EXPORT CROPS AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN TANGANYIKA 1929–61

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1. INTRODUCTION

This article considers crops exported from Tanganyika during the middle and later periods of colonialism from the point of view of a theory of underdevelopment as a process.[1] It assumes that underdevelopment is not a condition but a historical occurrence, and that it is different from a process of development. Underdevelopment is not a lower stage of development but the active perversion of production from the fulfilment of the needs of a society to the fulfilment of those of a different external society.[2] It follows from this definition that crops produced entirely for export, as sisal, coffee and cotton were during the colonial period, were contributing to the process of underdevelopment. Their increased production should not be described as development. To do so implies that increased production for whatever purpose constitutes development, which is how the colonialists themselves used the word; or that an increased income in the hands of certain individuals is development, which is how some African beneficiaries of the system have used the word. The congruence of interest between those who controlled the colonial state and those who produced export crops was an aim consciously pursued by the colonialists during at least the later part of the colonial period. But even those who produced for the external economy were becoming dependent on it. And the more they believed their interests lay within the system the easier it became for the colonialists to run. A social group appeared who by growing export crops assisted the process of underdevelopment of their own society. The discussion, therefore, is not merely a matter of terminology. It involves the examination of the aims and practices of those who held power within the colonial society, those who grew export crops and the resulting processes in the society as a whole. It is thus not merely an economic question either.

It is necessary to examine the question historically as well as theoretically both in order to show the effects of the process of underdevelopment and in order to establish the historical nature of the process. One of the most important effects of underdevelopment has been dependence, an inability to make decisions and to act in accordance with one's aims, without the concurrence of an external power. It is necessary to demonstrate that this dependence is the result of historical events and not a static characteristic.

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Apologists for colonialism have argued that dependence is a part of African character, that Africans were unable to provide for their own development and hence an external power fulfilled a necessary and beneficial function. But this is a perversion of fact, the confusion of cause and result. Colonialism caused certain conditions among the colonised, and was not caused by those conditions.

Similarly, statements have been made about African growers' "irrational" reactions to price incentives during the colonial period. They have been said to demonstrate this irrationality or "perversity" by producing more when prices are lower and producing less when prices are higher. The theory of the target-worker falls into this category. African labourers have been said to have the characteristic of working hard to achieve a certain amount of cash in hand and then to cease earning. But both these "characteristics" can be shown to be the result of colonial pressures. Colonial administrators set out to create target-workers. They forced Africans to work or to cultivate in order to pay taxes, in order, that is, that they should have a certain amount of cash in hand. The theory that these are innate characteristics appears to spring from either a racial explanation (that is, all Africans behave in this kind of way) or a class explanation (that is, all peasants behave in this kind of way). The latter is still particularly prevalent; it approaches an ideology justifying those who believe that they have a monopoly of rationality and that peasants need to be directed and "led" by the rational. The theory of underdevelopment forces one to re-examine such assumptions and to search for historical causes for every phenomenon.

An examination of the process of underdevelopment in the colonial period reveals two periods when different methods were primarily used. In the early period of colonialism, which did not end until after the Second World War, the main influence upon the potential African export-crop grower was force, or the threat of punishment if taxation was not paid. This means that the colonial government was relying mainly upon its monopoly of the means of coercion, which could be described as a quasi-feudal means of inducing production. From the point of view of the African grower, export-crop production was a form of tribute, an unwelcome obligation to the conqueror. In this period the price was basically irrelevant, for the colonialist merely ensured that the income was enough to pay the taxes he imposed. In areas where the colonialist expected to extract labourers rather than export crops even this—that income from export crops would be enough to pay taxes—was not true. The so-called cash economy in this period was often a system of distribution and re-collection, with cash having no importance in the lives of the people. Underdevelopment here took the form of the building of a system of extraction and the creation of habits of work and production. Dependence is shown in the need to complete obligations, and limited by the desire to do as little as possible beyond such obligations.

