Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production in Tanzania: Reference to Modes of Production in the Old Ugweno State of North-eastern Tanzania

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Abstract

Many scholars and politicians have argued that pre-colonial Africa consisted of classless societies. For the politicians this was an advantage since it provided one point to advocate certain policies like African Socialism. This socialism argued that Africa could return to the "socialist" past and build once again a classless society based on love, working together and respecting humanity. For the scholars this line arose out of being carried by the tide of African Socialism in the 1960s and 1970s. Some scholars just assumed the classlessness of pre-colonial Africa as a result of little research done on the topic. In Tanzania, African socialism took a strong hold in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and research on the classiness of pre-colonial African social formations almost ceased. This paper is an attempt to revive this research. Contrary to popular beliefs in Tanzania it is demonstrated (with a real historical case study) that modes of production in pre-colonial Tanzania were developed beyond the primitive communal level. It will be argued with real examples that there were class societies in pre-colonial Tanzania.

Introduction

In his essay "Ujamaa - The Basis of African Socialism", Dr. J. Nyerere argues that pre-colonial Africa consisted of societies based on human respect and

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everybody working for the benefit of the community.[1] Nobody starved, either of food or of human dignity, or because he lacked personal wealth. He could always depend on the wealth possessed by the community of which he was a member. According to Nyerere, there was not a leisured class of landowners. He goes further and calls these traditional societies socialist. He further argues:

> One of the most socialist achievements of our society was the sense of security it gave to its members, and the universal hospitality on which they could rely. But it is too often forgotten, nowadays, that the basis of this great socialist achievement was this: that it was taken for granted that every member of society contributed his fair share of efforts towards the production of its wealth.[2]

Nyerere goes on to argue that he was brought up in tribal socialism, and that in tribal societies individuals or families within the tribe were rich or poor according to whether the whole tribe was rich or poor. He even doubted whether the equivalent of the word "class" existed in any indigenous African language. Language describes the ideas of those who speak it, and the idea of class or caste was non-existent in African society. The only problem was technology:

> African socialism, on the other hand, did not benefit from the Agrarian Revolution or the Industrial Revolution. It did not start from the existence of conflicting 'classes' in society.[3]

Dr. Nyerere's problems of understanding pre-colonial African societies and their economies is based on two sources of error. Firstly, it seems that he is generalizing from the experience (real or mystic) of his own tribe or clan. This error also arises due to the wider problem of little research done on the old African societies. However, it is now known that pre-colonial Africa consisted of many varied types of societies. Only case studies can help us in reconstructing the history of these societies. Secondly, it seems that Nyerere's political position (a prophet of African socialism) biases his own conception of African history.

Nyerere influenced many African scholars. They took his political arguments and accepted his account of the African past without questioning its validity. They then became African socialists or socialists talking social democratic and even utopian positions. These scholars were not interested in doing research on modes of production in pre-colonial Africa. In real academic life little research

was done on the topic. The rationale could have been that there was only one mode of production in pre-colonial Africa (primitive communalism or "tribal socialism") which was classless, and thus there was nothing to research on. Maybe these scholars thought enough was known on primitive communalism from European writers who had researched and written much on social development. That is why even this primitive communal society was not researched on and studied.

Few researchers on the subject of modes of production came from Francophone Africa.[4] This is because Francophone countries were less hit by the tide of African socialism in comparison to the Anglophone countries. Also French anthropology and history on pre-colonial Africa tended to have a more Marxian/materialist tradition than British anthropology and history.

It is the above background that stimulated this research on pre-colonial societies in Tanzania. Because of the geographical vastness of the country, I decided to concentrate on one state only, although there existed many class social formations with states in pre-colonial Tanzania.

The Ugweno state was geographically located in north-eastern Tanzania, occupying the area now known as north Pare, which consists of a plateau on the mountains, and the surrounding plains. This area roughly lies between the present Tanga to Arusha main road, Rombo and Moshi districts, lake Jipe and Same district. Its area approximates that of the island of Zanzibar or roughly half the area of Northern Ireland. This state seems to have risen between 1300 and 1500 A.D.

It is necessary to mention that this paper is not a critique of African socialism although it rejects the assumptions that pre-colonial African societies were socialist in nature. It is rather a continuation of the little research done on the topic, and a challenge for more research to be done by African scholars. The source of my data is interviews with older members of present-day Ugweno society, already written history, and observations on sites of historical importance in present day Ugweno.

