

## UTAFITI NOTES

Perhaps the best part of the polemics on the Hill in the recent past few months has centred not around academic seminar papers, but around matters which, at first sight at least, appear to be of purely pedagogical interest to the profession of University teaching in an underdeveloped country. There are political and ideological undercurrents in these debates which can easily be fathomed by a discerning eye.

One segment of the debate concerned virtually the entire University, and was related to the issue of improving University teaching. In a highly controversial paper presented by I. M. Omari of the Department of Education and I. N. Kimambo, the Chief Academic Officer, the authors made a critical evaluation of teaching at the University. They pointed out, among other things, that teaching at the University had suffered as a result of a combination of factors, among which they rated lack of training in communication skills, and an absence of a correct ideological orientation as significant factors—significant enough for them to suggest a few institutional innovation which, if adopted, could really “modernise” teaching at the University.

One was the setting up of a centre, or clinic or laboratory for improving teaching, in which teachers, students and junior staff could participate. The second was the appointment of an Academic Associate Dean in each faculty with the function of co-ordinating the courses for teaching the teachers the skills of communication. A third was for the Institute of Development Studies to mount courses for changing the ideological orientation of teachers so that their teaching has “relevance” to the needs of Tanzania. A moment’s reflection would show the formidable implications of these innovations, if they are adopted, especially the last one, even if we ignore the purely operational aspects of the innovations.

Whatever the merits of these proposals, they draw attention to the problems of an “underdeveloped” University, using the term in its technical sense, i.e. in the sense used by theorists of underdevelopment. The growth of Universities in the developed capitalist countries followed the logic of class struggle in those countries. During the struggle of the bourgeoisie against structures of feudal power, the educational institutions, i.e. those institutions of learning which produce ideologies to reflect the material interests of the ruling classes in the name of “science”, were one of the last feudal ramparts to fall, much later certainly than the bases of feudal economic and social power. Rousseau’s *Emile* and *The Social Contract* which appeared in 1762, were ordered to be burnt by the Council of Geneva, and banned by the University of Sorbonne in Paris, for the first one was an educational treatise based on “natural” principles which challenged the reigning religious educational orthodoxy in the Universities, and the second, even more dangerous, advocated democracy and the rejection of the divine right of kings. Feudal

power finally collapsed, and with it the role of the University changed to producing an ideology which interpreted the reality in such a way as to grist the mills of the bourgeoisie now in control of the state and the economy.

As the bourgeoisie became more secure, the function of the Universities was reduced to that of producing specialised skills who could become immediately operational in the business and professional world of the bourgeoisie. The ideological framework within which their teaching was conducted remained either implicit, or, if explicit, relegated to the sphere of philosophy described as a metaphysical activity of a few cranks. Indeed, in our own time, the bourgeoisie has banished philosophy itself as it has developed historically, and have turned it either into a branch of Mathematics or of linguistic analysis. Not until the emergence of Marxism, itself a product of a new epoch characterised by a challenge this time of the bourgeoisie by a new class, the proletariat, did it become once again possible to break out of the purely functional role of the University and to ask if the reigning ideology behind University teaching was not systematically working against the interests of the working classes. It was once again possible to raise the larger issue of man in society beyond those that could only be answered by the specialised sciences into which the bourgeoisie had fragmented knowledge. The bourgeoisie was quick to realise the revolutionary implications of Marxist philosophy, and was quick either to ban it, like Rousseau's *Emile* and *The Social Contract* were in an earlier epoch by the then ruling classes, or to adulterate it by mixing it up with all kinds of bourgeois theories that appear on surface to be radical.

The relevance of this discussion to the paper by Omari and Kimambo is simply this: that they at least recognise, without suggesting any particular ideological philosophy, the need consciously to relate teaching to ideology. They have raised an important question. But what they did not adequately bring out is that Universities in underdeveloped countries can only serve an ideology of underdevelopment. Such an ideology recognises an enemy in capitalism and imperialism, but also recognises at the same time the objective necessity, from the point of view of the ruling classes, to try to rationalise a working relationship with capitalism and imperialism, whether the rationalisation is in terms of the economic necessity of earning foreign exchange, or in terms of the political necessity of avoiding class struggle. Consequently, in most Universities of the third world countries, the ideological philosophy is either an out and out apologia for capitalism, or, as is the case in the most "radical" campuses amongst them, it is some kind of what Engels once called "the pauper's broth of eclecticism... ladled out in the universities... under the name of philosophy".

