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Kaj Århem

THE MAASAI AND THE STATE

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Cover photo: Warrior, olmorani, drawing water for his cattle from a traditional well.

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THE MAASAI AND THE STATE

The impact of rural development policies on a pastoral people in Tanzania

by Kaj Århem

Copenhagen March 1985

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(Photos: the author)

Introduction

This document examines the evolution of development policies in Tanzania and their impact on a pastoral people - the Maasai of northern Tanzania. At the most general level it deals with the relationship between the state and the peasantry in Tanzania. Rural development policies are seen as one expression of this relationship. The evolution of development policies in Tanzania says something about the relationship between the state and the peasantry and variations in development policies throughout the history of Tanzania reflect changes in the quality and character of this relationship.

The document focuses on a particular and relatively little studied instance of state-peasantry relationship in Tanzania, namely that between the state and the pastoral peasantry. Through an analysis of the impact of national development policies on the pastoral producers in Tanzania, it tries to show how rural development - in its different guises - has contributed to the creation of a pastoral peasantry and served as an ideological, political and economic instrument for tying the peasant to the state. The Tanzanian Maasai are chosesn as a case in point. The Maasai are not only the largest pastoral group in Tanzania; their recent history and current situation to a large extent epitomize the predicament of other pastoral groups in East Africa.

The situation of the East African pastoralists is in many respects precarious. They inhabit semi-arid and ecologically fragile lands, they are usually marginal with respect to basic social services, and they form minority enclaves in the midst of an agricultural majority population. As such they tend to be poorly understood and largely in conflict with national cultural and political institutions. They practice a form of land use - mobile and extensive - which tends to be conducive to conflicts with other groups of people as well as other, more intensive and profitable forms of land use

promoted by the state. In addition, administrators and policy makers usually have a deep-rooted prejudice against the pastoralists. Nomadic pastoralists are considered backward and conservative. Sedentary agriculture and intensive ranching are seen as the only paths to progress. This attitude, paired with the difficulties in administering and controlling the nomadic pastoral groups, and the ignorance among administrators and planners about the needs and conditions of the pastoralists, has lead to the neglect of their interests. This document brings these problems into focus and places them in a context. It presents the needs and conditions of the pastoralists in relation to the economic ambitions of the state and the efforts to achieve these goals. In so doing, it seeks to correct the distorted image of the pastoralists as backward and conservative and alert planners and administrators to the true problems of pastoral development.

The document begins by providing an outline of Maasai culture and society. It then amplifies the perspective and scope, tracing the evolution of rural development policies from the early colonial period to the present. Particular attention is paid to the development of livestock policies, a topic less publicised than the evolution of agricultural policies, and their consequences for the agrarian peasantry in Tanzania. The impact of rural development policies on the pastoralists is illustrated by the history of Tanzanian Maasailand in general and a community of Maasai in the Serengeti-Ngorongoro area in particular. The case of the Ngorongoro Maasai substantiates and concretises the sweeping account of development and change in Tanzanian Maasailand as a whole. It traces the consequences of national development policies down to the local community, thus shedding light on the central theme of this document - the interaction and interdependence of the national and the local, the state and the peasantry.

The Maasai

Tanzania is one of the wealthiest nations in Africa in terms of livestock. According to the most recent livestock census (1978) there are some 12 million head of cattle in Tanzania[1]. Most of the domestic animals are kept by sedentary agro-pastoralists and mixed farmers in the tse-tse free areas of northern and central Tanzania. The largest herds and the highest stocking densities are found in higher-rainfall areas where crop production is the mainstay of the economy but where livestock, particularly cattle, play an important social and economic role. It has been estimated that about one quarter of the national cattle herd in Tanzania is kept by the agro-pastoral Sukuma on the margins of cultivated land in the Shinyanga, Mwanza and Tabora regions (Brandström, Hultin & Lindström, 1979). In the drier areas occupied predominantly by semi-nomadic pastoralists, herds are more scattered and mobile and stocking densities lower. Perhaps a tenth or less of the national cattle herd is kept by these pastoralists (Raikes, 1981).

The majority of pastoral groups in Tanzania are the Maa-speaking Maasai and Baraguyu and the Tatog-speaking Barabaig. Until recently they were all purely pastoral groups in the sense that agriculture played no or only a minimal role in subsistence production. Over the past decade, however, increasing numbers of particularly Barabaig and Baraguyu households have, in response to pressures from the outside and the reduction of their resource base, taken to subsistence agriculture as a supplementary line of production, thus turning into agro-pastoralists (cf. Kjaerby, 1979).

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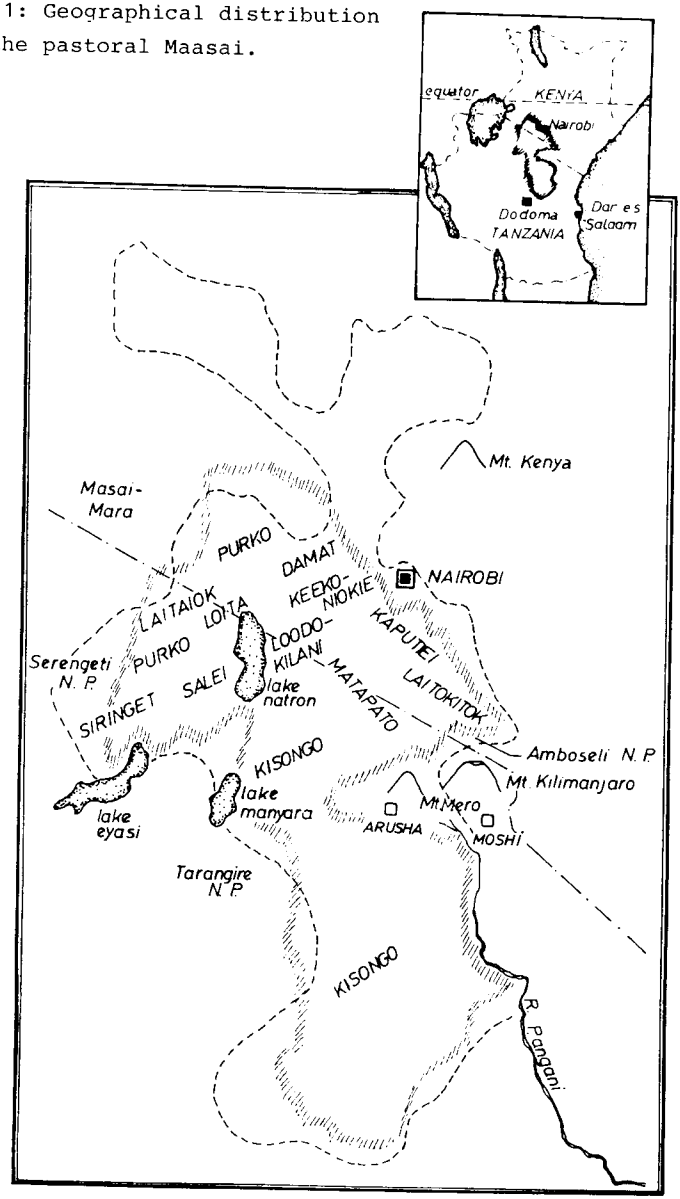
1. The official figure for the national cattle herd in 1983 was 12.5 million animals (Ministry of Livestock Development, June 1983). It is estimated that the small stock herd is somewhat smaller (Raikes, 1981). Recent official livestock figures are critically examined in Raikes (1981).

Map 1: Geographical distribution of the pastoral Maasai.



The Maasai are by far the largest of the pastoral groups in Tanzania. Today the Tanzanian Maasai, thinly spread over northern Tanzania, number some 80-90,000 people of the 300,000 or so pastoral Maasai living in the Rift Valley region of Kenya and Tanzania[1].

Maasai social and economic life centres around livestock. Cattle, sheep and goats form the basis of their subsistence. Milk, meat and blood are their dietary ideals, but in reality agricultural foods frequently supplement their pastoral diet, particularly during droughts and at the height of the dry season. Exchange of livestock for grain has probably always taken place between the pastoral Maasai and their agricultural neighbours[2]. Today grain, mainly maize flour, is a dry season staple along with milk. Though their pastoral economy is basically subsistence-oriented and the purely pastoral diet still highly valued, the need for grain firmly ties the Maasai to the economy of the larger society.