Modes of Production in the Ugweno Social Formation

We can identify two main modes of production in the Ugweno social formation - the artisan or craft based mode of production, and the peasant based mode of production (m.o.p.). The artisan m.o.p. was dominated by two clans - the Wafinanga and Washana. The Wafinanga specialized in iron smelting, and the Washana in the making of iron tools like hoes and machetes. Iron ore was

extracted from red earth by washing it in water and smelting the heavier iron containing material left under the water. Otherwise the iron containing material was collected in valleys after heavy rain which did the washing.

Towards the end of the 19th century European iron and steel was gradually available. Since this iron and steel could be heated and turned into implements without smelting, the Wafinanga gradually gave up smelting and became peasants. The Washana kept on making iron tools but were also slowly phased out due to the importation of metal products from Europe. To the present, however, there are a few members of this clan who make iron implements like traditional hand hoes and sickles. I managed to trace and visit only one iron-smith in the whole area although I saw many abandoned old iron works. Thus at most there may be only two or three families still in the profession. This mode of production was thus killed by the new economy that came with colonialism which by force and competition introduced European-made metal products en masse.

The iron works of Ugweno were controlled by the clan and lineage heads of the metal working community. These were the master craftsmen who organized the labour process, and had power over how to invest the surplus from the metal works. These clan and lineage heads were also traders who sold the iron products from the industry they controlled to the farming community and the external societies. Those who bought iron products paid in animals, farm products, and pieces of pig iron. From accounts of early European travellers we know that the Ugweno iron works produced the best iron and iron products in the whole of what is now north-eastern Tanzania and south-eastern Kenya. The proof of this is that this iron and its products were extensively imported by other societies which had their own iron works. Thus in 1871, Charles New noticed that:

> ... the people supply axes and hoes to the Wataveta, Wachagga, Wakahe, Waarusha, etc., the iron of which is smelted and forging done by the Waguena (i.e. Wagweno) themselves.[6]

The iron industry was so developed in Ugweno that in the process of exchange iron obtained the status of money which could be turned to tools on reaching the iron smiths. The material which contained iron could be seen in some valleys after rain, that is after the iron rich soil was washed and the material deposited by rain water. The peasants knew through experience that iron could be extracted from this material. They would pick the black material

and send it to the iron smelters. The latter smelted this material for iron, and in return they were paid in agricultural or dairy produce. If the owner of the iron (now pieces of pig iron or "minya" in Kigweno) wanted tools he could take his iron to the iron smiths (the Washana) who would then make the required tools, and be paid in agricultural or dairy produce just like the smelters. But since iron could be sorted, the owner of the pig iron could keep it until when he wanted it to be turned into tools. He could sell his iron for other products at the local market, or surrender part of it to the iron-smelter and the iron smith as payment for their labour. This is how iron master craftsmen got iron to make implements for trading. It is this process which made iron get the status of money in Ugweno.

At the political level, we notice an alliance between the master craftsmen (i.e. heads of the metal working clans and lineages) and the state. A deeper analysis shows that this alliance was one of convenience for two exploiting classes. The master craftsmen exploited the other members of the metal working community. These were the women who did domestic work for them, and the trainees or journeymen who carried out most of the physical work in the iron industry. Those who controlled the state (as will be demonstrated later) exploited the labour of the peasant community.

The state had a say in the iron industry. For example, he could determine what kind of articles to be produced and the standard the pieces of pig iron to be sold in the markets in his state. There was a market in every district of the state, and each market had its own day for assembling. (Some of these old markets - Kaloye, Ngothari, Mwira, Kithare - used to convene until the 1960s although the nature of the goods traded had changed). The state collected tribute from the markets and the iron smelters and smiths in the form of iron implements. Thus the rulers of the country exploited the iron smelters and smiths as well. The master craftsmen consolidated their position and prestige by sending seasonal or yearly gifts (iron implements) to the head of state.

