, *Practicing History in Central Tanzania*, is good example of a new genre of African history that takes as its subject African public (popular, amateur or local) historians, sometimes called ethnohistorians, who write the histories of their own people for a family, local community and/or national audience. This inquiry is more interested in why and how people write history rather than the historical content itself. It seeks to historicize the

practice of history in Africa by demonstrating how the post-colonial African context influences the relationship of the present to the past. With books like Maddox's, Africanist scholars are now beginning to construct an African historiography that honors historians not trained in the academy.

In the not too distant past, public historians like Ernest Kongola, Maddox's subject, would have been disparaged by academics as someone whose writing of history was neither authentic oral tradition nor scholarly research. Furthermore, these popular historians were the bane of researchers collecting oral tradition, who found their informants "contaminated" by written histories, a process known as "feedback" in the methodology. Yet this book ably demonstrates that "giving voice to the voiceless" might also include these encyclopedic informants. Maddox's analysis of Kongola's historical practice as a way to "explore the production and meaning of history in 20<sup>th</sup> century Africa" is a wonderful addition to this growing body of literature.

Maddox argues that the seven volume historical corpus of Gogo public historian, teacher, and political officer Ernest M. Kongola, contributes to the construction of both a post-colonial social order and his own social personality. Although Kongola himself represents an elite class of educated Christian Tanzanians, he does not make a radical break with the traditional Gogo past, but rather acts as a culture broker or mediator to integrate clan oral traditions with a progressive nationalism and salvation history. In doing so, Kongola establishes a synthetic vision of the past that emphasizes continuity with, rather than opposition to, modernization and national development. Kongola's work can be understood as both hegemonic, in that its' Swahili language discourse legitimizes the authority of the nation, and counter hegemonic, in that it preserves the distinctly local and intimate.

Kongola, like others of his class who have gained power in post-colonial Tanzania, creates order by "domesticating" Christianity and smoothing over the generational and gendered struggles that resulted from colonialism. In Kongola's autobiography, which is reproduced in full, one sees the dominance of the mission, school and career in structuring his life. Kongola's autobiography is told as a moral exhortation for discipline and perseverance. Maddox describes Kongola's written work as performance to reinforce the notion that the stories are told in social space and time. Kongola, of course, does not perceive of his work as creating a new social order, rather he sees himself as searching for the truth about the past and recording it for future generations. In spite of this disjuncture, Maddox ably uses Kongola's work to demonstrate the creative intellectual work of literate Tanzanians to make sense of their place in the world.

The sources for this book are primarily Kongola's historical works (clan histories, his autobiography and the biographies of his wife, mother and father) and Maddox's interviews. Kongola's writings are based on a genre of clan histories that he performs orally at funerals and which he prepares through his own research. The book includes maps drawn by Kongola to accompany both clan and biographical writing that illustrate the space of social relationships. Maddox also puts this material into dialogue with colonial and mission archival records, academic work on the Gogo and Dodoma, the work of other popular historians like Mathias Mnyampala and the performance of culture through dance troupes and cultural artifacts at the Village Museum.

The literature of post-colonial discourse (Chatterjee and Mamdani) provides a theoretical base for the analysis Kongola's work but is also critiqued by Kongola's practice. Maddox uses

Kongola's writing to transcend the orality-literacy divide, treating both as a performance within a social context. Although Kongola researches and writes history in a literary idiom he does so using the structure of clan narratives, producing a hybrid form. This book is useful to scholars interested in the production of history in Africa and post-colonial popular culture. The book, however, assumes knowledge of the theoretical literature of post-colonial discourse and the construction of ethnicity in Africa, making it difficult to use in an undergraduate course without careful preparation.

One of the most striking things about the book is the extent to which it is intensely personal and self-reflective, highlighting the uneasy relationship between popular and academic historians. The book is billed as a "collaborative work" between Maddox and Kongola, who read and commented on each chapter. The two began developing a mutually influential intellectual relationship in 1986 when Maddox appeared in Dodoma to begin his dissertation research and Kongola began writing history. Through his financial sponsorship of Kongola's project in Dodoma Maddox hopes to support a dialogue about the past that will destabilize unequal power relations in the academy. Yet the book reflects his ongoing anxiety about the power dynamics inherent in the relationship and his own sense of moral obligation to Kongola. Maddox ends the book by contrasting his fairly esoteric goal of analyzing social change in post-colonial Africa to Kongola's more practical goal of bringing together the past and the present for a community experiencing rapid change. It is fitting that this new genre of African history makes us all squirm as it brings our own practice of history under scrutiny.