The herds of cattle kept by the pastoral Maasai are low-producing but sturdy and disease resistant. To make up for the low productivity of the cattle and ensure a sustained milk yield, individual stock owners strive to keep large herds. The cattle serve as a store of food and insurance against disaster in an environment where drought is recurrent and livestock diseases endemic. Human population densities are consequently low but animal-man ratios relatively high. Land use

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1. Jacobs (1975:406) estimated that there were more than 226,000 pastoral Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania in 1975. Of these, 62,000 lived in Tanzania. His estimates were based on the 1958 Tanganyikan census and the 1969 Kenya census, adapted and brought up to date by assuming a 2% annual population increase. According to the 1967 national census there were 79,649 Maa-speakers in Tanzania. The total population of Tanzania was 17.5 million in 1978 when the latest national census was taken.

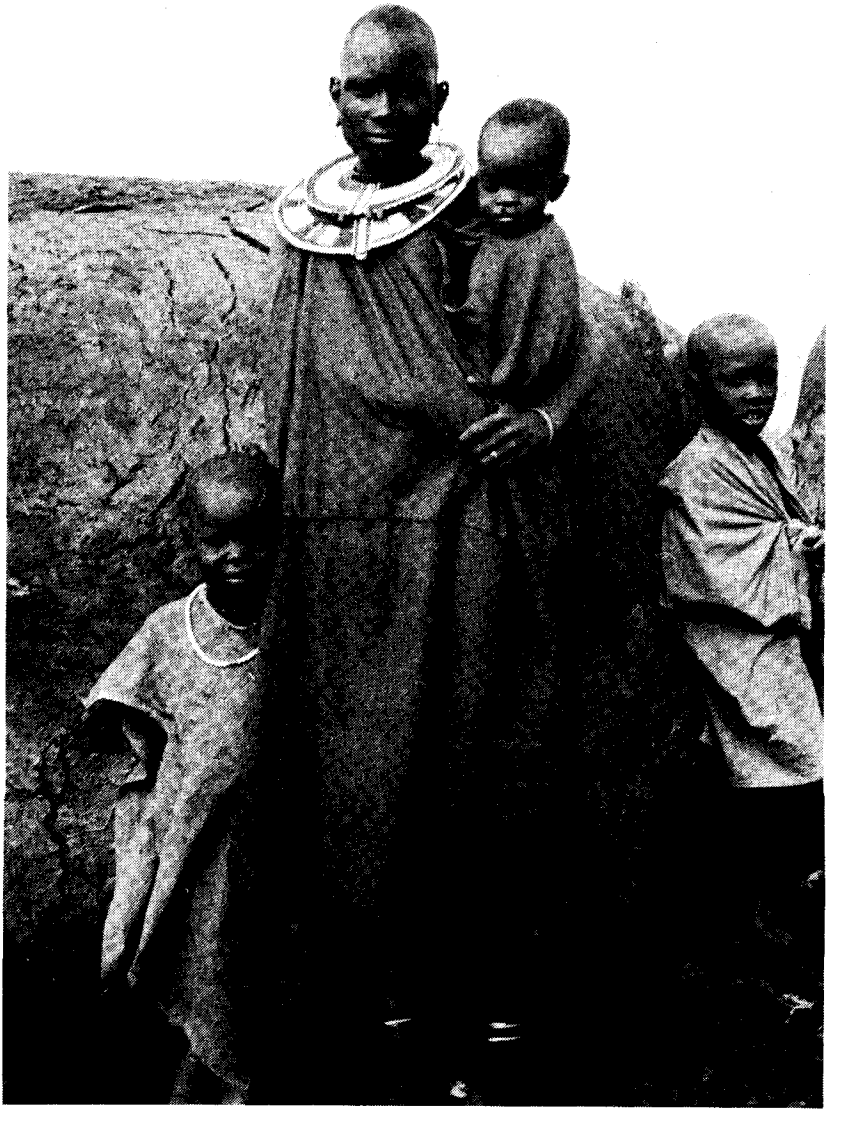
2. On the history of exchange between the pastoral Maasai and their agricultural neighbours, see Berntsen (1979).

is transhumant, which means that grazing areas are seasonally kept fallow to allow for grass regeneration and reduce grazing pressure. Rich grazing land is typically used during the dry season and left to recover during the wet when people and livestock move to lower-potential areas.

Livestock means far more than food and economic security to the Maasai. Cattle in particular constitute a key value in Maasai culture. The entire social system is geared to cattle herding and moulded around the transhumant mode of subsistence. Cattle are a multiple purpose resource. The live produce and the different parts of the carcass are used as food, medicine, utensils, clothing and adornment. But cattle also signify wealth and confer status. They serve as a medium of exchange, legitimize marriage and symbolize social relationships. Cattle are objects of affection and of supreme religious significance. They ultimately define the Maasai ethnic identity; the term for cattle, inkishu, also refers to the Maasai as a people. For the Maasai, then, cattle give meaning to life; they mean life itself.

Rights to livestock are at once individual and social. Livestock is inherited from father to son but may be kept in trust by a man's wives. Clan mates and stock friends also have claims on the family herd. Control over livestock is stratified; it implies a set of vested interests involving individuals and groups both outside and within the immediate family, uniting as well as dividing the social sphere.

Land, too, is invested with cultural value and social meaning. The natural produce of the land, the green grass, is the food of cattle. Along with milk and meat from sacrificed cattle, grass is a key symbol in Maasai ritual. Land is not owned by any one man but in a sense belongs to all. The Maasai are divided into territorial sections, iloshon, within which the members have priority rights in grazing. The section is subdivided into localities, inkutot, and neighbourhood clusters of settlements which effectively control customary



Mother with children

grazing areas within the section territory. This hierarchy of rights in, and effective control over grazing land is directly related to the requirements of herding in the semi-arid savanna environment: at times people and herds must be able to move over large areas in search of water and grass.

The Maasai social and political system bears out the pastoral adaptation. Social organisation is flexible, allowing for periodic contraction, expansion and reorganisation of herding units and social groups in response to changes in environmental conditions. Social groups are recruited on the basis of practical considerations of resource utilisation and congeniality in cooperation rather than normative exigencies of kinship and residence rules. In an ecological perspective Maasai society is designed to strike a viable balance between man, livestock and the physical environment - water and pastures.

Like the social system, the traditional political system is flexible and pragmatic. There are no ascribed or hereditary leaders. Authority rests with age-set leaders, elected on the grounds of their moral conduct and personal qualities. Hierarchy and equality are coexistent political principles in Maasai society. Within age groups equality is emphasised. The young men, ilmuran, form locality-based fellowships stressing sharing and communalism. Egalitarian solidarity and generosity are supreme values. Ilmuran are not allowed to eat alone. They cannot drink milk from their own family herds and always go around in groups. Influence, however, grows with seniority, increased knowledge and wisdom. As men grow older, wealth as an indicator of herding skills comes to play an increasingly important role. Thus, the elders control the younger age-groups and community wide authority rests with the elders. The council of elders, enkigwana, is the principal decision-making body of the locality.

This summary presentation of Maasai culture points to the environmental rationality of the traditional pastoral system

of land use and stresses the emotional commitment to herding and cattle among the Maasai pastoralists. This is not to be confused with the notion of the "cattle complex" as originally presented by Herskovitz (1926) but demonstrates that what is economically necessary is emotionally charged and symbolically invested. The Maasai see themselves as herdsmen by tradition and sacred mandate. They are "people of cattle" iltung'ana loo ŋgishu. As such they are, in their own view, distinct from the agriculturalists and hunters who surround them. Hunters, people without cattle, are seen as poor men. For the Maasai meat is not daily food; cattle meat is above all, sacred food. Agriculture is conceived of as desecration of the land on which cattle feed. The quintessential herdsman is the "big man", olkitok, who builds up social influence by means of generosity and generalised exchange of his livestock, rather than the "rich man", olkarsis, who accumulates wealth by reducing livestock exchanges (Galaty, 1981). The herdsman works for his family, his kin and his local community. Production is geared to the needs of the household. Beyond the household, food and property circulate within and between settlements along channels defined by kinship, friendship and age-group affiliation. This is, to the Maasai, the meaning of the "good life", the particular Maasai way of life.

