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## BOOK REVIEWS

Steven Feierman, *The Shambaa Kingdom: A History*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1974, pp. 235.

Most readers will have seen Professor Steven Feierman's chapter on the Shambaa in *Tanzania before 1900* edited by A. Roberts. The chapter was written while the author was still doing his field work on the Usambara Mountains. But the summary therein promised so many new insights on the Shambaa Kingdom that the publication of *The Shambaa Kingdom* must have been long awaited.

Historically, the Shambaa Kingdom, until recently the only well-known big Kingdom among the Eastern Bantu-speaking peoples, has attracted a number of writers. But no researcher before Steven Feierman has spent so much time among the Shambaa and understood Shambaa society so thoroughly. As a well-trained historian and anthropologist, Dr. Feierman did "two separate but complementary projects at once: the first is the collection and analysis of Shambaa oral traditions, and second, a general study of Shambaa culture and society" (p. 4). Apparently this book consists of the results of the first study (originally submitted as a Ph.D. dissertation in History to Northwestern University). *The Shambaa Kingdom* is an outstanding masterpiece clarifying most of the confusion which existed in the literature about the Shambaa. Another book based on the second study is also awaited. This is to be based on his unpublished D.Phil. thesis in Social Anthropology, titled "Concepts of Sovereignty among the Shambaa and Their Relation to Political Action", submitted to Oxford University.

Professor Feierman has clarified four important points in this book. Firstly, by providing proper analysis of the Mbegha myth, the story of the founding of the Shambaa Kingdom has become much clearer. This is the point where training in social anthropology can be seen to be a valuable tool in handling the history of a non-literate society. Mbegha has always been recognised as the founding hero of the Shambaa Kingdom, but the story surrounding his life is an important epic in the development of the Shambaa society itself. As Dr. Feierman puts it, "the story of Mbegha is both an intellectual's and a moralist's model of the Shambaa Kingdom. For it told how the Kingdom should work, and at the same time how the Kingdom, in evil times, does work" (p. 64). By analysing the various symbols of the myth, the author has been able to show that the myth existed before the time of Mbegha, and that descriptions of historical events were integrated into the myth later.

Secondly, Professor Feierman has greatly clarified the position of the Kilindi in Shambaa culture. Contrary to the diffusionist idea of Kingship, the author states that "there is remarkable body of evidence which survives from

the time of Mbegha's son Bughe, and which supports . . . the notion that the royal rule was a glorification of traditional Shambaa culture" (p. 93). This can partly be explained by the fact that Mbegha came from a neighbouring society much similar to that of the Shambaa and from which some of the Shambaa themselves had migrated earlier. The effort of transforming Shambaa society can therefore be seen as an attempt to unite and preserve a culture which at that time was threatened not by the Kilindi, but by the alien cultures of the Nango and Mbughu (both non-Bantu-speaking groups) who had entered Shambaai and caused tensions within the unified culture.

Thirdly, Professor Feierman has greatly illuminated the nature of the Shambaa Kingdom by focussing on its political economy. Although Kimweri ye Nyumbai achieved harmony throughout the greatly expanded Kingdom by using his own sons and grandsons as chiefs, the real strength of the Kingdom was the tribute collection system which permeated the entire population. Thus the changes which took place in the nineteenth century and destroyed the unity of the Kingdom were mainly in its political economy: "The political economy of the Shambaa Kingdom changes, in the nineteenth century, from one based primarily on tribute and territorial control to one based primarily on trade" (p. 120).

Finally, Dr. Feierman has clarified remarkably well the question of regional action in the Pangani Valley. By the time Kimweri ye Nyumbai died in 1862, the Shambaa Kingdom had been virtually decentralised. The Bondei had become chiefless, a small Kingdom had been established in East Usambara and Shambaai was divided between the forces of Semboja (Kimweri's son who became master of the new power base-trade) and those of the heirs of the traditional power base. Unlike the traditional kinship alliance and tribute, Semboja's power was of regional nature. Because of the importance of trade in this period "the major war for power in Shambaai was fought by the Wali of Pangani, chiefs of Bondei and Zigula, and the most prominent family of Mombasa [Mbaruk el Mazrui], it is clear that the most important events were no longer local in scale, but regional. In this setting the traditional Shambaa concern with maintaining the culture of the ancestors was clearly out of step" (p. 197).

*The Shambaa Kingdom* is undoubtedly a very valuable contribution to the history of East Africa. Its value as a scientifically well-produced and critically analysed work has already been stated. As a microhistory it is unique in that it discusses ideas of wide generalisation. For example questions of interpretation of myth and relationship between African thought and African history. This is a book which is likely to be of interest to most readers of history, specialist and non-specialist alike.