In the later period, after 1945, due to changed needs, and to defects in the quasi-feudal system, the colonialists considered higher prices as an incentive to increase production. In particular they feared that continued low prices would lead both to decreased production and political opposition. Hence the argument, for example, for decreasing the surpluses of the Marketing Boards in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Cooperatives belong to this period, with the exception of certain coffee cooperatives. Cooperatives indicate, it is suggested, both the beginnings of voluntary participation in cultivation of export crops on the part of some of the peasants (often kulaks) and the recognition by the colonial administration that cooperatives can assist administration policy. This is a period of increased incomes for some export-crop growers; for many of them it was the first time they found a significant margin between taxation rates and income from sales. They could buy more imported articles and pay for school fees for their children. But this does not mean that dependence was less or that development was now taking place. On the contrary voluntary dependence was now possible and more likely to be permanent. The cooperatives themselves demonstrate that certain growers were becoming conscious of themselves as a class with interests in and not against the exporting system. Dependence is now shown in a greater desire to export produce in exchange for imported goods.

2. THE EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD

It is necessary to retrace our steps briefly to the earliest growing of export crops in Tanganyika in order to see how and why the pattern was established. In doing so it is important to question the values expressed in much of the existing literature. The belief that the cultivation of export crops is a beneficial and developmental activity has led historians to search for the initiators in order to give them credit. Hence the colonialists in general and often missionaries in particular have been given praise by historians accepting this belief. Others less sympathetic to colonialism, but continuing to search for initiators, have suggested that export crops do not date merely from the coming of the colonialists, and that even during the colonial period "African initiative for change" was largely responsible. In Tanganyika it has been established that food crops were exported to Zanzibar in the nineteenth century. It was also been suggested that in the Bukoba area Africans exported coffee, once there was a railway from the Lake to the coast in 1901, for their own reasons rather than because the Germans compelled or even wished them to do so.[8] If, however, the introduction of export crops is seen in the context of a European desire to incorporate the Tanganyika economy within, first the German, and later the British, economy, the historical quest should be not so much for the individual initiators as for the reasons for this desire to incorporate. That is too large a question to deal with in detail here but a few points may be made. The

German capitalist class desired monopolisable sources of certain tropical crops essential to their economy, primarily sisal and cotton. The British capitalist class in the early twentieth century wished to deny these sources to the Germans and arranged for the capture of Tanganyika. Having other suitable sources of sisal and cotton the British did not show quite the same determination to extract these items until the Second World War, during and after which there was a need, not only for sisal and cotton, but for any dollar-earning export to assist the British capitalist class out of serious balance of trade problems. Against this background African initiative appears less important. In any case, as the Maji Maji example shows, there was much African resistance to the forcible growing of export crops. Decisions as to which export crops should be grown, and as to which Africans should grow them, was not primarily in African hands. The Germans established the pattern whereby sisal should not be an African peasant crop, and should be grown primarily in the north-east of the colony. Sisal plantations needed labourers and food, and certain areas of Tanganyika became, as a consequence of German decisions, producers of these "commodities". In other areas peasants were expected to produce goods for export, which meant agricultural raw materials and foods to fulfil certain metropolitan needs. As Iliffe has shown, such decisions affected the subsequent history of Tanganyika in producing regional differentiation, though this became important primarily as differentiation between individuals and classes in one region and those in another.[4]

During the early British period the inherited structure with its regional imbalances remained basically the same. Certain areas became even more obviously labour reservoirs. The Kigoma Region, for example, which for reasons of both fertility and transport could have become an export-crop area was left to provide workers. The Mwanza region on the other hand was provided with a new railway in 1928 and peasants there were expected to grow cotton. Coffee was "encouraged" in the Bukoba and Kilimanjaro areas, the British capitalists having decided that coffee was profitable to sell.

