

BOOK REVIEWS

Tarsis B. Kabwegyere, *The Politics of State Formation: The Nature and Effects of Colonialism in Uganda*, East African Literature Bureau, Nairobi, 1974, pp. xi and 276, 3 maps, bibliography.

Dr. Kabwegyere has written a book which is a useful antidote to those who still think of colonialism as a benevolent reforming institution. Unfortunately for the East African Literature Bureau there are not many of those still around in the University of Dar es Salaam, and what the author has to say may fall somewhat flat here.

The author's introduction usefully contrasts Hobson and Emerson (a lesser-known American historian) on the impact of colonial rule. Whereas Emerson assumes the impact of colonial rule was for the welfare of the colonies' inhabitants, Hobson argued that the coloniser neither intended benefits nor was capable of rendering them. Dr. Kabwegyere agrees with Hobson and quotes Lenin in his support. He discusses Lenin's definition of the state and deduces from it that the colonial state is an alien instrument with the aim of economic, political and cultural domination for the coloniser and dependence for the colonised. The introduction is in many ways the most interesting and best part of the book. I think it was written last, for much of the book does not apply its definitions or answer the questions which arise.

In the second chapter the author deals with what he calls the precolonial "setting". For a writer who claims to be applying a "process analysis" his consideration here is remarkably static. He has read the anthropologists and not the recent historians and draws the rather remarkable dismissive conclusions that people at opposite ends of Uganda had no reason or means to meet, and that "pre-colonial Africa depended on face-to-face relations" (p. 23). In fact he has little to say about pre-colonial Uganda and moves on rapidly to the impact of colonial rule on certain societies. Here he has some interesting things to say about tribalism. He sees "tribes" as colonial creations and says that this is so because the colonialists liked to think in terms of stated and static groups. This is valuable, and places much earlier writing especially by anthropologists, making the "tribe" their subject of study, into a different perspective. It is unfortunate that he spends time pointing out that Ankole was smaller in the pre-colonial period than in the colonial, when those who have read Karugire would know this already. It is also unfortunate that he laments the division of the Alur and Kakwa tribes by the colonisers' boundary. This is a common nationalist complaint, but it hardly fits in with the author's remarks about tribalism.

The third chapter concerns the Process of Colonial Consolidation. Here the author spends a lot of time on boundary-making, which is more in accord with an older definition of "state" than Lenin's. He has a useful section showing how the commonly accepted notion that colonial rule was imposed on Uganda without significant resistance except in Bunyoro is mistaken. Here there is an unfortunate compositing error where the author appears to say that "pacification" activity was open "welfare" (p. 76). He is trying to make exactly the opposite point and must have written "warfare". The last section of the chapter finds that elements of injustice were embedded in the colonial administrative system, that the British did not even attempt to create a primary loyalty to the central Government, and that Uganda was not created for an independent existence, all of which are fairly well-worn points these days.

The fourth chapter on Colonial Social Structure interprets this as a rigid racial construction in which Africans were a homogeneous exploited class. This might be true of the period the author mainly deals with, that is, the period from 1900 to 1930, though I am not convinced that Apolo Kagwa was a peasant. For the later colonial period it is a pity that the author did not examine more closely the social results of the changes he sees beginning to occur in the 1930's. Because he has not touched upon productive forces outside his own introduction, he tends to see only education as a differentiating factor among Africans, and regards the "elite/mass gap" as a kind of internal problem of lack of communication.

In Chapter Five the author deals with what he calls the problems of separatism and inequality. He is concerned to show that these difficulties were created by the colonialists and were left over for independent rulers to solve. Indeed his claim to analyse processes appears to focus mainly here, on the fact that, and the reasons why, Independence did not mean great changes. Did not the state continue to be an instrument of class dominance? I think he thinks that Lenin's definition applies only to states he does not like. Even the solvers of problems are themselves preconditioned by the problems. A further point about this chapter is that he considers regional inequalities to have been due to uneven exposure to "foreign change agents" which sounds remarkably like the uneven distribution of colonial benefits rephrased.

In Chapter Six the author gives us examples of Uganda's dependent relations. There are two interesting ones. One is the period of the Second World War when Uganda made "contributions" to Britain. (It was a time when the British documents he uses actually *admit* that such "contributions" were made). Second is his analysis of the origin of American sociology in Uganda. The British were being criticised by the Americans for continuing to own colonies in the late 1940's. The former invited American social scientists to study and set up Institutes in British colonies, in order to see the 'good work' being done there. Such is the background of sociological studies at Makerere.

The intellectual and emotional ferment among East African intellectuals is on the point of producing some monumental works. That this particular book does not at present appear to be one of them is due to the inconsistency of the author's thought. His introduction does not prescribe the choice of questions or the way of dealing with them. He treats the Uganda state throughout as a geo-political unit, a structure rather than an instrument, an umbrella under which loyalties ought to have been directed centrally but were not. What does not appear in the book is a consideration of changing modes of production, of the process of underdevelopment as the penetration of capitalism in a dependent situation, and of the role of the state as a supportive instrument in all this.

Finally, as the author himself once pointed out to me, historical analysis is not the same as causal analysis. I would like him to apply his adage to himself. To deal with a period of history before the event that requires explanation, and especially to omit detailed consideration of the thirty years before that event, is not necessarily to find causes. The book appears to have the title "State Formation" because it deals with the early colonial period, but this period may not explain the continuities of Uganda's independence. If the author had studied the late colonial period he would then perhaps have seen the emerging kulaks in Buganda and the educated bureaucrats with their ideologies of continuation. Nationalism, which the author sees as the politics of overthrowal, might then have been considered as that of men thrown upwards by the colonial process, who wish to go on ever upwards.

B.D. BOWLES

Justinian Rweyemamu, *Underdevelopment and Industrialization in Tanzania*, Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. xiv and 273, appendices, bibliography.

J. F. Rweyemamu's book is a very comprehensive and penetrating analysis of a dependent economy and draws the conclusions from it in terms of a strategy for the disengagement from this dependency relationship. Part I of the book deals with an historical analysis of the creation and consolidation of a dependent economy in Tanzania as a result of colonialism and the continuation thereof up to the Arusha declaration. In Part II the author starts from a more general analysis of the types of industrial development characteristic of ex-colonial economies and shows how this leads to lopsided development. Subsequently, he continues by "testing" this model of perverse capitalist industrial development in the Tanzanian case and shows that Tanzania did not constitute an exception to this type of perverse capita-