It was therefore no wonder that the Omari-Kimambo suggestion for an ideological centre was not taken up as one might have expected a revolutionary campus to have done. The University is a hotbed of eclecticism and no one ideology has a complete sway. However, there is a strong institutional

UTAFITI expression of ideology which emanates from the Institute of Development Studies, which adheres to the TANU Party ideology. Writing on the question of merging Theory with Practice, the IDS complained that there was a "proliferation of individuals in the University" who interpreted the country's ideology as they privately understood it, or deliberately misunderstood it. It suggested that: "In order not to leave matters to chance... it is strongly recommended that henceforth, recruitment, renewals of contracts and promotions of staff should take due regard of the individual's ideological awareness and commitment to TANU's policies." It went on to suggest ideological training, under the guardianship of the Party, of all University lecturers. This is the clearest expression of how those who have material interests in a certain mode of production tend ultimately to want to control even the means of intellectual production.

One particular Department saw the problem in purely pragmatic terms, recognising fully another important aspect of underdevelopment, namely, the dependence of underdeveloped Universities on expatriate staff. "It is quite conceivable", the Department noted, "that such effort could improve the teaching ability of the members of the teaching staff. It is however difficult to believe that a few ideological seminars held in the suggested centre... can change the ideological orientation of an elderly foreign professor on two-year contract!"

But perhaps the intention behind the Omari-Kimambo paper was not so much to revolutionise the ideology on the campus, as to modernise the teaching of the staff with audio-visual and other pedagogical aids, with its emphasis not on *substance* of teaching but the *technique*. It is true that in this day and age of technology, the fact that we at the Dar es Salaam campus should still be using the archaic blackboard-and-chalk system as a teaching aid might be a source of embarrassment to all self-respecting professional University dons. But apart from the question of the extent to which poor teaching is a function of poor technique, is it not perhaps more appropriate to think in terms first of modernising the instruments of production in Tanzanian agriculture? What would the wooden-hoe wielding peasant say when he sees that the surplus which only the peasant can produce in a predominantly agricultural country is used to buy photo-electric overhead demonstration kits for the University? Or is it perhaps the case that the use of such an equipment at the University is as essential as a heart-lung machine is at Muhimbili?

The Omari-Kimambo paper contains much else besides the issues raised above, selected in our case purely for their controversial character. As can be seen, none of the issues is of a purely pedagogical interest. The fact that they can be posed at all is a reflection of the political development of the University, which itself in turn, is a reflection of the wider society.

The issue that was posed at a general philosophical and ideological level by the above paper crystallised itself, as a result of a genealogy of its own and *independently* of the wider issues raised above, in the Department of

Economics at a more specific level. Again, the issue, though initially posed in pedagogical terms, acquired an inevitable political-ideological character. The issue was: What kind of Economics should be taught in a country in a transition to Socialism? The choice boiled down, as one expatriate lecturer saw it, to either teaching Marxist or "radical" economics or the capitalist neo-classical economics. He came out strongly in favour of the latter.

"I look upon economics as something (he wrote) more mechanistic, more technical, more logical. To fall back on a metaphor, I see neo-classical economics as having developed a nifty little theoretical box which, when asked certain questions, like some sort of a computer, flashes out definite answers. The problem is that no one in Tanzania is interested in answering the questions this box can answer. Radical economics has produced a theoretical box which is more like a music box. When asked a relevant question, it plays a sad refrain entitled 'exploitation'—and then repeats the question in other words."

It is clear that the author either had no understanding of Marxist economics or was out here (now gone) to sell neoclassical economics. Judging by his statement it would appear as if China or Vietnam do not know how to handle their operational problems in economics. If radical economists at the University were unable to provide operational answers to economic problems, could this not itself be a reflection of the fact of underdevelopment? Only a fully proletarian state can pose questions in a manner that can elicit operational answers from Marxist economists. The problem lies with the posing of the right kind of question and not with the tools of analysis. If the system demands that the products of its University's Economics Department should be able to do regression analysis and linear programming, then what else can the University do but to deliver the goods? A University cannot be far out of line with the basic political orientation of the country as a whole.

In a seminar discussion on this subject most participants, including those wedded to neoclassical economics, recognised that neoclassical economics have limited value for an underdeveloped country which is systematically disadvantaged in price-directed system of free trade. There was some disagreement on the question of whether economics consisted of a set of operational tools (like Statistics) which could be offered to students as neutral tools of analysis, or whether it consisted essentially of an ideology, carefully camouflaged in a pseudo-scientific language, and serving at best only to impart a *partial* understanding of the total reality in such manner as to serve the interests of the international bourgeoisie.

