

## INTRODUCTION

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There is always a reason why new journals are born. A general reason is that the old ones cease at some time to reflect the changed balance of forces in society. Like other institutions, academic journals also eventually fall into the hands of those who would like to conserve a certain balance of social forces, and the ideas that correspond to this balance, against the onslaught of revolutionary changes. The bulk of Western Social Science journals are, in this sense, deeply, and understandably, conservative.

It has been the practice among third world scholars to seek to place the fruits of their academic work in these Western journals. Sometimes they succeed. The journals generally practise "tokenism", by which an occasional article by a third world or, in a different context a Marxist scholar, serves to vindicate their ruling ideology of liberalism and eclecticism. But they make sure that the balance of ideological forces firmly remains in their favour.

Instead of losing scholarly work in such futile exercises in tokenism, third world scholars have increasingly founded their own journals. These journals now have a firm editorial base in third world countries, and not in the metropolises, as the case with many journals that profess to specialise in the issues that concern the third world but which are still "organised" from the metropolises.

The *Utafiti* is a journal of the new kind. It hopes to provide a focus—a narrow sharp focus—on the contradictions of development in third world countries generally, and more specifically, in Tanzania and in her immediate environment. Tanzania, we think, provides a good example of a country in which the balance of social forces is undergoing change. Much of this change is of course purely formalistic and as yet experimental. The more fundamental, substantive changes have to encounter formidable forces of resistance. Some of these forces are local; others are external to Tanzania and external to Africa. The *Utafiti* hopes to mirror this confrontation between the forces of change and the forces of resistance, as they manifest in Tanzania, in Africa, and insofar as is relevant to us here, in the whole world.

We hope that this inaugural issue, whilst we are only too aware of its limitations, justifies this promise in its potential.

*Dr. Tschannerl*, an engineer by qualification and a member of the University's Bureau of Resource Assessment and Land Use Planning, has attempted to apply Samir Amin's analysis of underdevelopment to the case

of Tanzania, backed with insight and competent empirical research. He challenges the more conventional approaches to understanding the third world countries but at the same time raises the question about the level of abstraction at which he has pitched his analysis. *Rugumisa*, a young Tanzanian economist also at the University, takes up this issue and argues essentially for a more concrete class analysis of Tanzania based on historical materialism.

The problem of imperialism and the struggle for liberation is an old issue with Africa. West Asia, which Eurocentrists call "Middle East", has an even longer history of struggle. *Jamil Hilal*, a Palestinian active in the struggle, and for a year a member of the Department of Sociology at the University, analyses the nature of this struggle, clearly identifying the character of Zionism as a settler-colonial, petty-bourgeois ideology, and the balance of class forces that determines the character of the PLO and of the Arab countries in which the PLO operates.

*Brian Bowles*, a member of the History Department, applies the theory of underdevelopment, and consequently makes considerable advance, on our existing understanding of the place of export crops in integrating colonial Tanganyikan economy to the world capitalist system between 1929 and 1961. He argues that peasants' protests against export crop growing, often said to be due to "backwardness", are better understood as passive resistance to changes made with the welfare of people other than peasants in mind. Similarly, their so-called perverse reactions to price "incentives" are better understood as symptoms of dependence, and as a result of the historical process of the creation of that dependence. *Martin Kaniki* of the same Department applies, though not uncritically, Trimmingham's thesis about the three stages of the process of Islamisation, and identifies the factors in pre-Islamic Africa that facilitated, and those that inhibited, the penetration of Islam in the continent. The material base that might explain the depth or lack of penetration is not analysed, but the author carefully delineates the institutions that were susceptible to Islamic influence and those that were resistant.

We have in this issue an article in Kiswahili by *A. S. Nchimbi* of the Department of Linguistics at the University. The inclusion of an article in Kiswahili is not an exercise in tokenism. It is an expression of an open door to those who would rather write in the national language. Mr. Nchimbi's article itself is symbolic, in that he is concerned about the dangers of miscomprehension inherent in translation that a country like Tanzania faces, dependent as she is on technical assistance personnel coming from various countries. The author offers a suggestion of how this problem might be tackled.

Finally, we have what we hope will be a regular column. *Utafiti Notes* is not meant to be a gossip column of the journal. It is a serious attempt at providing, as comprehensively as possible, an account of the issues which have worried Social Scientists at the University of Dar es Salaam over the

UTAFITI six months preceding publication of the journal, since this is a bi-annual publication. The account, therefore, is not simply a listing down of publications and seminar presentations of the Faculty members, for an attempt is made to pick out a few of them for a closer examination in order to demonstrate the range and kind of controversies that have raged on the Hill. Those who have been unaware of these controversies have obviously not fully participated in the intellectual liveliness of the campus, and might perhaps make an effort to read the publications referred to here, or to pick up an argument with their authors, and thus add to the life of the campus. Those outside, who we hope will subscribe to the journal, might find in these *Notes* a microcosm of the controversies that probably are now, in the present epoch, the daily bread of most universities in the third world. As a former student of the University of Dar es Salaam once said, *what theories reign in academic circles is not simply of academic interest. Ideas reflect and attempt to legitimise certain group interests, and the struggle between ideas is only a struggle at the most abstract level, whose material base lies at the level of how the society organises itself for the production and distribution of its means of social existence.*