The alliance between the rulers and the master craftsmen was an alliance of two exploiting classes. It was an alliance for convenience which never extended to the non-economic fields. At the cultural level, the clan of the rulers (Waswia) and the iron working clans were bitter rivals and enemies. The Washana and Waswia clans, especially, were traditional enemies who never married because tradition had it that in a very old war (date unknown) members of the latter massacred members of the former. It seems, however, that the enmity could be based on competition between farmers (the peasants) and the iron forgers rather than traditions or even myths. Research has shown that the Washana clan never

did any cultivation as they specialized in iron works, especially forging. The Waswia, on the other hand, specialized in farming and animal husbandry and never did any iron work. In any case they could not indulge in iron smelting and forging since the master craftsmen effectively guarded the secrets of working with metals. Thus the rivalry between the two clans was more of an occupational or trade competition. An interesting proof for this conclusion is that the Wafinanga, who gave up iron work earlier than the Washana, mixed more freely with the Waswia even in marriage. However, there is enough evidence from older members of the present Ugweno society which shows that in the olden times the Wafinanga were as hostile to the Waswia as to the Washana.

In the Ugweno social formation there also existed very specialized wood workers, weavers and potters. Pottery was especially very developed, and the pots from this area are exported to towns up to the present, and used to be exported to Kenya up to the 1960s. However, these industries were badly hit by colonial trade which brought in factory-made pots, spoons, clothes, etc., from Europe. What exists of them now are a few isolated craftsmen who, because of unreliable markets, are no longer interested in the generational reproduction of their crafts. In the olden times the members of these crafts did little or no farming like the iron workers, and thus can be grouped in the artisan based mode of production.

The reconstruction of history is not easy in a situation like this where there is so little in terms of written records, and almost the non-existence of archaeological records. Thus although I could establish that the iron works in Ugweno were the oldest and most technologically advanced in that part of East Africa, I was, however, unable to establish whether there were metal work trainees from external communities who came to learn smelting and forging in Ugweno.[7]

I said above that the production of metal implements was the most dynamic m.o.p. in the Ugweno social formation. This m.o.p. turned out instruments of labour or tools. However, it seems that the dominant m.o.p. was the peasant-based one. This also involved the majority of the population of Ugweno. Again, here the seemingly clan organization can easily submerge the reality of the class nature of the social division of labour.

In the farming community, there was the Waswia clan (which also had the status of a "ruling clan") and several other smaller clans. District chiefs (mostly drawn from the Waswia clan) and Waswia lineage heads controlled the land in the name of the head of state. These *de facto* landlords allocated the

land to the peasantry. The peasants in turn paid an annual tribute or land tax to the landlord who kept part of it, and conveyed the rest to the head of state. Thus the important relations of production was not the relationship between clans, but the relationship between land-lords and peasants who had almost the status of serfs in the older European feudal societies.

A closer analysis of the land ownership shows that there were actually two main land tenure systems. There was the land around the peasant's home which was cultivated with permanent crops. This was in the mountain or plateau part of the country. Then there was the land near the plains which was re-allocated each year and planted with seasonal crops. The land-lord class was able to re-allocate this land for its own economic ends. Since the peasants' possession of this land was annual, it meant that the peasant could be refused further tenure if he disobeyed the land-lord who had earlier allocated the land to him. Thus the land-lord had a strong control over this land and could, in the name of head of state, determine the type of crops to be cultivated. The tribute (paid in kind) on this land was fixed by the head of state and his vassals (the land-lords) who collected it and remitted a pre-determined portion to the head of state.

In the mountain zone the land tenure was more complicated. Since permanent crops were grown here, it was harder for the landlord to evict the peasant in case of default (e.g. refusal or failure to pay tribute for this land). The head of state and landlords could not refuse the peasants to grow permanent crops because this was the only guard for the whole population against such calamities like crop failure in the plains or hunger. What happened in the mountains is that the Waswia land-lords allocated more land to members of their clan who were turned into puppet peasants exempted from most of the tax on the permanent crops land. However, they paid the full tribute on the seasonal crops land near the plains and were not exempted from other dues to the landlords and the state. One of the most notorious dues was the one goat out of the dowry paid for any woman who was married in the state. The ruling class of landlords was able to use its control of the state to exploit peasants. The nature of the political control will be clearer when it is examined in the next part of the paper. What is important to emphasize here is that the landlord class (which included the head of state and his ministers) was in effective control over the allocation of land, and was able to systematically extract a surplus (i.e. tax in kind) from the peasantry.

There is a theoretical problem here of where in the division of labour in the peasant based m.o.p. can we place the noted favoured or puppet peasants. Maybe the introduction of the concept of a free peasantry (free in the sense of

land owning) may help to resolve the problem. It seems that allowing the peasants who were members of the ruling clan to have relative freedom over the land allocated to them (the land with permanent crops), was a necessary condition for the Ugweno aristocracy to entrench its economic domination over the whole economy. Since the puppet peasants could ideologically identify with the ruling clan, it means that for the state the number of real and potential collaborators was increased, while the number of potential opposers was checked.