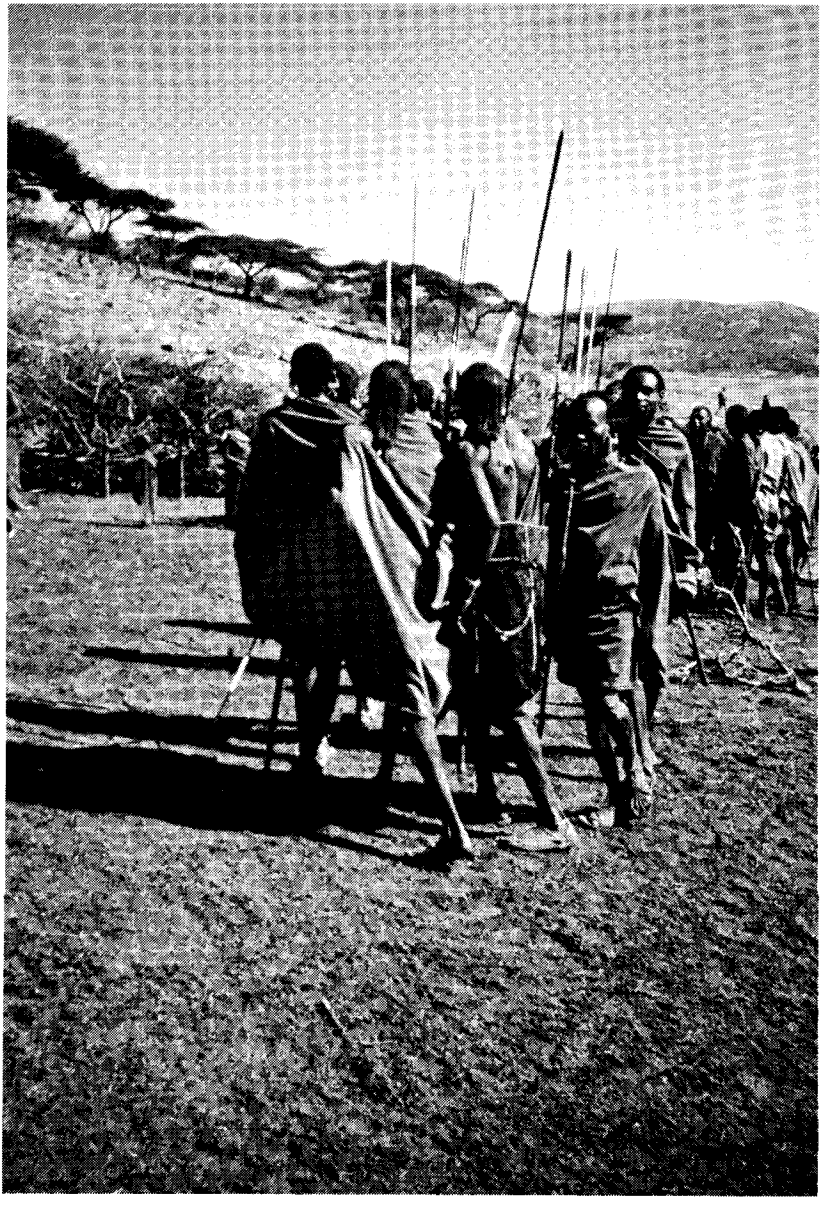
At present the Tanzanian Maasai have increasing difficulties in reaching their own standards of good living. They are drawn into the mainstream of the national economy and the political machinery of the state. They are becoming increasingly dependent on economic and political forces outside their control. Their economic security and capacity to determine their own lives are reduced and their very existence as an ethnic group is threatened. Paradoxically, this situation has to a large extent been created by national development efforts ostensibly aimed at improving their well-being and living conditions.

The pastoral way of life has persistently been, and still

is, misunderstood by administrators and planners. The seasonal migrations of people and livestock are seen as a manifestation of an innate desire to wander about and a reluctance to settle down rather than an adaptive response to the semi-arid savanna environment. Viewed in a strictly economic perspective, isolated from its social and ecological context, the relatively low output of milk and meat from the pastoral herds becomes a sign of underdevelopment and underproductivity; the multipurpose value of livestock and the fact that the sturdy pastoral breeds are evolved in response to the specific constraints of the environment are ignored. The low population densities in pastoral areas and the transhumant pattern of land use are interpreted in terms of underutilisation of resources - a waste of land - which could be put to more intensive use in a national economic perspective. At the same time the high stocking rates per capita - necessary as an insurance against drought and to make up for the low productivity of the pastoral livestock breeds - are seen as irrational and a threat to the environment. Sedentarisation and nucleation of the pastoral populations, destocking and the commercialisation of livestock production consequently characterise Tanzania's livestock development policies since colonial times. The policies take little or no account of the needs and conditions of the pastoralists but manifest the common prejudice against them and the ignorance about the pastoral mode of subsistence on which it is based. The following is an overview of rural development policies in Tanzania from the pastoralists' point of view.

Colonial Development Policies

The German rule in Tanzania (formerly Tanganyika), from the 1890's to the First World War, was a rule of conquest and crude coercion. The colonial policies were clear as to their objective and direct in their means of achieving it: the colony was to serve the interests of the German Empire. At



Warriors dancing during the boys' initiation ceremony

the turn of the century the German administration controlled the major population centres of Tanganyika and the main lines of communication, including the old caravan routes between the coast and the interior. Plantations and settler farms introduced a capitalist sector in the colony while taxation and forced labour combined to create a peasantry. Resistance to colonial rule was widespread at the beginning of the century and culminated in the Maji Maji rebellion of 1905-6, harshly crushed by the Germans after protracted fighting.

After the German defeat in the First World War, Tanganyika became a Mandated Territory administered by Britain under the supervision of the League of Nations. The British Mandate of 1922 gave Britain full powers of legislation and administration while at the same time binding her to promote "the material and moral well-being and the social progress" of the Tanganyikan people (quoted in Iliffe, 1979:247).

The initial British presence in Tanganyika was low-key. The colony was of little economic interest to Britain. The Mandate was accepted more as a moral obligation than an economic opportunity; a fact reflected in the early British economic policies in the territory. The notion of development entered the colonial scene. The British advocated "African Development" as the guiding principle in Tanganyika on the ground that Tanganyika must remain "primarily a Black man's country" (quoted in Iliffe, 1979:262). This was to distinguish the colonial policy in Tanganyika from that in Kenya, which was basically settler-oriented.

In contrast to the direct rule of the Germans, the British introduced the system of "indirect rule" developed in their West African colonies. The idea behind the doctrine of indirect rule was to integrate indigenous political systems into the colonial framework by means of establishing native authorities, native courts and indigenous tax-collecting institutions (native treasuries). In effect, however, the

system of indirect rule was to become a large scale experiment in social engineering, later to be paralleled only by the ujamaa policy and the compulsory villagisation programme in independent Tanzania. Tribes and tribal boundaries had to be invented where they did not exist in reality to make the colonial administration operate. Native chiefs had to be appointed among people to whom such offices were totally alien Far from being an integration of indigenous political systems into the colonial administration, indirect rule came to mark a new stage of colonial control.

The initial emphasis on "African Development" gave way to a deeper penetration of rural society by the colonial state and a standardisation of Tanganyikan life. Efforts at developing the indigenous economies during the first years of British rule yielded to a firmer commitment to capitalistic development towards the end of the inter-war period. The grip over local economies hardened. The economic processes initiated by the Germans were followed up and developed. Sisal and coffee plantations expanded and multiplied. Plantation owners and big farmers gained a hold over native producers. Fertile and naturally endowed regions of the country turned into cash-cropping and export-oriented zones. Other areas stagnated and came to serve as labour reserves for the big farms and plantations. The differentiation of the country into labour-exporting and labour-importing areas begun during German rule froze into a pattern which prevailed until Independence.

The need for cash created wage labourers. Cash cropping divided society and differentiated local economies. Land was bought and sold. The process of peasantisation developed into incipient capitalism where land and labour entered the market as commodities. These trends were consolidated during the post-war period when Britain was impoverished by the war and its colonial empire began to crumble. At this time Britain needed even Tanganyika's meagre resources. The policy of

"African Development" was replaced by the "new colonialism" (Iliffe 1979:437). European settlements were encouraged. Cash-cropping expanded at the expense of indigenous production systems. Productive investments rather than social progress were increasingly stressed in development planning and practice.

Underlying the policies of the "new colonialism" was the need by the colonial state to extract a greater surplus from the peasantry to satisfy the growing demands of the metropolitan economy and the increasingly complex colonial society. The policies were justified by an ingrained modernisation ideology rooted in a capitalist ethic. Its manifesto was the colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 combining self-interest and altruistic rhetoric: "There is no conflict" declared the Foreign Secretary at the time "between the social and economic development of the overseas territories to the advantage of their people and their development as a source of supplies for Western Europe"(quoted in Iliffe, 1979:437). The chief solvent of rural backwardness in the colonies was seen as maximum participation in the world economy. The basic components of the colonial concept of development were the creation of a marketable surplus in the rural areas and of a worker class engaged in wage labour. Workers were needed for the growing capitalist sector. The goals of development were to increase production, commercialise agriculture and produce cash crops for export. Taxation, labour migration and resettlement were means to these ends.