Victory in this particular debate was proclaimed by both sides, though neither was of course fully satisfied. Those among the students whose conception of themselves as economists coincided with their conception of their role as technicians of a trade, ready to serve masters that be, won their battle for having operational aspects of economics emphasised in at least some of the courses which, in practice, meant neoclassical economics. Those others

who saw the situation in wider terms got it finally accepted that economic theories were historically born to serve certain class interests, and that therefore in teaching these theories they should be handed out to students not as immutable scientific laws of society but as ideological and necessarily partial analysis of a complex political and social reality. Once again this debate proved the rule that an underdeveloped University is constrained by its very situation to offer at best "a pauper's broth of eclecticism."

From the higher realms of philosophy let us now descend to the ground and view the activities of an institution at the University, the Bureau of Resource Assessment and Land Use Planning (BRALUP), which conceives its role in purely pragmatic terms. It sees itself essentially as the Government's consultants development planning. It has economists and other specialists trained mostly in the neoclassical traditions. It is funded, apart from Tanzanian sources, by the Danish International Development Agency, the Department of International Development Co-operation of Finland, the International Development Research Centre (for a demographic unit), the Population Council, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Swedish International Development Agency. For a full list of its activities, undertaken mostly at the request of Government Ministries, one must study its last Annual Report, but we might mention here two of its better known projects.

One is the BRALUP's major involvement in the preparation of the Third Five Year Plan which was scheduled to appear in 1975 but was shelved on account of temporary problems. BRALUP's role is to co-ordinate the Regional Plans of Tanzania—in effect, this means writing up the Third volume of the Plan. This is an important and difficult assignment, for it involves putting together into a national plan an enormous range of plans that are being worked out in each of the twenty regions of mainland Tanzania almost independently of each other.

The other project of the BRALUP is to assist in the making of the Fifteen-Year Regional Plan of one of these regions, namely, Rukwa, called the Rukwa Rural Integrated Development Programme. While all the other regions are assisted by the technical expertise from outside donor countries (such as Western Germany in Tanga, Canada in Dodoma and the United Nations Development Programme in Iringa), Rukwa is the only region with the benefit of the services of a local institution. Within the BRALUP itself the Rukwa project is headed by two of its senior research fellows, Audun Sandberg and Gerhard Tschannerl. We shall let Mr. Sandberg explain to us the objectives and method of work of the R.R.I.D.P.:

"Based on the Agro-Economic Zones' earlier defined by BRALUP, the agricultural/livestock system within each of the five zones in Rukwa has been quantified and analyzed with respect to constraints and potential. A model of the agricultural systems was then constructed, where a target income per peasant family was fixed and the resulting yields improvements and area requirements derived. On the village level, after conducting a 'village site

fertility study' the model yielded a specific recommended village size which would enable the peasants to reach the target income with the resources available to the village.

"These objectives are attainable given equal access to land within the village (land use planning and land reallocation) and given a correct strategy for rural transformation. Instead of investing in central productive enterprises and hoping for a demonstration or trickle down effect to the traditional peasantry, a multisectoral approach is suggested whose main aim is to alleviate rural poverty by sustained increases in the productivity and incomes of low-income peasant households. This means that the target group is around 100,000 peasant families and consequently that investment per family is low.

"This calls for minimum cost approach both in the productive and social sectors and for equal access to improved farming implements, seeds, breeds of animals and knowledge for all sections of the rural community. The sustained improvements in productivity will have to come about in whatever mode of production is appropriate for a particular crop in a particular agro-economic zone, individual, co-operation groups, Ujamaa or block farming. But the approach has to be flexible, with predominance of ox-ploughing (ownership of plough/or is planned to increase from 25% to 80% of peasant households) and hardly any rural differentiation, individual farming is going to be predominant also in the near future. Tanzania's experience shows that productivity in agriculture does not increase under forced collective farming until one enters the stage of mechanized grain farming and that controlling economic inequality is easier by setting maximum holding sizes and herd sizes which can be controlled on the village level. What the R.R.I.D.P. is stressing is that the agricultural revolution has to come within the next five years, lest the movement of people to villages has been in vain. In connection with the increase in peasant productivity, farmers' education (on farming) will increase the professionalization of peasants and create a demand from the rural poor for greater influence in policy issues rather than being the target of political education. This is the single most important element of the R.R.I.D.P. The R.R.I.D.P. will be designed so that it can be financed from either external or internal sources, depending on the strength and commitment of the Regional Management Team."

