

**Commoditization of Livestock in A Predominantly Non-Cash Crop Growing Area  
A Case Study of Mbulu Area**

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**Abstract**

Today's international (capitalist) economic system presents us, among other things, with undisputed fact that the whole world is woven into this giant economic house. In one way or another, the economies of the world as a whole are affected by international capitalist system. Historically, the socialist economic systems are a consequence of the collapse of capitalism in countries which succeeded in bringing about the socialist revolutions e.g. Russia, China and Cuba.

On the other hand, the majority of the now developing countries were, and some still are, the plundering grounds for resources for the capitalist economies in the developed countries.

The implication of this state of affairs was that no single area of the world had remained outside this capitalist economic system. The countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America were mainly drawn into the system through colonisation by the European and North American countries.

This study intended to look into the question of commodity economy, not only of the former colony whose economy was still a peripheral one, but the periphery of that periphery. In particular, the study sought to the extent of gradual commoditization of livestock which came about at a of the tnt10duction of the capitalist colonial economy. The researcher was specifically interested in the peripheral economy (livestock). For most of the tune. livestock economy in the developing countries had remained outside the economic system of the society. But it was still being drawn into the whole system) through a variety of methods. This study sought to analyse the systematic commoditization of livestock which came about as a result of the introduction of the capitalist colonial economy.

The area under discussion was Mbulu, which was then in Arusha Region. It was one of those areas which did not "contribute enough" to the colonial economy. One reason was that the area was not economically attractive enough for the colonial economic ventures. However, from

the very beginning of the colonial administration in this country, the area seemed a livestock economic backbone of the northern part of the country.

Since the aim of this study was mainly to analyse the systematic commoditization of livestock in particular, the findings were not directed to any specific community in the study area. As such, the whole exercise was essentially based on two communities who were the main inhabitants of this area namely; the pastoral Barbaig and the agro-pastoral Iraqw. The two communities had been taken together because of two key reasons.

The first reason was based on the degree of dependence on livestock by each of the two communities. This degree of dependence on livestock as a source of subsistence would tell the kind of approach one would use in order to bring about modernisation. Thus, in the then 'villagisation' programme which was geared towards quick rural development, one was bound to effect this with varying degrees between 'pure' pastoralists and semi-pastoralists. At the same time, both pastoralists and agro-pastoralist would show a varying degree and extent of participation in the commodity economy.

The second reason why these two communities have been studied together was that, for most of the time since the colonial times, livestock had been regarded as the only commercially-viable economic activity in the study area, and the attention of both livestock owners and policy makers was, therefore, directed towards livestock keeping.

In this study, documentary review was one of the main data collection methods used. Documents relating to livestock management were deemed the most reliable sources of information for this study. Substantial information Was obtained from periodic reports in files from the Mbulu District Livestock Development Officer. Also, useful information came from similar reports of the Tanzania Livestock Marketing Company. Other forms of information Were obtained through formal interviews and questionnaires. This was mainly with the livestock development experts at the ward, division and district levels as well as the peasant pastoralists. These instruments consisted of questions which ranged from open-ended questionnaires dealing with various aspects of the livestock economy to questions which dealt with attitudes towards de. stocking or livestock price fluctuations.

The use of questionnaires was based on villages. At the time of this research, there were 85 registered villages in Mbulu District. Given this big number of the villages and time limitation, a small sample of (8 villages) was selected. A random method was used after villages were arranged according to their recent registration order. The next step was then to pick up every nth (i.e. 10th) village. In this way, the selected villages were Endanachand, Haydom, Maghang, Dongobesh, Gidihim, Diyomat, Khaday and Waama.

The study observed that, although the people's primary economic base in the study area was livestock keeping, colonial rule demanded that all the people had to fully contribute to the colonial economy. Thus, in this non. agricultural cash crop growing area, livestock had to be incorporated into the colonial economic order. Even the wheat growing pioneer African farmers in the northern zone of Mbulu (not part of the study area) were said to have obtained cash for opening farms from the sale of livestock.

It was noted, however, that people in the study area did not enter the commodity economy by their own free will. They were forced into the deal, and the process continued. Nonetheless, their initial reluctance has never vanished. Unfortunately, these people were living under conditions which were, in the eyes of outsiders, outdated. Consequently, it appeared that there was need to adjust the life of these people to be at the level of the '20th Century standards through an acceptable fashion'. Fortunately, the pastoralists were rich in terms of livestock. So, it was a matter of choosing the appropriate approach and methods suitable for the transformation.