But it should not be imagined that what was occurring was the differentiation of developed and underdeveloped areas. If "underdeveloped" means "neglected" we imply that the colonialists brought development to those areas which they did not neglect. We also imply that the basic feature of underdevelopment is lack of attention. Even to criticise the colonialists for preventing the cultivation of export crops in certain areas, as was a predominant "nationalist" complaint in Kenya, implies the beneficial effects of export crops in the areas where they were "allowed". But those who did grow export crops in this early period were not "better off" except that they were able to stay in their own homes, than those who did not grow them. Some trouble was taken by the colonialists to ensure that this was so, by such methods as calculating the price of crops in relation to a labourer's wage and the hours of labour expended. But in any case the theory of

underdevelopment as a process suggests that we look beyond individuals' incomes to the society as a whole. The growing of export crops could not lead to development, for the crops were not to be utilised within the country. It was not a surplus that was being exported, but the whole content of production.

3. THE MIDDLE COLONIAL PERIOD

In turning now to an examination of the period 1929 to 1945 we shall concentrate our attention on export-crop growers, their production and their reactions, bearing in mind that they are at the receiving end of regulation in the interests of the metropolitan bourgeoisie by the colonial state. Some of these export-crop growers were themselves Europeans. Consideration of the European managers of sisal plantations is complicated by the fact that these managers have connections with that metropolitan bourgeoisie, indeed they are often directly its agents. Their relationship to the process of production is, therefore, somewhat different from that of an African peasant.

The period 1929 to 1945 was dominated by two external events, a slump in the capitalist world's economic activity, 1929-31, and a World War, 1939-45. That statement by itself illustrates a form of dependence. But their impact on the growers is even more revealing. The period is one of extremely low prices. Though these are said to have been caused by the slump, there is evidence for direct depression by government agencies during the war in the interests of the "war effort" and by private agencies before this in the interests of "rationalisation". Growers' cotton prices, for example, having dropped below 6 cents a pound in 1931 and risen somewhat thereafter, dropped again to 7½ cents in 1941. At these prices a grower's income from an acre of cotton might be shs. 12/- a year if he was lucky. It would be considered in other parts of the world irrational for a farmer to go on producing at this level of income. In colonial Tanganyika the cotton-growers were being forced to be "irrational". Prices for coffee and sisal were also relatively low during most of this period though not as absolutely low as those for cotton. What was happening in cotton was that American surpluses were keeping European prices low, and monopoly marketing was keeping African prices still lower.

Yet sisal exports rose from 46,000 tons in 1929 to 93,000 tons in 1939. Coffee exports rose from 8,900 tons in 1929 to 16,500 tons in 1936. Cotton exports were approximately 5,000 tons in 1929, 3,700 tons in 1930, 10,000 tons in 1935 and 11,600 tons in 1939. The detailed figures show some positive correlation to changes in price levels, least so in sisal and more in cotton. The reason for this difference is the period of maturation: four to five years for sisal and a few months for cotton. But overall, that is, looking at the growth in production from 1929 to 1939, there was in all three crops a negative response to changes in price levels. Yet sisal was entirely, and coffee partly, a European-grown crop, and cotton almost entirely an African-

grown crop. All show periods of an increased production despite reduced prices. This is most noticeable in the case of sisal during the periods 1929 to 1935, in the case of coffee during the same period, and in the case of cotton during the period 1935 to 1941. In addition there are cases of reduced production in spite of increased prices, in the case of sisal in the period 1938 to 1941, in the case of coffee in the period 1939 to 1953, and in the case of cotton in the period 1941 to 1943.[5]

From a selection of such facts commentators have sometimes deduced a theory of the irrational or perverse behaviour of African peasant farmers. They have suggested that there was something in the nature of African producers which made them produce more when the price was less and vice-versa. It should first be pointed out that such an explanation cannot be valid unless it applies also to European coffee and sisal growers. It cannot be racial. The facts indicate some common factor affecting all export-crop growers of whatever colour. It is true that sisal growers had special circumstances. They or their share-holders had invested capital and could not afford to reduce production. Indeed they increased it in order to attempt to cover their costs and contrive to make a profit. But an African coffee-grower had similarly invested capital in planting his coffee trees and an African cotton-grower had contributed his labour in planting and tending his crop. One difference is undoubtedly that an African grower was more often the subject of compulsory measures. The colonial state did not attempt compulsion of sisal growers except for interference in marketing during the war period, but African growers of coffee were subject to compulsory measures intended to improve quality and cotton growers, particularly during war time, were subject to compulsory acreages. These differences meant that African growers were more likely to react to compulsion—to obey when obedience could not be avoided and to cease to cultivate if the chance existed—than to price. In addition African growers did not have relatively fixed salaries as the sisal managers did, which meant that they were more likely personally to suffer. This explains riots in both Bukoba and Moshi (the coffee centres) in 1937. They had two causes: low prices, and compulsion, either in methods of cultivation or in marketing; and were directed primarily against the chiefs who administered the measures of compulsion.