It would appear from the above description that the emphasis is on increasing the *productivity* of the region so that peasants in Rukwa attain a targeted income level in fifteen years, and not on the mode of organisation of production. In other words, individual farming, group farming, Ujamaa farming, block farming—all these modes of organising production are acceptable and long as, with the assistance of whatever aid can be obtained from internal and external sources, the plan yields the prospect of, say, doubling the income of the peasants in a fifteen-year period. The *social relations of production* become not only a secondary matter, but essentially even irrelevant.

Such activities of the Bureau, and of its sister Bureau, the Economic

UTAFITI     Research Bureau, are activities that practically matter, in the sense that they have immediate policy implications, for better or for worse. The rest is mere academic: they enlighten the mind of the students rather than strengthen the hands of the state. Nonetheless, they are an important contribution to the life of the University. Most faithful in this regard has been the Department of History with its regular weekly seminars. Most provocative in this regard has been the activities of what is essentially a students' body, the Economics Association, with its occasional public sessions of debate on larger issues of economics.

In one of its sessions, the Economics Association had Professor Nabudere of the Faculty of Law tear down the veil of neo-Marxist explanations of Imperialism and reveal underneath these explanations the unconscious strivings of petty bourgeoisie intellectuals of the Third World counselling their petty bourgeois compradorial regimes towards a strategy of action against the Capitalist countries limited only to the sphere of the *market*. Imperialism, Nabudere explained, has to be understood by looking at the laws of motion of capitalist *production* which necessarily leads to imperialist expansion as a means of countering the law of declining rate of profit under capitalism.

In another session, Marc Wuyts of the Economics Department reviewed Clive Thomas' recent book entitled *Dependency and Transformation*. Clive Thomas, it might be recalled, was a professor of Economics at the University in 1972/73, and was the originator of the famous phrase that in the Tanzania-type economy, the people produce what they do not consume (i.e. cash crops which are exported), and they consume what they do not produce (i.e. they import their consumption needs). In its essentials he had advocated a strategy for Tanzania-type economies which would involve the convergence of resource use and demand as a first "iron law" of transformation, and convergence of needs with demands as the second "iron law" of transformation, and an industrialisation strategy based on promoting "basic industries" in Tanzania. In its own time Clive Thomas' strategy sounded revolutionary, and was certainly instrumental in sparking creative imagination of the economists on the Hill steeped in neo-classical theories. After three years of revolutionary development on the Hill, Thomas' strategy is recognised for what it is—an "economistic" ideology devoid of any class analysis, which was born at a particular historical period when it was necessary to show to the capitalist economists that the structure of the economies of the underdeveloped countries was *qualitatively* different from that of the developed countries, and that these countries were not likely to experience a trajectory of development through which the older capitalist countries had gone, an assumption on which was based much of the literature on the growth models for the Third World countries. Clive Thomas' work crystallised this "underdevelopment" thesis, born first in Latin America, in its purely structural form, and therefore, insofar as it did not touch upon the substance of economics, which is politics,

its strategy for development had limited use. This all became clear in Wuyts' presentation and the subsequent debate that followed.

In a third session of the Economics Association, the Governor of the Bank of Tanzania explained to the University audience the meaning of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for Tanzania. The mechanics of the Bank's and the Fund's assistance to Tanzania were explained. The Governor complained, however, that in the decision-making organs of the World Bank group, the countries of the Third World were treated as children "who could only be seen, but not heard", though he hoped that through joint endeavour, they will reform the system until their voices are heard also. The discussion was organised along the lines of a panel, of whose other three members, shot out after the Governor's speech systematically exposing the essentially imperialist character of the World Bank, one which could not be trusted for helping Tanzania to build a Socialist economy.

The discussion so far has been on the more polemical side of the University's intellectual pursuits in order primarily to give a sense of its vivacity and ideological flavour. But the campus has been productive yet in another area of its activities, in the area, that is, of drama. The Department of Theatre Arts produced six plays in a short period of six months, each of which portrayed some aspect of social contradiction either in contemporary Tanzania or in the world at large but appealing strongly, however, not to the proletarian sentiments of the working classes but to the petty-bourgeois, liberal, nationalist sentiments of its usual audiences, whether within the University or outside.