Another theoretical problem is the question whether the artisan based m.o.p. and the peasant based m.o.p. should not be classified as one m.o.p. This would still leave the metal works to be classified as the most dynamic sector of the Ugweno economy.

This problem of classification can be resolved by treating the artisan and agricultural economies as division of labour in the same mode of production. The argument can be strengthened by taking the example of capitalism where we never treat the manufacture of ploughs and tractors, or even the manufacture of textiles, as a different m.o.p. from commercial farming.

A section of the peasantry (the Wambughu clan) mainly kept cattle and did little, or no cultivation. However, they were subdued in similar manners by the landlords and the state. Since legally all the land belonged to the head of state, and was held in his name by the landlords, it meant that even these cattle keepers had to depend on the head of state for land. They particularly needed more land since they were cattle grazers. The cattle keeping peasantry paid its tax in animals. This peasantry was particularly more exploited (i.e. paid a heavier tax) because they were less organized than the farming peasants due to the nature of their occupation. They were more exploited also because their tax (cattle) was the most valued product of the land . Here, we can see again that through the legal ownership of land and the control of the means to put this claim to effect, the Ugweno aristocracy was able to exploit all sections of the peasantry, albeit in varied degrees.

The Ugweno aristocracy owned a considerable number of domestic slaves. Domestic servitude was quite widespread although not to the same extent like, for example, was the case in the old West African states of Abron in Gyaman and Ashanti.[8] Like in Gyaman and Ashanti, however, the people who fell to this domestic servantship were those who had failed to pay fines or tributes to the landlords or the state, and thus they were directly enslaved by their creditors. The most common way of enslavement in Ugweno was when one got married. By tradition one had to pay four cows, four goats and several other smaller things (like sugar cane rum) to the bride's father. Without paying this dowry (at

least two cows as advance payment) you could not marry. If you married without paying the dowry, your children would legally be counted as your father in law's children, and thus you could not get dowry when your daughters married. What happened then is that a poor peasant would borrow animals for marrying his son, and if he failed to pay back the animals the son would be enslaved together with his children. The children of a domestic slave were automatically domestic slaves to their father's master, but they could buy their freedom by paying the original debt contracted by their father.

It is hard at this stage to establish whether domestic slavery was a different m.o.p. or was an appendage of the peasant based m.o.p. Clearly the domestic servant was not a peasant in the sense we have applied the term so far. The domestic servant worked in his master's farms, and what he produced in this land wholly belonged to the master. In return he was given food and shelter. If a m.o.p. is defined mainly by the nature of its relations of production, we can see that domestic servantship constituted a different relation of production in comparison to the peasant/landlord m.o.p. Since relations of production are always changing and forming, we can consider domestic slavery as an embryonic and third m.o.p. in the Ugweno social formation.

An alternative theory would be to view the domestic slaves as a special category of peasants who worked the landlord's land like the other peasants, but were more exploited. This theory could be strengthened by the fact that domestic slaves were in most cases given small plots of land by their masters to grow food, although they could not make any legal claim over the land. This contrasts with the other peasants who could pass their land with permanent crops to their children as long as the children kept on paying the original agreed land tax or tribute.

It is clear from the above explanation of the economic relations in Ugweno that this society was not based on any form of primitive communalism. This is clear even if we disagree on the classification of the modes of production. We must try and discover the source of the confusion which categorizes pre-colonial African societies as communal even when they are not. In the case of the Ugweno social formation we notice one element which can lead to this confusion. There was a tradition in Ugweno known as "makamba", which meant working on each others' farm, house, etc., in turns. For example, ten people could clear a plot of land jointly in the farm-land near the plains. They would do this if, for example, their farms adjoined each others. However, such co-operation ended with the clearing of the land, and all the other remaining activities were done on private household basis. In other cases a group of

households would build a house for one family but on the condition that each one would come out to build the others' houses when the need arose. However, this cooperation in such activities was insignificant, and it seems it was for convenience, i.e., for tasks which needed concerted effort to be easily done. Thus, such cooperation cannot provide a basis to conclude that such societies were communal. In the case of Ugweno this cooperation never even covered most of the households, and it was voluntary. For example, it never extended to the permanent crops land where most of the agricultural production was done, and it never extended to the keeping of animals. This was society dominated by private household production, each utilizing the labour of its members.