Independence and the Ujamaa Policy

In 1961 Tanganyika gained independence. Julius Nyerere, the leader of the dominant nationalist party (TANU), was elected the first President of the new Republic of Tanganyika, later to become Tanzania. During the first years of Independence, development policies continued along the lines estab-

lished under colonial rule. Large-scale settlement schemes, heavily capitalised, mechanised and over-administered, were given highest priority. The schemes did not achieve their goals. They failed socially as well as economically. Rich peasants benefitted and marketing cooperative unions proved corrupt. Peasant opposition grew. New political initiatives were needed.

Sensitive to the stirring dissatisfaction among the peasants, the government reacted by setting the young nation on a new course. The Arusha Declaration of 1967 committed the nation to a policy of socialism and self reliance. The new policy was explicitly defined in a series of Presidential Papers and policy documents released in rapid sequence[1]. The policy signalled the emergence of a truly national ideology and a break with the colonial past. The welfare of the people now came to the fore. The elimination of oppression and poverty became the supreme goals of development, increased production the means. Development meant development towards socialism and democracy, equality between people, political autonomy and economic self reliance. Within a few weeks of the Arusha Declaration, Tanzania nationalised all banks, most large factories and companies and other important means of production in the country.

Similarly, rural development policies were radicalised in accordance with the basic goals of the Arusha Declaration. In the Presidential Paper "Socialism and Rural Development" Nyerere outlined a new strategy for the socialist transformation of rural society based on the creation of ujamaa villages. The ujamaa village was defined as a voluntary association of people living and working on communally owned land. It was conceived as a revitalisation of the traditional

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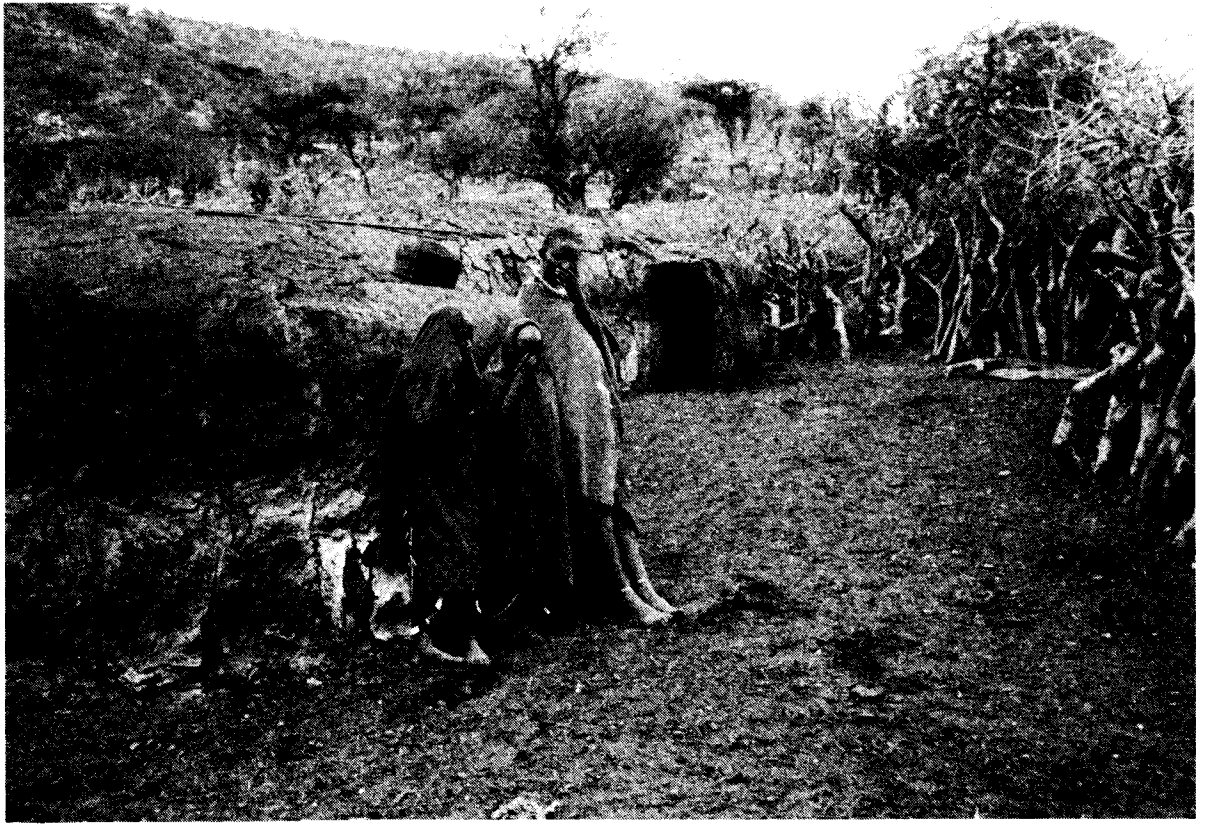
1. See, for example, "Socialism and Rural Development" (1976) "Freedom and Development" (1968), "The Development of Ujamaa Villages" (1969), "The Mwongozo" (1971) and "The Rational Choice" (1973).

concept of ujamaa, meaning "communal living" and implying unity and self sufficiency, cooperation and sharing. The rationale behind the strategy of ujamaa was that only by living in village communities and working together for common goals could the peasants achieve better living conditions and take advantage of modern technology to transform their traditional subsistence economies to economies of scale. To live and work together in ujamaa villages was seen by Nyerere as a pre-condition for socialist development in rural areas. Local initiatives and village democracy were regarded as essential ingredients in this process of rural transformation. Persuasion, not force was to be used in the formation of ujamaa villages. Ujamaa development was envisaged as a mobilisation process, a change from below and within, involving full popular participation.

Reality was, however, to prove very different. The Tanzanian government met with great difficulties in implimenting the new strategy for rural development. The first few years after the Arusha Declaration saw a limited development of ujamaa villages and communal village production in agriculture. But on the whole the peasants responded poorly to the ujamaa policy. In the early 1970's, the government and the ruling party began to take a more active part in the formation of ujamaa villages. Regional campaigns were launched in Dodoma, Kigoma, Iringa and elsewhere. By 1973 over two million Tanzanians were reported to live in ujamaa villages. But the figures concealed major set-backs in the campaigns: most villages were registered whether they were actually engaged in communal production or not. In the majority of cases, existing villages were simply registered as ujamaa villages in order to receive government facilities (Hyden, 1980:104). More than half of the total rural population still lived in scattered settlements.



Inside the homestead, enkang. The fence of the cattle kraal is seen to the right.

The Villagisation Campaign

In 1973 the state followed up its policy intentions with greater firmness. The President announced that all Tanzanians would have to live in nucleated villages by the end of 1976. Villagisation became compulsory. In fact, the villagisation programme initiated in 1974 was to become the largest resettlement effort in the history of tropical Africa, involving the forced migration of some five million people (Hyden, 1980:130). There was no longer any talk about ujaama villages. People were simply required to move together into physical villages, now called development villages. There was no insistence on communal farming. The socialist values of cooperation, sharing and equality receded into the background. Maximum output came to the fore as the guiding principle in development. Villagisation was seen as a necessary precondition for the modernisation of the peasant economies and the social development of the peasantry.

Through the decentralisation reform of 1972 and the Village Act of 1975 a new political and administrative structure was imposed on the villages. Registered villages were given a certain measure of administrative autonomy and control over the village land and its resources through the establishment of village governments. The reorganisation was intended to bring the government closer to the people and make it better equipped to tackle local development problems. But in effect it meant increasing state penetration and greater government control over village affairs. The party and the government now effectively reached down to the level of the village and the household.

The move towards greater political control over the peasantry was paralleled by a similar trend in economic policies during the latter half of the 1970's. The third five-year plan (1976-81) thus concentrated investments to export-oriented, large-scale agro-industries. More than half of the

agricultural development budget for the period 1977-79 went to the development of state controlled plantations, farms and ranches (Ståhl, 1980:83).

The long-term economic and environmental consequences of the massive villagisation programme are still to be seen. Agricultural yields have fallen far below the projected goals. The volume of exported crops declined drastically during the 1970's while imports of food rose. Rather than producing more for export, as stipulated by the second and third five-year plans, the peasants have increasingly returned to household production of food crops (Havnevik, 1980). Moreover the nucleated villages have in many parts of the country brought about land degradation and soil erosion (McCall, 1983).