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**Engendering Human Rights: Cultural and Socio-Economic Realities in Africa. Obioma Nnaemeka and Joy Ezeilo, eds. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 320 pp.**

Nnaemeka and Ezeilo provide a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary overview of how context shapes the definition, interpretation, and enforcement of human rights in Africa. The focus of the book is on "engendering" or "developing and producing" human rights in Africa at a time when the universal notion of human rights presents an attractive solution to the problems plaguing postcolonial African states. While the focus of others working in this area, such as Bunch (1990) and Uvin (2004), has been on transforming theory and practice to incorporate feminist, rights-based approaches to development, this text moves the conversation forward by making the argument that the indivisibility of rights demands that attention be directed to cultural rights, socio-economic rights, and policy implementation in order to achieve universal human rights. While all citizens are entitled to human rights, all citizens do not have access to this entitlement. Nor is it always an appropriate goal as the series editor, Chandra Mohanty, suggests. The authors emphasize the understated reality that the lack of access to human rights proportionately impacts women. Despite attempts to regulate human rights with international law, violations abound.

The five sections of the book question the relevance of focusing on the universality versus the indivisibility of human rights. In general, the sources referenced were consistent with the objective of bringing light to core legal documents as well as academic work from a variety of disciplines and regions. However, this edited volume suffers from some common problems. The volume maintains the thread of argument, but the chapters range widely in effectiveness. The diversity of disciplines represented confounds the internal consistency. The concept of human rights is not well defined, nor is it adequately critiqued. For example, the authors do not address the issue of the boundaries or limits of freedom when universal concepts such as human rights are applied to particular cultural contexts. Despite the weaknesses, the book is successful overall. The cogent introduction and impressive collection of articles by scholars and practitioners in fields including law, public health, education, politics, and psychology make the book relevant to a similarly diverse audience.

The core argument about the indivisibility of cultural, socioeconomic, and human rights is clearly defined in the introduction and reinforced through sections III, IV, and V. Section II offers important historical and cultural context for Egypt. The chapter by renowned activist El Saadawi is a celebration of one of the many women who have prevailed despite major obstacles, in the spirit of what the volume sets out to do. She interrogates how neo-colonialism and religious fundamentalism conspire to oppress women in Egypt. After a personal and poetic exploration of her experiences with religious fundamentalism, she concludes hopefully with a note about harbingers of women's empowerment in Egypt.

Section III keeps with the theme of historicism and how historical context influences the structure and efficacy of the health sector in sub-Saharan Africa. de Gruchy and Baldwin-Ragaven, a medical doctor and public health professor, focus on the implementation of human rights, how rights are defined, and by whom in South Africa. Nzenza-Shand interrogates the corollary issue of how "participation, access and information" relate to "culture, justice, and empowerment" and how this relationship is constructed and active outside and inside of Africa based on her public health research work in rural villages in Zimbabwe (63). She is one of the few authors to take the core argument of cultural relativism to its logical conclusion by discussing global sisterhood as a system of hierarchical dominance and by advocating for the incorporation of traditional beliefs in the health sector. By the same token, she maintains that an effective local health care system must incorporate traditional beliefs in order to meet its intended aims and be sustainable. Rassinguié, a professor in women's and gender studies, underscores the critical importance of community organizations as institutional vessels of cultural relevance, participation, and empowerment.

Section IV expands the core argument about contextualizing rather than universalizing human rights to the girl child. The articles in this section oscillate between the development and implementation of legal apparatus for protecting the rights of girls and female adolescents (Ewelukwa, a law professor, and Osakwe & Nwodo, both English professors) and case studies of child labor and school-related gender-based violence (Babalola & Nwashili, academic activists, and Webster, a teacher). The fifth and final section differs from Parts III and IV because it focuses on a violation of human rights—gender violence. This section would benefit from a section introduction. The first and last chapters of the section address female circumcision from different perspectives and to different ends on issues ranging from language

(‘female circumcision’ versus ‘female genital mutilation’) to interventions (‘intervening in phases taking account of lived reality’ versus ‘global campaigns to end the practice’). The middle two chapters on domestic violence both talk about how a private human rights violation can be addressed in a public and state-regulated sphere. I finished the section wanting a chapter that integrates the two perspectives and allows the chapters to be in dialogue with one another.

The final chapter began with a personal reflection on activist work in Germany, and ended with a conclusion which was better suited to the book as a whole rather than to the chapter alone. In her conclusion, Levin raises the concept of ‘nego-feminism,’ or the politics of negotiation, compromise, and shared values indigenous to African communities, a concept, which if raised earlier, would have been an apropos framework for the entire volume (297). Nego-feminism, a concept popularized by Nnameka, a professor of French, women’s studies, and African Diaspora studies, supports the argument that if communalism rather than individualism prevails, the natural balance of African society will allow women to change cultural norms in conversation with men.

The organizational critique does not, however, undermine the important points raised by the edited volume. Nor does it negate the central point that in Africa, the engendering of human rights requires specific attention to history, gender, race and context. The book will fill conceptual lacunas and bridge the human rights and development discourses in the classroom and beyond with case studies, which include lessons which can be applied to other contexts. *Engendering Human Rights* is an important book because it provides a broader framework for human rights and development. It raises issues such as cultural relativism, the universality of problems, and relates the human rights discourse to women and the girl child explicitly. This book shows that if we do not pay attention to the socioeconomic and cultural context of women, the girl child, and socially excluded groups when defining human rights, the entitlement is bankrupt.

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