At the level of the economy there is still the important question of how the surplus to support the exploiting classes (landlords and master craftsmen) was obtained. The Ugweno state occupied a well- watered mountain area with two rainfall seasons, and a relatively cool climate. The Ugweno people were able to adopt many crops of which the most important was banana.[8] The nature of this crop is such that after the initial planting and attendance, the farm needs less care, and the production continues without planting new plants on the same area. Thus the cultivator can have time and food to deal with other economic activities like crafts and animal husbandry. It is likely that the division of labour in Ugweno resulted in this manner. As the farms became established some members of the community could involve themselves in other economic activities like iron and wood works, and tend other crops like beans, peas, maize, sweet potatoes, cocoyams, yams, sugar cane, oil nuts, etc. Others even started to indulge in politics on a full-time basis.

Wherever they came from (some traditions mention Taveta, and others Ethiopia via Taveta) to settle in the area, the Wagweno came with a considerable number of animals. They soon discovered how important cattle manure was to agriculture. They thus carried out extensive fertilization of farms, and this further laid the basis for a more advanced division of labour to evolve. This is because cattle manure worked quite well to increase productivity of farms and retain soil moisture - an observation which can easily be made even in present-day Ugweno farms.

There is the harder question on what kind of economy and society preceded the one analysed above when I outlined the three modes of production in Ugweno. There is virtually no data on this issue. All that can be said is that we cannot rule out the possibility that the Ugweno social formation might have been preceded by agricultural primitives communal modes of production. If this was the case, it could be that with the introduction of more advanced crops like

banana, and more advanced technology like iron smelting and forging, it was possible for other changes like a more pronounced division of labour and a more advanced social order to evolve. Irrigation played an important role in advancing the economy of Ugweno. Remains of old water works can still be seen in the mountains, and near the plains surrounding the mountains.

The superstructural aspects of the Ugweno social formation

At the helm of the Ugweno state was the head of state who was referred in Kigweno as "mangi mrwe", who was the paramount chief or king. The Ugweno state was not a chiefdom as such. It was not a state in the sense of the small states of central and western Tanzania which were headed by chiefs with various titles like "mtemi". Ugweno was an elaborate complex of a political system fully developed with ministers, a central government and district administration. The head of state was assisted by a chief minister ("mnjama") who presided over the court of the state, and was head of all government affairs. The chief minister was assisted by four senior ministers: ministers of foreign affairs and war, agriculture, health, and initiation rites.

The fact that there was a minister for agriculture suggests that either agricultural production was fairly advanced, or the state had interest in organizing agriculture, or both. The minister for agriculture was assisted by various agricultural officers, and their role was to allocate land (both in the mountains and the plains) and ensure that the land was well cultivated. They also administered irrigation near the plains when the supply of water was limited during the dry seasons. They also collected from landlords part of the tribute paid by peasants for the head of state. Since the agricultural minister and officers were selected from landlords, it means that many of them were also district chiefs. Thus the office of agricultural officers bestowed on these people was not accidental. The state was a corporate landlord with the same interests as individual landlords. Agricultural success meant that more resources came to the state. It is clear that those who controlled the state apparatuses had also control on the land and its products. The fact that they could, for example, supervise irrigation shows that they also had some control on the labour process.

An investigation of the role of ideology in the social formation is equally informing, interesting, and helps us to understand how strong the control by the state was in Ugweno. There were initiation rites for men which staying in a forest training camp for about six months. In the forest the young men were politicized and given military training. They took oaths of loyalty to the existing

order and to defend the state. This was important to the state since external raids for cattle were common from other tribes like Wamasai and Wachagga.

There was a standard battle cry used to call men for war. The young men were taught this battle cry and how to distinguish it from a mock or enemy's battle cry. They were taught that it was compulsory for every able-bodied man to respond to a battle cry by immediately taking arms and rallying behind the state's military field commander (i.e. the minister for external affairs and war). They were made to understand that it was degrading for a man to fail to respond to a battle cry by, for example, hiding in an underground trench or in the bush.[10] What is important to note here is the vigorousness and effectiveness of the politicization carried on the young men in the forest. For example, until now, due to the hangover from this training the men of Ugweno will still respond to a traditional battle cry the same way as it was in the old society.[11] And this is after over a hundred years since the end of tribal wars.

