

The Growth and Development of Coffee and Cotton Marketing Co-operative in Tanzania, c. 1932-1982

By

Somo Makanyaga Liheta Seimu

Doctor of Philosophy, University of Central Lancashire, 2015

By the mid-1970s, Tanzania had the biggest co-operative movement in Africa and the oldest in East Africa. Despite such achievement for decades, the literature on Tanzania's small-scale coffee and cotton cultivation and marketing co-operatives has suffered from a dearth of substantive historical accounts. The available literature is fragmented along various academic disciplines, mostly political science and sociology. In addition, there is no single substantive secondary historical study specifically dedicated to the co-operative movement since the inception in 1932. The neglect is more critical given the current renaissance in Africa and increasing international interest in the co-operative movement at either national or local levels. This thesis seeks to fill this gap by utilising primary sources from the Co-operative College archive in Manchester and Tanzania National Archive (TNA) to examine and evaluate the coffee and cotton marketing co-operatives during the 1932 to 1982 period. The study further explores the interlocking forces and policies that led to its growth and development. The development is also examined against the changing political and ideological influences during the interwar, and post-war to independence periods. This thesis is structured under three cases, two of which are coffee marketing cooperatives, the Kilimanjaro Native Co-operative Union (KNCU) and Bukoba Cooperative Union (BCU) in Kagera; and the cotton apex marketing co-operative in the WCGA, the Victoria Federation of Co-operative Unions (VFCUS) which was formed in 1955. Study findings show that the time gap in the formation of the mentioned cooperatives were due to the colonial authority neglecting its own co-operative development policy. The evidence shows that, the KNCU which was formed in 1933 and BCU in 1950 were both established at the behest of the British colonial government in a move to control the coffee industry. Importantly, the study examines the power relations involved and the government interventions in the process and the extent to which the co-operatives were promoted and controlled by the government through the co-operative and agricultural marketing policies and legislations. This was particularly provided under Section 36 Of the 1932 co-operative legislation and was further reinforced by three policies, the 1934 Chagga Rule, the 1937 Native (control and marketing) Ordinance and the Defence Ordinance, Orders of 1939 and 1940; and the African Agricultural Products (Control and Marketing) Ordinance, 1949. The post-colonial authority perpetuated the colonial policies in promoting cooperatives and the control of agricultural export revenues provided under the 1962 by the National Agricultural Products Board (Control and Marketing) Act by intensifying the intervention, effectively strangling and restructuring them to provide for effective control. Again, there was an increased politisation of the movement's function as they became an integral part of the propagation of the socialist/ujamaa ideology and the national development plan as the 1976 villagisation policy. This study is of the view that the colonial and post-colonial authorities intervened in the formation of co-operatives given the fact that they were economic strategically vital. During the phases covered in this thesis, the established legislations reinforced the government's control over the co-operative movement and the producers; and granted themselves a monopoly over the handling and export of small-scale produced coffee and cotton through the control of marketing boards by appointing co-operatives as crop handling agents. Thus, the co-operative movement never attained autonomous status as it became part of the government machinery in extracting resources and exploiting small-scale growers.