But the common factor and basic explanation is an inability to withdraw from the production of export crops. For the plantation manager this is shown by his attempt to meet the running costs of the plantation. The methods open to him are increasing production in order to gain as large an income as before price reductions, and to reduce costs. It was usually the labourers who suffered the consequences, but the point to be emphasised here is that sisal growers displayed the same so-called "perverse" reactions. For African growers an additional explanation is dependence. African coffee-growers had become dependent on income from their coffee for paying taxes, school fees for their children and imported articles such as

clothes. Many growers clearly wished to cease production in 1937 but instead they rioted because they were not able to cease production. They had become committed to the process and had entered a trap from which they could not escape. Though Bukoba growers reduced their production as a result of dissatisfaction in the years after 1937 they could not and did not cease. Similarly, though Kilimanjaro growers protested against the government-sponsored and chief-dominated Kilimanjaro Native Coffee Union, they found no way to escape its monopoly and were forced both to produce and to sell to it. African cotton-growers were dependent for taxation almost alone. Cotton-growing had enabled them to do little other than buy hoes. Levels of income were little higher than levels of taxes. But they could not, during peace-time, escape the attention of agricultural officials, who argued that they must increase production if prices fell. When they could, as during the latter years of the war, they reduced production. Their dependence was not a voluntary dependence. They were target-workers in the sense that a prisoner thinks of the day of his release.

One of the effects of underdevelopment is generally impoverishment, but an impoverishment which is unequal in its impact. In the period under consideration, this unequal impoverishment is especially marked in the sisal plantations. A few planters were rendered bankrupt by the 1929-31 slump, but most survived because they were politically powerful. Sisal planters had no need to riot; they had connections both with the colonial state and the metropolitan bourgeoisie. They could also argue that sisal, which provided generally only a little less than half of the total value of Tanganyika's exports, was the backbone of the economy, in other words that the level of exports depended primarily upon the sisal planters. The planters asked for and received government backing in recruiting labourers, in preventing them from organising themselves in unions, and in making withdrawal of labour a legal offence through the contract system. It is the labourers who had become dependent and who were maltreated as a result. Sisal cutters' wages had been shs. 25-30/- for 30 days' work in 1930. They were forced down to half that amount and did not rise again to the 1930 level until the 1950s in spite of the recovery of sisal prices. Recruiting methods were at their severest in 1943-44 when direct conscription was legalised by the colonial state. Living conditions were also extremely poor with low levels of nutrition and consequently health among the migrant labourers. Further, they were treated as a permanently unskilled labour force. Their living conditions were not related to opportunity costs or even to the necessity of labour reproducing itself, but to the economic and above all the political power of their employers, the colonial state, and the system in which they operated.[6]

Among African coffee-growers impoverishment also took place during this period. During the early 1930s, as already noted, African growers increased their production in spite of falling prices. This was partly the result of British propaganda that increased production was necessary in order

to keep up levels of income in times of reduced prices. In other words the British were seeking to "persuade" the growers to produce more for a lower "reward". To the extent that they succeeded, colonial officials were creating a practice which theorists later claimed was an innate characteristic of African peasant growers. To the extent that it became an acquired characteristic it was the result of a process of impoverishment. In the case of the Bukoba growers it did not become entirely so, for many expressed their resentment by a decrease in production after 1935 which lasted many years and which is more understandable in political terms, that is, as passive resistance, than in economic terms. But the colonial administration ascribed the decrease to innate laziness and favoured those who were prepared to continue to cooperate. For it is unlikely that the decrease in production was general, that is, that it was spread in even proportion among all growers. Although average incomes were said in the Bukoba area to be shs. 60/- a year during the war period, this hides the differentiation that was occurring. The figure is sufficient to illustrate the low general levels of income, but the 1937 riots also indicate that there was resentment of those chiefs who through their control of land and labour, as well as their salaried positions, could gain more from the growing of coffee then the normal farmer. In the Kilimanjaro area shortages of land, and political power in the hands of a few chiefs and kulak farmers who employed labourers, were causing differentiation. The K.N.C.U. was dominated by those who were not impoverished, and operated against the interests of those who were, as the 1937 riots showed.[7]