Three of the plays "*Maiti*" (Author and Director: a third year student, Franklin Mziray), "*Pambo*" (Author: Mrs. Penina Muhando; and Director: Miss Thekla Patrick, a third year student), and "*Damana*" (Author and Director: Godwin Kaduma), all these in Swahili, had a common thread running through them, namely, the tensions of underdevelopment in contemporary Tanzania. In "*Maiti*" a contrast was drawn between the human condition in the two periods separated by Independence, in which the contemporary social problems of urbanisation (erected by the total situation but faced in their most cruel forms by women, for example, in the practice of baby-dumping) were placed against the historical background of the colonial period. "*Pambo*" is a graduate of the University of Dar es Salaam, a misguided intellectual maniac, who moves around with his College gown impressing upon the younger generation the pleasures of aping decadent bourgeois culture of the West—drug taking, hippydom, free sex, bumping—a case, in other words, of total alienation of an individual, allegedly a result of modern University education. "*Damana*", on the other hand, attempted to portray the education of schools in Tanzania characterised by indiscipline on both sides—on the side of the students, especially sons of big shots, and on the side of corrupt school officials. The play made no attempt however, to analyse



UTAFITI the malaise at the deeper level of the social situation, it only asked some questions.

"*Tendehogo*" (a Swahili production, authored and directed by a third year student, Edwin Semzaba), and "*The Island*" (an English production of Athol Fugard's famous play directed by S. Sorkin), both play on the theme of slavery and oppression in their complex historical and contemporary forms. "*Tendehogo*" juxtaposed slavery at two levels—at the historical, conventional, physical level, and at the contemporary, psychological and cultural level. "*The Island*" is the Robben Island in South Africa which holds time-serving political prisoners of *Apartheid*, going through the mental and physical tortures of modern-day slavery in its racially disguised contemporary form. The sixth play, *Jogoo Kijijini* (Author and story-teller: Ebrahim Hussein; Director, Franklin Mziray) was a class of its own, a kind of creative dramatics, a story-teller's art presented in the form of poetry.

We come, finally to providing a list of topics presented in Departmental Seminars at the University, for the benefit of those who would like to secure copies of these from the Faculty. The History Department held the following seminars:

Pre-Colonial Agriculture Systems and Settlement

Patterns in Tanganyika (H. Kjekshus)

The Development of a Myakyusa Peasantry and Problems of Peasant Production in Rungwe District 1920-45 (J. Mbwiliza)

The Early Colonial Impact on Pastoralists in Serengeti District 1898-1924. (O. Anacleti)

The Underdevelopment of Agriculture in Colonial Kenya. (B. Bowles)

The Conversion of Muhammed Bello from the Qadiriyya to the Tyaniyya Order: A Re-Evaluation of the Evidence. (U. Al-Nagar)

East African Critics: Some Persistent Problems of "Modernisation" (A. Ishumi)

Pre-Capitalist Social Formations in Pre-Colonial Kenya (A. Sheriff)

The Colonial Situation and Pottery Production Since 1936: Usangi Pare Case Study (B. Omari)

Social Production, Symbolism and Ritual in Buha (G. Gwassa and J. Mbwiliza)

Marxism and African History (H. Bernstein)

C. Ehret: Ethiopians and East Africans: A Review (O. Elderkin, D. Nurse and G. Philippson)

An Overview of Economic History of South of Lake Rukwa, 1750-1960 (M. Wright)

The Economic Research Bureau organised the following Seminars:

Petroleum Crisis and the LDC's: Effect and Energy Policy Alternatives  
OR

The effect of the Energy Crisis on Developed Countries and Possible Impact on LDC's (Prof. R. Dunn)

- Population Growth and Agricultural Development—The African Continent with emphasis on Tanzania (Prof. Francispillai) UTAFITI
- Inflation: Tanzania's Dilemma (P. Kuuya)
- Decision-Making in Tanzania's National Bank of Commerce (NBC)—Controls and Participation Dichotomy (N. Mwase)
- Causes of excess capacity in selected Industries in Tanzania (S. M. Wangwe)
- Export-Import Policy and its impact on the General Economy of Tanzania (N. A. Pillai)
- Nyarubanja System and both Development and Ujamaa Villages in West-Lake Region (J. Bugengo)
- Lidep's vegetable Case Study (R. R. Matango)
- A General Model of Planning Techniques (B. Adams)
- Housing and Construction in the Tanzanian economy—an inter-industry approach (Tore W. Kjøsterud)
- Import Substitution as a Development Strategy: A case study of Cement Production in Tanzania (P. M. Kuuya)