I. N. KIMAMBO

Robert Chambers and Jon Moris (eds.), *Mwea: An Irrigated Rice Settlement in Kenya*, Afrika—Studien Nr 83, Weltforum Verlag, Munchen, 1973, pp. 539.

UTAFITI In this volume of the Afrika-Studien series, the German-based institute has provided us with a mass of information about Mwea rice settlement scheme in Kenya. The book is a compilation of scholarly worked out papers on the scheme. The papers are the product of researches done between 1965 and February 1973. There are good pictures showing the life of the people at the end of the book. There is also a layout map at the end.

The Mwea settlement scheme was established as a result of the emergency resettlement projects in Kenya after the outbreak of the proto-nationalistic movement of Mau Mau (Chambers, 1969, pp. 59-136). In 1953 the Kikuyu reserves were overcrowded with people who were repatriated from the Rift Valley where many of them had been working in European farms. To settle them in planned areas was thought to be a long term solution. The Mwea area which was allocated to Kikuyu, was established by the *Carter Land Commission* as compensation for the land they had lost to the Europeans.

Initially, the scheme grew out of political necessity rather than economic need. As Chambers noted (pp. 65-67), the birth was premature when it started in November 1955. It had not been planned for. But since the landless peasants were to be rehabilitated, the programme was launched.

The book is divided into four parts consisting of fifteen different articles dealing with some aspects of the scheme. The first part has two articles by the editors. These two articles deal with the environment and the history of the scheme.

Part two deals with the production of the scheme. Engineering aspects of the water control and production systems are analysed. Furthermore, management is looked at in detail.

In part three we have articles dealing with subjects like tenants' performance, women and the household economy, health and nutrition. This part covers the effect of the settlement on the settlers. It also sheds some light on which of the scheme's 'components has contributed the most to the agromomic success of the irrigation system'.

Since part three deals with the settlement way of life, chapters in this section deal with the impact of the scheme on the wellbeing of the settlers. Here the articles narrow down their scope of analysis to the community ways of life and individual household.

Part four concludes the collection of the articles and do assess the scheme itself. In order to have a fair evaluation, the contributors to this section has approached their analysis from a comparative point of view. Thus other similar projects carried out in other parts of Africa have been referred to. This enriches the section and the volume as a whole.

The Mwea Irrigation Scheme offers us some experience to take into consideration when we start such kind of projects elsewhere. It shows how expensive it is to run such a kind of scheme. But, also it shows how an irrigation scheme can be of a great help economically, when, and if a workable managerial system and innovation techniques are introduced properly. It

furthermore illustrates how modern technology can be introduced to the planned community to complement labour intensive techniques within the production system. UTAFITI

After reading through the fifteen scholarly written articles one wonders how the same type of scheme can become a model for other less favourable areas. Perhaps, areas like Kilombero and Ruvu basins in Tanzania could be ideal places for the kind of Mwea Scheme. However, the social structural and production systems of Mwea would hardly be acceptable to a country aspiring for a socialistic economic mode of production.

To the academicians and policy-makers, the book has a lot of information related to the theory and practice in the areas of planning and managerial system for agricultural production. Thus the volume may be of a great help as a reference.

C. K. OMARI

Samora Machel—President of FRELIMO (and now the People's Republic of Mozambique), *Mozambique: Sowing the Seeds of Revolution*, Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea, London, 1975, p. 63.

This is a booklet containing, if we exclude the two-page introduction by John Saul, 61 pages of revolutionary and highly educative material. It is a collection of six speeches and one interview article all done in the period 1970-73.

Since the material composing the booklet was not originally intended for a book but rather as self-contained speeches on various contradictions facing the Mozambican anti-colonial armed struggle, the booklet in a formal sense is naturally not a homogeneous whole. One finds in all the articles what may appear to be repetitions. However, any serious reading of the booklet, particularly by those who would wish to learn and are capable of learning some revolutionary lessons from the Mozambican revolutionary armed struggle as articulated in the seven articles, reveals both homogeneity and richness of explanation and elaboration of the fundamental and other contradictions in Mozambique which the revolutionary struggle was and is to resolve. Indeed, common themes run through the articles although the subjects covered appear to be different. This is clearly evidence of a clear and consistent ideological line of FRELIMO for which Comrade Samora, as its President, so effectively spoke.