For the Mwanza cotton-growers impoverishment took the form of shortages of fertile land and resulting food shortages. Plant More Crops campaigns were conducted by British officials during the 1930's, but, in the absence of changed technology, more crops meant more acreages and more labour. More acreages meant sometimes the cleaning of new land. This was beginning to be noticeable in Geita district in the 1930's where Sukuma farmers with Government assistance began to move into new areas and were able to get high yields of cotton. But more often more acreages meant the more permanent cultivation of fields previously left fallow, with no new means of restoring fertility, and a decrease in acreages planted to food. British officials began to note both soil erosion and food shortages, especially in areas like Kwimba, in the late 1930's. Growers there, compelled through fear of being treated as tax defaulters to plant and tend cotton in competition with millet and maize, and finally to carry the cotton by head-load up to twelve miles to the collecting post, could not possibly make an income beyond their tax obligation, and were more probably impoverished through neglect of their food production. In addition declining fertility meant increased effort becoming necessary for the production of food. While similar changes elsewhere forced peasants off the land, most Sukuma peasants stayed, often with declining levels of subsistence.[8]

4. THE LATE COLONIAL PERIOD

The period between the end of the Second World War and Independence was one of greatly increased export-crop production. The volume of cotton exported increased by 300%, the volume of sisal by 80% and that of coffee by 70%. It is sometimes suggested that increases in African-grown cotton and coffee were due to improved methods, and more effective propaganda, leading to higher productivity. But the basic tools remained the same—the hoe being predominant—and increases of production were still achieved through increases of acreage. Improvements of seed, soil conservation and insecticides merely counteracted the effects of declining fertility. So far as African growers were concerned, the increases of production were largely due to their own voluntary response to increases of crop prices, and, for those who controlled them, to cooperative organisations which further enhanced incomes. The prices of most primary products rose after the war, reaching a peak for sisal in 1951, for cotton and coffee in 1954. The reasons for these higher prices are twofold. They first reflect the increasing demand for those products in the capitalist centres, and some increased competition between capitalists to obtain such products. There was a general shortage of sisal coinciding with a greater demand at the time of the Korean War stockpiling. But also British capitalists' problems over dollars led them to desire to extract larger quantities of any product which could be exported to the United States. At the same time as this desire for much greater production, and partly as its consequence, the British administrations in their colonies moved towards a change in their methods of inducing export production. They were becoming aware that force had its limitations in engendering increased cultivation. The policy to which they moved was one of greater reliance upon monetary, quasi-capitalist incentives, mainly in the form of increased prices but including also marketing arrangements more convenient to the growers, the placing of some restriction on the freedom of Indian buyers and processors, and the encouragement of cooperatives. In certain cases reluctant British administrators made these changes more from fear of the political consequences of not doing so, than from a belief in their effectiveness. Accordingly, in the years after 1945, and after taking legal powers to decide prices, they paid higher prices for export crops. At first through Marketing Boards they retained in their own hands a large proportion of the increased values the Marketing Boards received from their sales. Later, often for political reasons, they allowed their powers over marketing to slip away, or allowed the growers a price nearer to the export price. The success of this change in policy was clear by the time of Independence. By then the value of cotton exported from Tanganyika had increased by 750% since 1945, the value of coffee by 650%, and that of sisal by 370%.[9] These values, as the use of the word by the British recognises, are values to the colonial economy, that is, to those who control the state. Export

crops were still intended for the benefit of the colonialist. Prices to the grower were not a sharing or distribution of benefits, but a means of inducing voluntary production and creating an increased dependence upon production for export markets. If in this period certain export-crop growers became "better off", that is, began to have a larger income than before, we should not believe that development was now taking place. Financial incentives to some Tanganyikans to provide voluntarily for the needs of an external society are not the same as provision for the needs of Tanganyikan society.