While the government - through parastatal crop authorities, trading corporations, market organisations and pricing regulations - holds virtually all the strings that tie the peasant economy to the world, it has failed to induce the peasants to produce more. Despite the radical goals of the ujamaa and villagisation policies their main effects have been to increase state control over the peasantry without any accompanying growth in production (Boesen, 1979:140). Development has been reduced to an effort by the state to extract a surplus from the peasantry in order to sustain the state machinery and meet the growing demands of the state bureaucracy. But the peasants are neither capable of nor inclined to meet these demands. The democratic and voluntaristic elements of the policy of socialism and self-reliance have virtually disappeared. Development has become top-oriented and state-centred. It is the demands of the bureaucratic state rather than the needs of the rural poor which determine development priorities.

The Evolution of Livestock Policies

The same general trends appear with even greater clarity

in an examination of the evolution of livestock policies in Tanzania[1]. Before Independence the major ingredients of livestock development policies were tse-tse eradication, destocking and improved extension services - the provision of range water and veterinary facilities in the rural livestock areas. A major factor inhibiting livestock production on a national scale in colonial Tanganyika was the presence of tse-tse flies in large parts of the country. In 1924 it was estimated that two-thirds of the country was infested by tse-tse. District officers levied millions of man-days of compulsory labour to cut and burn barriers to tse-tse expansion (Iliffe, 1979:271-2). These efforts were largely in vain. Tse-tse remains a principle obstacle to livestock development in Tanzania[2]. Compulsory destocking campaigns were ostensibly justified on account of overgrazing but the deeper motive was squarely economical: to secure cheap supplies of meat for the expanding urban market (Raikes, 1981:22). And again the efforts failed. It appears that the transhumant and nomadic pastoralists in the tse-tse free areas, by and large, managed to satisfy their need for cash by opportunistically selling a few of their stock without impinging on the reproductive capacities of their herds. There was less need for the pastoralists than for the agriculturalists to engage in cash cropping or exporting labour to the coast (Iliffe, 1979:312). Their mobile settlement pattern also made them difficult to tax.

In the past-war period livestock policies moved away from coercion, which had obviously failed, to policies of price incentives and the development of livestock related services. Policies were aimed at raising and commercialising production among pastoral and agro-pastoral peasants. Rinder-

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1. Colonial and post-colonial livestock policies are aptly described in Raikes (1981).

2. About 60% of the land surface of Tanzania is infested with tse-tse fly (Raikes, 1981:141).

pest was succesfully eradicated by 1940 (Raikes, 1981:91). Water facilities were provided on dry, previously unused land, but often tended to produce serious environmental consequences by attracting large concentrations of herds around the artificial water supplies. Efforts to redistribute herds and control grazing largely failed. Again the colonial administration resorted to destocking.

Livestock development followed the colonial pattern in the early years of Independence. The key components were disease control, water development and the creation of Ranching Associations under the Range Management Act of 1964. The purpose of the Act was to regulate grazing and water use in areas declared, and officially gazetted as "range management areas". Range management and development schemes were planned in various parts of the country, notably in Dodoma, Shinyanga and Arusha. Except for the project in the Arusha region, these schemes did not materialise as they came in conflict with the ujamaa and villagisation policies at the time.

With the socialist reorientation of national development policies after the Arusha Declaration, state involvement in the livestock sector became more prominent. In 1968 the government launched the Livestock Development Project (Phase One) funded by a credit from the International Development Association (IDA). Six national beef ranches holding some 56,000 cattle were taken over by the project, absorbing the greater part of its funds. In 1973 the IDA project went into Phase Two with a budget of some 30 million US dollars. It began to develop existing ranches and create new ones. It also sought to develop the national marketing organisation and extend the provision of technical services and training facilities. The project gave highest priority to the development of large-scale beef ranches, absorbing some 73% of its budget (Raikes, 1981:160; Kasaka, 1982).

A pastoral scene: herdsmen and small stock leaving for pasture in the early morning.

The major achievements of the project were the formation of the Livestock Development Authority (LIDA) and the Tanzania Livestock Marketing Corporation (TLMC), together with the strengthening and expansion of the National Ranching Corporation (NARCO) and the Tanzania Dairy Farms Corporation (DAFCO) both of which came under LIDA. Yet, this transformation of the livestock sector, placing it firmly under state control, yielded few results in terms of increased production. The national ranches run by NARCO have consistently made losses and the livestock marketing system remained blatantly deficient, even increasingly so, after the TLMC took control of all primary markets in the country in 1974.

State involvement in the livestock sector continued to grow throughout the period of the third five-year plan (1976-81). The plan allocated some 41% of its total livestock development budget to beef ranching alone, excluding allocations for marketing, processing and fodder production as well as the funds for veterinary research, all of which were directed towards ranching developments. All in all, large scale commercial beef and dairy production units together accounted for about 80% of the total livestock development budget (Raikes, 1981:161).

Summing up the livestock development trends in Tanzania over the past 20 years Raikes (1981:162, 171) concludes that while state expenditure on livestock production has grown considerably, the proportion spent on programmes for the development of peasant production has steadily declined. Resources have been channelled away from the pastoral and agropastoral producers and increasingly concentrated on the development of the state-controlled, large-scale beef ranches. The impressive expansion of the ranch sector has, however, produced neither the meat needed nor the profits expected.

The failure to commercialise the traditional livestock economies is in part due to the poor performance of the livestock marketing system. Consistently low and controlled

retail prices combined with an expensive and inefficient system of primary marketing have led to low producer prices. Since the 1960's the imposition of a variety of bureaucratic controls on buying and selling livestock has contributed to obstruct the flow of livestock through the official markets and consequently directed an increasing proportion of animals outside the official system (Raikes, 1981:204). There is, in short, a definite but untapped economic potential in the traditional livestock economies.

This potential will, however, remain untapped if current policy trends continue. Today a single parastatal body, LIDA, controls the majority of ranches and dairy farms and all the primary markets in the country. The direct state involvement in livestock production has led to a marginalisation of the pastoral peasants. Large-scale, mechanised beef ranches and dairy farms continuously alienate pastoralists and agro-pastoralists from their lands, thus replacing rather than developing the traditional livestock economies.

Underlying this development is a basic conflict of interests between the state and the peasantry. The conflict is persistently denied by the state and hidden in official development rhetoric but nevertheless is manifest in the incompatability of the overriding policy goals: to increase market output for export and to improve the consumption levels of the peasant producers themselves. As Raikes (1981:2) has succinctly put it: "what is exported cannot be consumed locally". The efforts by the state to extract a bigger surplus from the peasants are made at their expense. Available studies show that by far the greatest proportion of livestock products in Tanzania are consumed by a wealthy minority in urban areas, that is, the people least in need of dietary improvements (Raikes, 1981:2,245). The failure of the state to mobilise the pastoral and agropastoral peasants for the national development goals must be seen in this light.

The Current Livestock Policy

Though the goals and the rhetoric remain the same, the official livestock policy for 1983 signals some new departures. The creation of a separate Ministry of Livestock Development in 1980 and recent speeches by the President on the importance of new initiatives in the development of the livestock industry indicate a growing concern for the livestock sector as well as an appreciation by the government of its untapped potential[1].

There are three major innovations in the latest policy plan. First, there is a strong emphasis on integrated land use planning. One component in the planning exercise - and one which should be given immediate attention - is the identification of livestock development zones where livestock development should be given highest priority. This is, in fact, an effort to revitalise the ideas behind the Range Management Act of 1964. Villages in which livestock production is the basic economic acitvity should be designed and registered as livestock development (or ranching) villages to distinguish them from agricultural development villages. Livestock development villages should be grouped together into viable Ranching Associations in which livestock owners are granted rights in pasture lands and provided with livestock related services.

The second point of importance in the new policy is the official recognition of the land rights of pastoral peasants, of the necessity of providing a legal framework for securing and defending these rights as against other competitive interests. Thirdly, the concept of destocking as a goal in itself is officially abandoned and replaced by the concept of redistribution of livestock in the country. Livestock keepers

1. See, for example, the speech made by the President published in the Daily News, August 12,1981.

in overstocked areas should be encouraged to resettle in understocked areas. Together these new departures reorient policies and resources towards a development of the peasant sector and an improvement of the traditional livestock economies rather than their replacement.

This is the long term objective of the plan - to develop the traditional livestock sector into a modern one. But the immediate and more urgent concern is still to meet the demands for meat and milk in the urban areas by means of a continuing expansion of the commercial and state-controlled livestock industry, the beef ranches and dairy farms. This is explicitly stated in the plan. As in previous policy documents, modernisation ideology is at the root of development thinking. The belief in large-scale, technical solutions and social engineering provides the guidelines for development. Though the document is addressed to the livestock peasants, it is clear that its authors neither trust them, nor understand them.