Young women also underwent a similar ideological training, which however took less time and was carried in smaller forest camps. The minister for initiation rites had a woman co-minister in charge of the young women's forest training. However, since women never became soldiers in this society, they were not taught fighting.

The initiation rites for both sexes were tightly controlled by the state. The two ministers who supervised the initiation rites worked directly under the prime minister and the head of state. To ensure their loyalty these two ministers (like the head of state, the prime and all the senior ministers) could only come from the Waswia ruling clan. Strictly speaking this clan was not a ruling clan as such because only the land-lords from this clan constituted the ruling class or the aristocracy. Clan ideology was only used when it suited the interests of the rulers. This is an important point because there is the old tendency of rushing to the conclusion that societies which had some form of clan or tribal organization were classless/communal. The above organization only ensured that the ruling class also firmly controlled the ideological and coercive apparatus of the state.

In normal life the young men from the forest training were automatically soldiers who could be summoned any time by the head of state for attacking external communities for cattle or for suppressing the local population in case of internal protest. The political and ideological orientation acquired in the forest camps made sure that they would serve the state irrespective of their clan origin. Any youngster who would not be politicized to the required standard or questioned the existing order was ruthlessly eliminated in the forest camps and

his family would be informed that he was "swallowed" by the forest. By tradition and law no one could question the secret forest rites even if a prince or prime minister's son vanished. The feeling of "same treatment" appeased the commoners. In any case if one died in the forest there could be no basis for a court case since the body of the dead soldier was never recovered.[12]

The forest training was thus a very important ideological and military apparatus of the Ugweno state. Sacrifices and religious rites were also conducted in the same forests. For example, when the head of state wanted to sacrifice animals to pray for rain and peace for the country he would do so in the same forests. The high priests were closely associated with the head of state. They came from one Waswia lineage from which also, by tradition, the prime minister was appointed by the head of state. The association of the forest camps with religious rites completed the ideological control by the state. This was the most useful apparatus for socializing the general population, who would pay all their dues like land taxes to the head of state and his land lord-vassals without questioning (and even happily). I would argue here that the control of the ideological aspect was equally important as the control of land and the iron industry for retaining political power.

A less important ideological/political apparatus in this old Ugweno society was the head of state's advisory council consisting of all ministers and elders appointed by the head of state from the different geographical parts of the state. Most of the members of this council came from the ruling clan. The function of the council was to bring its members closer to the state, the prime minister and the four senior ministers, mentioned earlier. The same can be said of the parliament. Every district of the kingdom was represented by two elders and the district chief. Most of these people belonged to the ruling clan, and since they had no much political power they were no more than advisory more council puppets and associates of the state.

What was the role of long distance trade in the Ugweno social formation? It seems that by the time long distance trade started the state was already centuries old. There may, however, be a correlation between the rise of long distance trade and the advancement of the division of labour in Ugweno society. It also appears that this trade could have helped to strengthen the Ugweno state as more wealth came in the society. The most important product traded was iron tools and pig iron which brought in animal wealth to Ugweno. The head of state strengthened his treasury by the tax in the markets in his domain where traders from external societies went to buy the iron products and pig iron.

Sometimes in the second half of the 19th century guns from the coast

entered the market. An important market developed in the plains to the north of Ugweno mountains (near Mount Ngofi and Lake Jipe). Local traders from Ugweno sold ivory in exchange for guns and other products like cloth. They hunted elephants in the plains surrounding the Ugweno mountains. The role of guns in the state's development or decline is however not yet clear. The Wagweno seem not to have been very keen with the guns, although they were interested in them as anybody would for a new weapon. The reason is that these guns (muzzle loaders) were very crude and almost as dangerous to the firer as to the target. Some traditional weapons in Ugweno like bows and poisoned arrows were safer to use and maybe even superior as they could strike more accurately at longer distances. Still the rulers of Ugweno acquired a considerable quantity of the guns. Long distance trade for Ugweno did not last long however, because in 1884 Tanganyika became a German colony, and by 1900 there was a German Lutheran Mission right in the centre of the now officially abolished state of Ugweno (i.e. the Shighatini Mission).