African reaction to this situation is important in two quite different ways. The first is that voluntary production led to a greater concern with prices and an increased suspicion of the way in which prices were decided. This led in turn to a greater concern with the political question of who decided them. These concerns had, as already suggested, a strong influence on British policy. They helped to create in British minds consideration first of higher prices for the protesters' products, and later of Independence, as solutions to particular problems. The second point is that acceptance of the export-crop economy by Africans was also an important precondition in British minds for the granting of political Independence, for voluntary production for export meant voluntary dependence. Hence political dependence became less necessary, especially if political control could be handed over to representatives of the export-crop producers. Similarly British acceptance of demands by the leaders of the K.N.C.U. to market their own coffeee is a response to a situation of voluntary dependence, where the growers wish not only to produce for export but to organise that export themselves. The lack of enthusiasm for T.A.N.U. among some Chagga coffee-growers is symptomatic of the fact that a class of kulak farmers had been created who now considered that the existing system operated in their interests. They had gained a significant place in the existing system and would not wish to change it. Dependence had been deepened and not lessened. Similarly even those Sukuma, who protested about the price of cotton and joined T.A.N.U. in the 1950's, were demanding a more significant share in the existing system. They were not turning away from the export economy but demanding greater participation in it. The coloniser could, therefore, afford to risk sharing political power with them.

An obvious form of dependence which can be discussed here is dependence upon world commodity prices. The terms of trade (that is, the relation of export prices to import prices) and the way they operate against the interests of producers of raw materials is sometimes the only form of dependence considered by writers. The terms of trade became less adverse for Tanganyika in the period 1945-52 and more adverse during the period 1952-61. Sisal prices fell after 1951, reflecting the greater use of synthetic substitutes, greater mechanisation of agriculture in the United States, and the ending of stockpiling for the Korean War. From 1951 to 1957 sisal

exports rose by 28% but values fell by 60%. Coffee prices were affected by the fact that coffee is a relatively inessential item of consumption in the developed world, and production in the underdeveloping world rose faster than that consumption. Underdeveloping countries were "competing" with each other in providing the luxuries of the developed countries. The result was that although exports from Tanganyika increased by 30% between 1954 and 1961, values fell by 32%. Cotton prices were slightly more stable but fell if the United States surplus rose. Between 1951 and 1961 production rose by 275% while values rose only half as much.[10] These figures demonstrate the generally adverse operation of the terms of trade.

But in the colonial period the terms of trade should not be seen as operating between one society and another. The trade is between a capitalist class in one country and its agents in its colony, between one part (the dominant part) and another (the dependent part) of one economy. In addition, to deal with terms of trade in percentages or indices assumes some kind of a norm which by implication appears to be equal or just. In effect variations in the terms of trade are variations in the degree of inequality of exchange. For in so far as the laws of supply and demand did operate in the international capitalist economy, they operated against Tanganyikans at most periods, and in so far as power to manipulate prices existed it was not in Tanganyikans' hands.

It is commonly said that increased exports pay for increased imports, and that a precondition for development is foreign exchange. Hence export crops are necessary in terms of the foreign exchange they produce. But it is important, before accepting this argument for the colonial period, to consider the actual composition of imports, in other words what was obtained when the foreign exchange was expended. In considering the composition of imports exchanged for export crops in the later colonial period four points need to be examined.