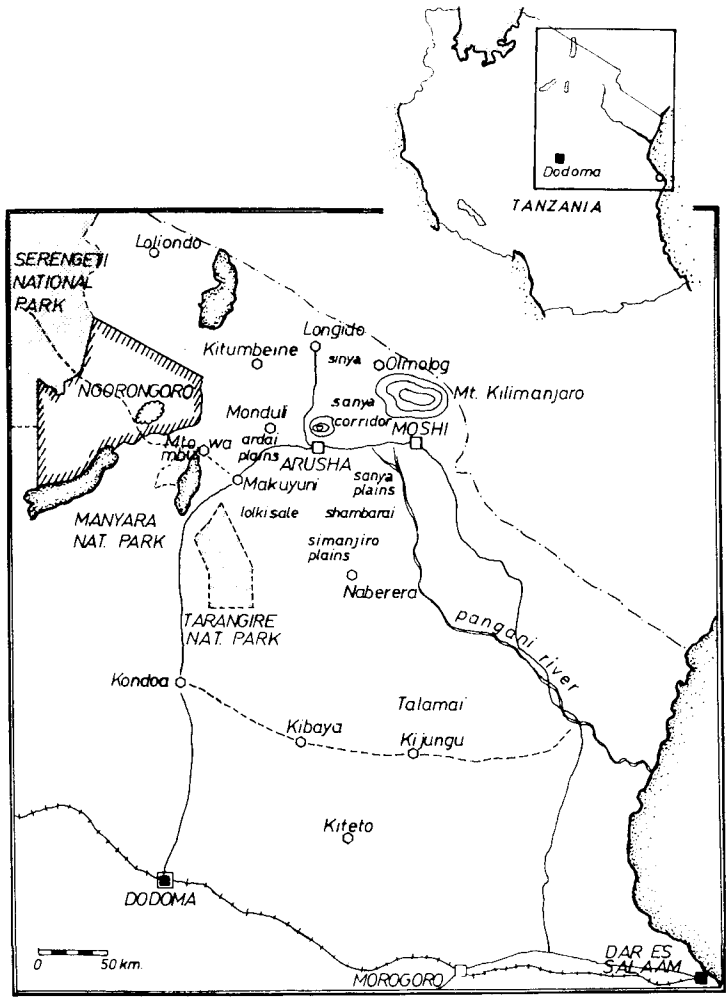
An editorial comment in the Daily News, the official party organ, of January 21, 1982,summarises the typical concept of livestock development held by the policy makers. It throws light on past and present livestock policies but leaves little hope for the future. The comment purports to summarise the central message of the official party guidelines in relation to livestock development. Defining the long term objective of the livestock policy as bringing the traditional livestock keepers into the cash economy "so that people's health and pockets become all the richer" it spells out the means of achieving this goal and the problems to be overcome. The work that lies ahead, it states, "will largely be one of educating our livestock keepers to abandon traditional beliefs associated with livestock" because "most cattle keepers associate wealth with sizes of herds owned by individuals and families" having "little if any awareness that such wealth is deceptive since the larger the herds, the more the danger

of overgrazing". To fight these erroneous beliefs party and government leaders must "educate and persuade cattle keepers ...to destock in order to improve their own lives and to preserve the soils".

Development in livestock producing communities, it continues, will only come about if traditional pastoralists settle down and adopt modern techiniques of livestock keeping and learn to integrate livestock keeping with farming. Instead of letting stock graze and herds grow, "oxen can be used to pull ploughs...and the manure can be used on the farms". Development, in other words, is identified with agricultural development. Pastoral peasants enter this development scene only insofar as they become ranchers or mixed farmers. Finally, the editorial comment stresses the importance of improving the performance of the state ranches. One means to this end is to upgrade the beef cattle. But, the comment ends "while appreciating these efforts (of upgrading the national beef herd) the traditional short-horn zebu should not be entirely ignored since they presently make up 90% of the country's cattle population".

The editorial comment reveals an appalling ignorance about livestock-based peasant economies in Tanzania and a total lack of awareness about the results of more than 30 years of intensive sociological and ecological research on pastoral and agro-pastoral land use systems in East Africa. It is as if nothing had really happened since the early colonial days. It manifests a colonial attitude in its crudest form, an attitude of ignorance and deprecation of the pastoral peasants. The prejudice against the pastoralists prevails.

Map 2: Tanzanian Maasailand today



The Impact on the Pastoralists: A History of Tanzanian Maasailand

Having outlined the rural development policies in general and the livestock policies in particular we are now in a position to trace their impact on the pastoralists in greater detail. As has become evident, the overall development policies and the specific priorities of the livestock policies have not always been compatible and their combined effects on traditional livestock economies frequently devastating. The history of Tanzanian Maasailand presents a vivid example.

In precolonial times, the Maasai controlled a vast area of land in Kenya and Tanzania. At the height of their power in the mid 19th century, Maasailand extended from central Kenya down to Ugogo and Uhehe in central Tanzania. Today they occupy less than two thirds of their former territory (see map 1). The great rinderpest, which hit East Africa in the 1890's, all but obliterated their herds[1]. Weakened by disease and the famine which followed in its wake, the Maasai saw their best grazing land being taken over by white settlers and encroaching cultivators. The colonial land policies in Kenya and Tanzania at the time favoured settler agriculture and indigenous small holder farming.

In Kenya the "Maasai moves" of 1904 and 1911 excluded the Maasai from their dry season pastures and drought reserves in the highlands, which became known as the "white highlands". They were reserved for white settlement, while the Maasai were confined in the government controlled "Southern Reserve". In Tanganyika the Germans similarly attempted to confine the Maasai in a reserve on the arid Masai-steppe south of the Arusha-Moshi road, thus reserving the better lands of the

1. Some 90% of all cattle in East Africa are thought to have died as a result of the rinderpest (Raikes, 1981:19). See also Kjekshus (1979:126-32)

northern half of the Tanganyikan Maasailand for white settlers[1]. The attempt was unsuccessful; the white settler community in Tanganyika was not large enough nor the German administration strong enough to enforce the plan (Huntingford, 1953; Parkipuny, 1983).

Yet agricultural encroachment and piecemeal land alienation for agricultural developments took on considerable proportions in Tanganyikan Maasailand during the German rule. The Tanganyikan Maasai soon lost the rich land around Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Meru to white settlers and indigenous farmers.

With the British came a period of relative peace and prosperity among the Tanganyikan Maasai. The Masai District covering most of Tanganyikan Maasailand was created in 1926 to impose order, and ostensibly to defend Maasai interests by controlling agricultural encroachment and livestock movements. On the whole, it seems that agricultural encroachments on pastoral lands were, in fact, kept at bay by the benevolent British administration up to the 1930's (Parkipuny,1975). Then, increasing demands on the colonial economy forced the British to tighten their grip on the traditional livestock economies. The "new colonialism" of the late inter-war period began to be felt even by the pastoralists. High productivity and bigger returns from the land became the slogans of the time (Iliffe, 1979).

Beginning in the late 1930's and continuing through the 1940's and 1950's a series of large-scale land alienations[2]

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1. In older literature Maasai is spelt Masai. This spelling has lived on in names and is used in this document in an historical context when referring to certain geographical areas, administrative units and projects.

2. The information on land alienation in Tanzanian Maasailand in this and the following paragraphs is mainly taken from Hoben (1976), Jacobs (1973),Parkipuny (1975,1983) and Fosbrooke (pers. Comm.).

took place in the centre of Tanganyikan Maasailand. The Mbulu-Mbulu area, then inhabited by Maasai pastoralists, was settled for wheat production. Parts of the Ardai plains east of Arusha were virtually ruined by a heavily mechanised war-time wheat scheme. Monduli Juu and Makuyuni were largely taken over by European settlers and native farmers. In Manyara several hundred thousand acres were alienated to one European rancher. In 1947 the Maasai were evicted from the Sanya corridor. The following year Ol Molog, a dry season grazing area and ritual site of great importance to the Kisongo Maasai, was alienated to 15 European wheat farmers. In the early 1950's large tracts of land in Lolioro and Lepurko Essimingor were parcelled out to settlers for wheat and maize production. The borders of the Masai District, originally set out to secure Maasai rights in grazingland, were now changed to allow cultivators to take over pastoral lands in the Kisongo and Longido areas.

In order to compensate the Maasai for the heavy losses of land, and to remedy some of the disastrous effects of the new land policies, the Masai Development Plan was launched in 1950. The aim of the programme was to modernise the traditional pastoral economy by providing improved services - pipelines, dams and boreholes - and by combating the tse-tse. The programme collapsed in 1955. Its most lasting effect was a notable resource depletion. In the years that followed, colonial development efforts in Maasailand were devoted to redress the damages done by past undertakings (Parkipuny, 1975).