The articles are generally short, precise and artistically written and presented. Rather than attempting to summarise each one of the articles we shall point out the themes which run through all of them and their revolutionary significance. The main areas covered by the articles include: international solidarity and mutual aid among "forces fighting for the same objectives"; correct leadership practice in a revolutionary movement and a revolutionary struggle that combines armed resistance and socio-economic transformation of the "liberated areas"; the true meaning of "liberation of women" in theory

UTAFITI and practice within the context of colonialism, capitalism and imperialism. generally and as they pertain to the historical development of Mozambique: how to impart political and technological education for revolutionary armed struggle and socio-economic transformation; the meaning and role of health services in the revolution; the fundamental distinction between production under exploitative social relations and production for liberation and revolution of the toiling masses; etc.

Let us briefly look at the common themes running through all the articles. Firstly all the articles—if we leave out the review article—are based on a clear understanding of the fundamental contradiction in Mozambique: the contradiction between capital and labour which underlies and is intensified by other contradictions. Principal among these contradictions, as again clearly appears in all the articles, is that of imperialist-colonial domination of the Mozambican people with Portuguese colonialism and world imperialism, on one side, and the colonised, dominated and exploited but resisting masses of Mozambique, on the other. It is within the context of these contradictions that other minor contradictions were seen and discussed. The resolution of all the secondary contradictions through raising of political consciousness of the cadres and the masses and the revolutionary armed struggle and socio-economic transformation as discussed in the articles would dialectically create the requisite quantitative and qualitative forces for the final resolution of the principal and the fundamental contradictions.

One of the secondary contradictions hinging on and intensifying the fundamental contradiction and the principal contradiction was disunity among the people. This manifested itself in phenomena like tribalism and thus lack of national consciousness; racial discrimination; discrimination and domination of women by men within the colonised sector; etc. The other important secondary contradiction engendered by and intensifying the fundamental and the principal contradictions is the ignorance and obscurantism of the masses (and initially the cadres) due to religious and traditional mysticisms and superstition combining with colonial intimidation and domination. Hence lack of a scientific world outlook and political consciousness on the part of the oppressed masses were and are rampant. We leave out of account other minor contradictions, since, in fact those mentioned here cover virtually every important aspect dealt with in all the articles in the booklet.

FRELIMO's political and military line on which all the articles are based, clearly comes to grips with these contradictions as can be gathered from the articles themselves. The consistency and dynamism with which this line is applied to the various subjects showing that they all have a common base in or rather are dialectically linked with the fundamental and the principal contradictions, is the explanation for the apparent repetition of the same themes in different contexts covered by the articles. The implication is that all contradictions within Mozambique could be traced down to the fundamental contradiction reinforced by the principal contradiction.

In the result we find in all the articles the following themes running through in an interconnected and illuminating manner. First is the necessity of *unity* among the people and thus of a relentless inner struggle at all levels and at all times against tribalism, racialism and individualism. These should be replaced by national and class consciousness and spirit and practice of internationalism based on class alliance and solidarity among all struggling peoples of the world. Second: the fight against ignorance and obscurantism through the raising of political consciousness and the scientific and technological knowledge of the cadres and the masses and releasing their productive powers. The educational method should be a balanced merger of theory with practice. Third: the necessity of evolving (class conscious) group leadership based on the revolutionary principles and practice of "criticism-and-self-criticism", "study, work and struggle" and follow "the mass line" in all questions relating to the armed struggle and the socio-economic revolution. Fourth and final: the absolute necessity of the struggle for the "liberation of women" in the context of the general struggle for national liberation and against capitalist and imperialist domination, oppression and exploitation.

As can be seen, the booklet contains very valuable material expressing and summarising both FRELIMO's experience in the course of ten years of armed struggle and its view of the material basis of the society which is to evolve and replace the old society in Mozambique through revolutionary struggle.

Every true people's revolutionary struggle produces revolutionary theory derived from revolutionary practice. Such practice in most cases initially and continuously thereafter draws its inspiration and guidance from existing theory—itself derived from previous or current revolutionary practice. In this sense, every serious revolutionary struggle enriches the existing revolutionary theory either by confirming or refuting its universality and by adding new contributions arising from concrete practical experience. It is also generally the case that those who articulate that theory—orally or literary—as spokesmen of and actual participants in the struggle, do so with the dynamic militancy, clarity, precision, and comprehensiveness which the practical struggle itself demands of and builds in them. Indeed, no revolutionary struggle against centuries-old colonialism and imperialism can last a single day without these indispensable attributes in the mode of leadership and the resultant actual operation of the struggle itself by the masses. We find in Comrade Samora Machel's speeches and interview all these attributes. This makes it all the more imperative for the revolutionary forces in Africa and the world of struggling masses seriously to read the booklet whose contents were written in the heat and furtherance of an actual, concrete, revolutionary mass struggle against colonialism and imperialism.

J. L. KANYWANYI