First, there was almost always during this period a so-called 'favourable' balance of trade, that is, an excess of exports over imports in stated values (quite apart from actual values). This means that much of the foreign exchange earned was not spent at all. In the years from 1951 to 1961 there was a surplus balance in ten years out of eleven, and in seven of those years there was a surplus of over £8 million, or 10% of the total trade. The total trade surplus in these years was approximately £77 million. This surplus was held by the East African Currency Board and invested outside East Africa, largely in London where such surpluses were of great importance in upholding the value of sterling. The use of the surplus reflects Britain's interest as a centre for investment rather than Tanganyika's interest as a user of capital.[11]

Second, especially in the early part of the period, the British who controlled the imports wished them to be obtained primarily from Britain. For example, in the late 1940's Japanese imports were banned because they

competed with imports from Britain. Japanese cotton goods were cheaper and more suited to Tanganyikan customers than British, and those customers had to pay higher prices for less suitable material. A much more beneficial solution would have been for Tanganyika not to import cotton fabrics at all, but to manufacture them herself. The fact that it did not illustrates the consequences of the control of the state by representatives of an external class. This class had also ensured that the type of cotton grown in Tanganyika would be of a long staple suitable for export rather than being usable for a lower quality manufacture in Tanganyika.[12]

Third, the most beneficial imports for Tanganyika would have been capital goods, in particular machinery which could enable Tanganyikans to produce for their own needs. Many of the imported goods were items for consumption by the privileged few, that is, the British administrators and their allies, including some of the export-crop growers. Capital imports included machinery for manufacturing European beer and cigarettes, and converted British tanks and other unsuitable machinery for the groundnut scheme (which was greatly misconceived and would have been greatly underdeveloping if it had succeeded).

Fourth, and of clear importance in 1975, one of Tanganyika's imports was food. Whereas the previous points illustrate the use and abuse of the surplus taken from producers, this illustrates the process of impoverishment previously considered in an earlier period. It is not merely that European-type food was imported. The more ominous import is maize. In seven out of the ten years 1945 to 1954 maize was imported and in three of them the amount was greater than 25,000 tons. This means that the surplus of food usually creamed off by urban dwellers from rural dwellers was diminishing and that sisal estates were not becoming self-supporting in food. The people of the food-producing areas like the Uluguru and Usambara mountains were often the greatest sufferers from the process of underdevelopment. Not only did food production diminish but the people of those areas were becoming impoverished at a greater rate than export-crop growers. But in the export-crop areas themselves cultivators sometimes found themselves in possession of money instead of food. No provision was made in the colonial system for the supply of food to export-crop areas; it was assumed that the growers would supply their own. But competition between food and export-crop production heightened during this period of increased export-crop cultivation. The problem was relatively easily solved by the man who could employ labour but not, for example, by the Sukuma cotton-farmer, who, as Collinson showed, had to reduce his food acreages in order to increase his cotton acreages. The kulak was as usual the one who did well. Whereas the solution proposed by the British was to rely entirely upon the kulak and to favour him with individual ownership of land, the problem was that of underdevelopment. It is symptomatic of that process that a society becomes

Table 1: Prices and exports 1929–43: Annual trade reports

Date	COTTON		COFFEE		SISAL	
	Exports in thousand Centals	Price per Cental in shs.	Exports in thousand tons	Price per ton in pounds	Exports in thousand tons	Price per ton in pounds
1929	111	84	8.9	66	46	32
1931	54	44	9.3	27	56	12
1933	114	49	12.7	34	70	13
1935	224	51	18.6	26	83	14
1937	258	47	13.6	32	91	23
1939	261	50	16.6	28	93	13
1941	294	15	13.7	33	75	20
1943	157	80	10.9	51	97	22

N.B. Prices are export prices, not growers' prices.

Table 2: Volume and value of exports 1945–61: Annual trade reports

Date	COTTON		COFFEE		SISAL	
	Exports in thousand tons	Value in million pounds	Exports in thousand tons	Value in million pounds	Exports in thousand tons	Value in million pounds
1945	7	0.8	14	0.9	111	3.0
1948	10	1.3	11	0.9	117	8.9
1951	8	2.8	17	4.5	142	23.7
1954	12	3.4	19	10.0	168	10.9
1957	27	6.6	19	7.1	182	9.5
1961	30	6.8	25	6.8	201	14.0

both an exporter of primary products and an importer of some of its own food.[13]