The general thrust of the colonial land policy - that of taking over pastoral lands and putting them to more intensive use while compensating the pastoralists with largely ineffective extension services - continued into the post-war period and even to the present day. Large tracts of land on the Ardai plains and in the Lenkijabe hills near Monduli were taken over in the 1970's for military installations and a national wheat scheme. Agriculturalists have continued to

penetrate into the Sinya plains, the Monduli mountains, the Loliondo highlands and the Kujungu-Kibaya area of southern Maasailand. In the north, cultivation now extends far beyond Monduli and deep into the Simanjiro and Shambari areas. In 1980 an area of 1500 square km. in Lolkisale, east of Tarangire National Park, was leased to a private multinational agro-business company. Currently there are advanced plans for setting up large scale, state owned wheat and barley farms in the Loliondo area.

The Masai Range Project

The obvious effect of this situation has been an increased subsistence stress among the pastoralists and heavier pressure on the dwindling pastoral resources. The Maasai and other pastoral groups in Tanzania have been pushed out onto marginal lands, often being forced to use on a year-round basis grazing areas which they previously used only for wet season grazing. Poverty and a widening gap between prosperous and poor pastoralists have turned many pastoralists into agro-pastoralists and urban squatters. Competition for land between pastoralists and cultivators has hardened. The Range Management Act of 1964 was in part a response to these processes. It aimed at regulating land use in areas where the interests of livestock production and agriculture were competitive. The Masai Range Commission was set up in the same year to administer the Act and register Ranching Associations in Maasailand. It was later instrumental in the launching of the USAID-financed Masai Range and Management Project in 1970. The project was the most ambitious and costly ever launched in Tanzanian Maasailand. By establishing ranching associations and an efficient marketing system it sought to achieve "a sustained high level of livestock offtake in the Masai District, consistent with proper range management and Tanzanian development goals" (Hoben, 1976). The objective was to

Woman milking in the morning

be achieved, on the one hand, by means of developing the livestock-related infrastructure through range management plans, disease control, water developments, market improvements and the introduction of improved bulls, and on the other, by creating ranching associations to secure rights of occupancy and to manage the infrastructure[1].

The project initially met with a positive response from the Maasai. They were promised dips, water supplies and drugs for their livestock. People were willing to form ranching associations. Indeed, the concept of "range" gained a symbolic value and in parts of Maasailand the newest age group was given the name 'range' (Parkipuny, 1979:145). The area chosen for the initial attention of the project, Talamai, attracted large numbers of people and stock. High stocking levels resulted, land deteriorated, bush encroached and water was soon inadequate to meet the inflated demands.

In other parts of the project area, the opposite situation arose. The promised facilities never materialised and people lost interest. The project was not able to provide the planned services, and more serious still, could not secure rights of occupancy in any of the associations formed. In 1975 there were eight ranching associations in some stage of formation. When the project ended five years later, in 1980, they were all dissolved. The reason was basically a conflict between the project goals and the priorities of the national development policies at the time. The associations had lost their cattle marketing functions to the Tanzania Livestock Marketing Corporation (TLMC) in 1974. The legal status of the associations was seriously undermined by the Village Act of 1975. The Masai Range Commission, which had been instrumental in initiating the whole project, had ceased to function already in 1972, when it was absorbed by the new regional

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1. My analysis of the Masai Range Project is based on Hoben (1976) and Parkipuny (1979).

administration following upon the decentralisation reform the same year.

On the technical side, the project had achieved a great deal, but without a supporting institutional framework to manage the technical inputs the positive effects were partly lost. Dips and water points were left unattended and broke down. Socially and economically the project was a failure. It failed to establish a monitoring system for range conditions and stocking levels. Sales of livestock did not increase while overstocking and range deterioration in some parts of the project area reached alarming proportions. Finally, the project failed to reward local initiatives in fund-raising and organisation, to involve the Maasai in planning and implementation and, above all, to secure their legal rights of occupancy.

There seem to be two fundamental reasons for these failures, both of which point to certain general trends in the practice of rural development in Tanzania. First, the technical bias of the project - its reliance on heavy machinery and foreign expertise - alienated the project from the people. It was oriented to the top which excluded popular participation. The project became an "investment project" in Maasailand rather than a development project. It became an effort to modernise the livestock industry, not to promote the development of the pastoral peasants. The animals, not the people were the focus of the project. At the root of the failure was a conflict of interests between the project goals and the interests of the pastoralists. The Maasai saw the innovations as a means of strengthening their society and the values on which it was founded. An improved livestock economy to them meant "better life" in its encompassing and characteristically Maasai sense. The project, on the other hand, treated livestock in a narrow, economic sense, as wealth to be converted into cash and meat for the market. Its ultimate purpose was to develop a livestock industry capable of paying

back the funds injected into it and to generate an additional surplus for national economic growth.

If the first problem thus was a problem at the local level, inherent in the project itself, the second was a problem at the national level. As the project evolved, it became increasingly clear that its basic aim, that of creating ranching associations, conflicted with the national development goal of settling the rural population in compact and permanent villages oriented towards agricultural production. In fact, the Village Act of 1975 effectively pre-empted the concept of ranching associations as resource-controlling, legal bodies. The agricultural bias of the overall national development strategy and the orientation of the national livestock policy towards the industrialisation of traditional livestock economies, formed, in effect, a frontal assault on the pastoralists in general and the Maasai in particular. The Masai Range Project was part and parcel of the policy of integrating the Maasai in the national society by purposefully breaking down their cultural distinctiveness and replacing the pastoral way of life with a market-oriented, state-controlled livestock economy.

Operation Imparnati

The failure of the ujamaa policy in the late 1960's and early 1970's and the initial difficulties in implementing the villagisation programme in different parts of the country led the government to realise that development among pastoralists had to take a different course than among settled agriculturalists. Up to 1974, rural development in Tanzania had basically meant agricultural modernisation. Livestock development among traditional livestock producers had meant sedentarisation and a change from extensive pastoralism to mixed farming - intensified and modernised livestock production in combination with crop cultivation. This is, by and large,

still the view of the policy makers and state bureaucrats but after 1974 it was officially recognised that villagisation and development in pastoral areas had to be adapted to pastoral conditions. The concept of "livestock development villages" - as distinguished from agricultural development villages - was created and obtained official acceptance (Parkipuny, 1979:154).

Livestock development villages are defined as those villages where livestock production is the main economic activity. The model type of the livestock development village was to comprise a central settlement area and a village range, divided into a core area for the milk herd and an outlying range for dry and wet season use by the main beef-herd. The basic settlement units, the kraal camps, were to be arranged in a circular or semi-circular layout with the village services in the centre (Hoben, 1976; Parkipuny, 1979).

In 1974-75 the villagisation programme was launched in Maasailand under the name of Operation Imparnati (imparnati means "permanent habitations" in Maasai language) with the purpose of settling the pastoral Maasai in livestock development villages. Planning and implementation teams were sent out from the district headquarters to inform the pastoralists about the operation and eventually to induce them to move into villages. The pastoralists in each locality were told to choose a site for the new village settlement and to move there within a period fixed by the district officials, usually two months. To judge from the available records, the operation was generally carried out rather smoothly. According to one of the officials "the pastoralists were easier to deal with than the cultivators" (quoted in Ndagala, 1982:30). The village layouts were generally flexibly imposed and adapted to local conditions. Existing land use and settlement patterns were usually accepted as the ground plan for resettlement. As a result, movement tended to be relatively minor and seldom covered distances of more than 5km. The actual relocation of

sites did not have major social and economic effects[1].

On the other hand the campaign was poorly planned. It was, as one commentator put it (Parkipuny, 1979:54), a mere "lumping together" of sites around already existing trading centres. There was no popular mobilisation for specific purposes. It was precisely an "operation", a campaign imposed upon the pastoralists. In some instances the level of persuasion was very crude and coercion did occur. In at least two cases, both in the Ngorongoro district, the implementation teams burned settlements to force the pastoralists to move to new sites (Parkipuny, 1979:155; own survey 1981-82).

By mid 1975 more than 2,000 Maasai were reported to have moved into development villages (Parkipuny, 1979:154). By May 1976 an estimated 36% of the total population in Kiteto district and 31% in Monduli district had been resettled in 27 out of a planned 139 development villages (Hoben,1976:56)[2].