Conclusion

Sometimes in the 1860s or 1870s, before German colonization in 1884, the Ugweno state had started to lose its political power. This decline seems to have come mainly due to internal contradictions. The exploitation of the people seems to have been excessive, especially in the various taxes and other dues imposed on the peasantry. Many external attacks had been repulsed, thanks to the Ugweno state's elaborate and effective military system. There are many accounts of these in Ugweno oral history. However, it seems that the land tax was excessive, especially in the marginal districts of the state. The district of Usangi to the south of the kingdom was the first to rebel, and refuse paying the annual tax to the head of state. Fearing repression the inhabitants of Usangi sought external aid from the Mbaga chiefdom, in what is now South Pare. With the help of soldiers from Mbaga, a military contingent sent by the Ugweno head of state to crush the rebellion in Usangi was successfully beaten back. This district was however unfortunate since the Mbaga helpers, impressed by the success against the Ugweno army, decided to stay in Usangi and rule the district on their own.

The rebellion in Usangi sparked more internal resistance. For the first time (around 1860s) a section of the Ugweno army rebelled and refused to fight for their head of state. They claimed that he kept most of the animals from raids for himself. Thus a Wachagga raid in Ugweno (around 1860s) resulted in a loss of

a considerable amount of the Wagweno's most valued wealth - cattle.

Around the same time a bitter struggle resulted in the Ugweno aristocracy as different princes and chiefs vied for the seat of head of state. The state of Ugweno never collapsed as such but by the time of German colonialism in 1884,it was much weaker and smaller in size. The landlords however successfully continued with their traditional claim to the right to allocate land and collect a tribute for it. This practice continued well under colonial rule, and even today one still finds few traditional landlords still collecting tax (''mbuta'') from land they inherited from their ancestors. Peasants producing crops and animals by utilizing household, and sometimes hired labour, now dominate the economy of Ugweno.

Notes

1. J.K. Nyerere: *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism* (Oxford University Press, Dar es Salaam 1968).

2 *Ibid*, p. 5.

3. *Ibid*, p. 11.

4. See for, example, S. Amin, et C. Coquery-Vidrovitch: *Histoire Economique due Congo 1880-1968* (I.F.A.N.Dakar Editions Anthropos Paris 1969) and C. Coquery-Vidrovitch et H. *L'Afrique de 1800 a Nos Jour* (Paris, Pressesde France, 1974).

5. See, for example, E. Terray: ''Long Distance Exchange and the Formation of the State:The Case of the Abron Kingdom of Gyam'' in *Economy and Society* Vol.3, No.3, August 1974.

6. C. New: *Life, Wanderings and Labours in Eastern Africa* (3rd Edition, Frank Cass, London 1971) (First edition 1873).

7. One proof of the superior technology of the Ugweno iron works is that its iron lasted longer than iron from nearby tribes. This is proved by the popularity of this iron in the ''foreign'' markets and internal markets attended by ''foreigners.'' The oral history of nearby tribes subscribes to this hypothesis.

8. See E. Terray: *ibid.*

9. R. Oliver: "The Problem of the Bantu Expansion in *Journal of African History*. Vol.7, No.3, 1960. pp. 369-371.

10. The Wagweno had built an impressive network of defence of underground trenches (*mireshe*) for hiding women, children and cattle during war.

11. An interesting incident was in early 1960s when there was a traditional battle cry (lukunga) from one Vuchama vwa Ndambure village in Ugweno. This is now remembered by even young people. In less than half an hour the cry went all over the plateau of Ugweno (now the old Ugweno area is called North Pare or Mwanga District). The men picked their rusted and forgotten weapons inherited from their grandfathers and rushed to the scene of the "battle", i.e., where the cry had originated. Some of them had to walk for ten miles only to be disappointed since the battle cry had come from a couple fighting. According to tradition the men seized and roasted the cattle of the man who was fighting his wife and from whose house the battle cry had come from. This was the standard traditional fine (seizing the cattle of the false battle crier) for making a false or mockery battle cry and the idea was to deter people from making unnecessary battle cries.

12. Older men of Ugweno flatly refused to tell me how people were eliminated in the forest. They had taken an oath not to say anything on what took place in the forest, and those who are still alive would not betray their oath. Some people who went to the forest training are still alive because the practice of initiation went on after colonization - possibly up to the 1920s or 1930. My own assumption is that the dead soldier's body would be burned to ashes or buried in a remote part of the clearly demarcated forests for training. These forests were strictly no-go areas even when there was no training taking place.