On the political plane it appears that the British government having determined that some form of Independence was inevitable, would have preferred to hand over political power to representatives of the more prosperous export-crop growers. Sisal planters and European farmers were the most obvious of these, but African coffee-growers, among whom Thomas Marealle appears to have been groomed for leadership, were the backbone of the growing kulak class. This class, with an interest in continuing the export-oriented economy, was essential to British plans. Multi-racial "partnership" meant essentially an alliance between European and African supporters of the existing economic system. In Tanganyika the United Tanganyika Party was its expression and was favoured by the colonial state in the period 1956-58. But it failed, even though elections on a very narrow franchise in 1958 were expected to favour it. The prosperous export-crop growers were too few and too divided to form a new ruling class. That result of the process of underdevelopment was specific to Tanganyika, and had much to do with the subsequent path towards socialism.[14]

It is remarkable that the export-crop economy should have had co-operation from any of the African growers. But, being placed in a dependent situation, since political power was not in the hands of Africans, their choices were very limited. Remote and unpredictable customers regulated the economy of their suppliers in the interests of the market, that is, those who controlled the market, that is, themselves. Nor was the production of export crops a means to a desirable end, a step on the road to industrialisation. For the colonialist it was an end in itself, for the colonised a dead end.

FOOTNOTES

1. This article is a revised version of a paper presented to the Universities of East Africa Social Science Conference held in Dar es Salaam in December 1973. Theoretical debts are acknowledged to Clive Thomas, Walter Rodney and Mahmood Mamdani, and helpful comments have been made on the earlier paper by Andrew Coulson and Abdul Sheriff.
2. Rweyemamu, Justinian, *Underdevelopment and Industrialization in Tanzania* (Nairobi, 1973), pp. x-xiv.
3. Alpers, E.A., *The East Africa Slave Trade*, H.A.T. pamphlet, 3; Iliffe, John, *Tanganyika under German Rule* (London, 1969), pp. 23 and 74.
4. Ilife, John, *Agricultural Change in Modern Tanganyika*, H.A.T. pamphlet 10; Rodney, W., "The Political Economy of Colonial Tanganyika 1890-1939", in M. Kaniki and Gwassa (eds.) *Tanzania under Colonial Rule*, (forthcoming).
5. Tanganyika Territory, *Annual Trade Reports, 1929-45*, see Table One.
6. Tambila, Anse, "History of the Tanga Sisal Labour Force, 1936-64" (University of Dar es Salaam, M.A. thesis, 1974), pp. 21-24, 35, 50 and 90. See also A.C. Mascarenhas, "Resistance and Change in the Sisal Plantation System of Tanzania" (U.C.L.A. Ph.D. dissertation, 1970), pp. 105, 182-89, 197.
7. Tanganyika Territory, *Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture*, 1930-37.

8. Ibid. 1929-45; G.M. Manyanda, *A History of The Growth of Commercial Cotton Cultivation in Ndagalu, Kwimba District, Tanzania, 1936-67,* (University of Dar es Salaam M.A. thesis, 1974), pp. 37-39.
9. *Annual Trade Reports,* 1945-61 (prepared after 1948 by the East Africa High Commission); Rweyemamu, op. cit., pp. 27-28; B.D. Bowles, "The Political Economy of Colonialism in Tanganyika 1939-61" in M. Kaniki and Gwassa (eds.) *Tanzania under Colonial Rule,* (forthcoming). See Table Two.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid; *Annual Reports of the East Africa Currency Board,* 1951-61.
12. *Annual Trade Reports,* 1945-61; Arthur D. Little, Inc., *Tanganyika Industrial Development,* 1961, pp. 191-93.
13. *Annual Trade Reports,* 1945-61; *Annual Reports of the Department of Agriculture,* 1945-61; H. Kriesel, Laurent, Halpern and Larzelere, *Agricultural Marketing in Tanzania: Background Research and Policy Proposals,* (1970), p. 40; M.P. Collinson, *The Economic Characteristics of the Sukuma Farming System,* (Economic Research Bureau paper, University of Dar es Salaam 1972), p. 17.
14. The results of research by Alistair Ross, University of London, on the United Tanganyika Party, should soon be available.