The Maasai reacted to the villagisation programme as they had reacted to government interventions in the recent past: with apparent indifference and without resistance. They accepted it as a new force in their reality, much as they responded to environmental changes in general. The Maasai faced the obligation to form villages with mixed feelings of hope and distress[3]. Some saw in the campaign an opportunity: they hoped that the new policy would give them rights of occupancy in their land, much as they had hoped some years earlier when agreeing to join the ranching association of the Masai Range Project. They thought that it might help them

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1. "Operation Imparnati" in Tanzanian Maasailand has been briefly described by Hoben (1976), Ndagala (1982) and Parkipuny (1979).

2. These figures include both livestock and agricultural development villages.

3. Maasai reactions to villagisation are summarised in Hoben (1976) and Ndgala (1982).

Struggling against the wind in the Ngorongoro highlands: a family returning to the settlement area in the highlands from a temporary camp on the plains.

defend their pastures and water sources against agricultural encroachments. Possibly they also expected from the policy greater autonomy and economic security. The initial reaction of compliance was, at least in part, a tactical and strategic response to achieve these ends.

But there was at the same time a widespread worry among the Maasai about the villagisation programme. They saw in villagisation another step taken by the government to subjugate them and conquer their land. They feared that they would have to give up their traditional clothing and housing, that they would be forced to destock and have their herds collectivised and that they would be compelled to become "wajamaa", which they believed meant sharing everything, including wives and children (Ndagala, 1982:29).

The reactions of the Maasai to the villagisation campaign and, earlier, to the Masai Range Project can be understood against the background of their particular culture and the conditions of their pastoral existence. The Masai Range Project and the villagisation campaign were but the latest forms of state intervention in Maasailand. As such they were judged against earlier experiences and interpreted in terms of the cultural standards of the Maasai.

Villagisation imposed a new authority structure on the traditional community and represented a step towards the imposition of a new settlement and land use pattern, difficult to reconcile with the pastoral values. The new hierarchy of political offices - the chairman, secretary and manager - weakened the traditional leadership. It placed the centre of authority outside the local community. The move towards a more nucleated and sedentary settlement pattern was experienced as a threat to the transhumant way of life and the resource-base on which Maasai society rests. Similarly, the restrictions on herd and settlement size stipulated by the villagisation programme touched the very core of the Maasai culture: livestock as a multiple resource and societal value.

Restrictions on individual livestock holdings meant to the Maasai an infringement of their freedom and a reduction of their capacity to subsist. At the same time the Maasai also saw in the villagisation programme a possibility of increasing their control over pastures, a possibility at least ostensibly reinforced by the latest (1983) national livestock policy. The hopes and fears expressed by the Maasai in response to the villagisation campaign all reflected their most basic concerns: economic security and political autonomy.

The Case of the Ngorongoro Maasai

State intervention and land alienation for development purposes have taken many forms in Tanzanian Maasailand. In this final part of the document I trace these processes down to the local level by examining a particular, relatively novel form of state intervention - wildlife conservation - and its impact on a community of pastoralists in the Serengeti-Ngorongoro area of northern Tanzania - the Ngorongoro Maasai. The case of the Ngorongoro Maasai concretises the sweeping account of development and under-development in Tanzanian Maasailand given above[1].

Over the past three decades the creation and expansion of wildlife reserves has come to play an increasingly important role in national development policies in Kenya and Tanzania. A large number of game reserves and national parks have been established since the 1950's. In East African legal terminology, national parks and game reserves exclude by law all kinds of human habitation and subsistence activities. Game

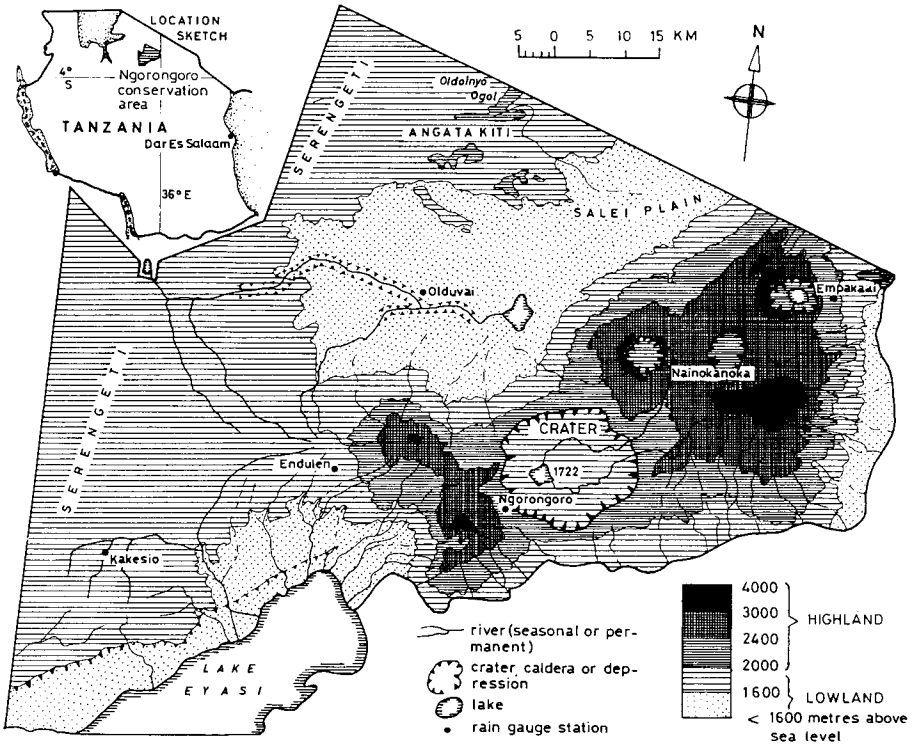
1. The account of the Ngorongoro Maasai is essentially from my own research in Ngorongoro in 1980-82. Some of the results of this work are published in Århem (1981a, 1982b, 1982, 1984a and 1984b). In the description of the evolution of the conservation policies in the area I draw freely on Dirschl (1966), Fosbrooke (1962,1972), Parkipuny (1981, 1983) and Saibull (1978).

controlled areas and conservation areas allow human habitation and certain forms of land use subject to strict controls. Maasailand is today virtually filled with one or the other form of wildlife reserve. On the Kenyan side there are the Amboseli National Park and the Maasai Mara Reserve. On the Tanzanian side there are the Serengeti, Manyara, Tarangire, Arusha and Kilimanjaro National Parks and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, all extending over traditional Maasai grazing land.

The Serengeti plains and the Ngorongoro highlands have been inhabited by Maasai pastoralists since the 17th century and before that by pastoral Tatog groups, ancestors of the present-day Barabaig. The number of people and the size of the domestic herds have fluctuated according to climatic variations, the incidence of livestock disease and inter-tribal hostilities.

In 1929 the area held some 139,000 cattle and 227,000 sheep and goats. Twenty five years later, in 1954, there were some 10,000 Maasai pastoralists with 122,000 cattle and 208,000 goats and sheep in the area (Masai District Book; Grant, 1957). The greater part of the pastoral population occupied what is today the Ngorongoro Conservation Area but some 1,000-2,000 of them , with 25,000 head of cattle and 15,000 goats and sheep, lived in the Western Serengeti, in the present-day Serengeti National Park. The Western Serengeti was also used as a seasonal grazing area by a much larger pastoral population inhabiting areas to the south and west of the Park (Grant, 1957).

Currently (1980) some 15,000 Maasai inhabit the western fringe of the Serengeti plains and the Ngorongoro highlands, keeping about 118,000 cattle and 145,000 small stock. Since 1959 they have been confined to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, extending over approximately 8,000 square km. I refer to the Maasai living in this area as the Ngorongoro Maasai. They do not, however, form a sociologically bounded unit but



Map 3: The Ngorongoro Conservation Area

are composed of various sub-groupings of different Maasai sections, principally the Ksongo, Siringet and Salei Maasai. Nor is their present homeland ecologically bounded; the Ngorongoro Conservation Area is an area defined by administrative considerations and political circumstances. It borders the Serengeti National Park in the west and extends to the Rift Valley Escarpment in the east. In the south it is bounded by the Highland Forest Reserve and the agricultural settlements of the Oldeani-Karatu area, while its northern boundary cuts an arbitrary line through the rugged Oogol mountains.

The Serengeti-Ngorongoro environment is typical of Maasailand in general: mixture of open, short grassland on the low-lying plains, hilly parkland and tall grasslands and forests in the highlands with mountain peaks rising to over 3,000 m. This combination of dry, hot lowlands and more humid, cool highlands has for centuries provided the setting for pastoral communities in East Africa. The pastoralists and their herds of livestock seasonally alternate between the two types of environment according to a transhumant pattern of land use, finely tuned to environmental resources and constraints. The highland pastures are grazed during the dry season and the plains used in the wet season.

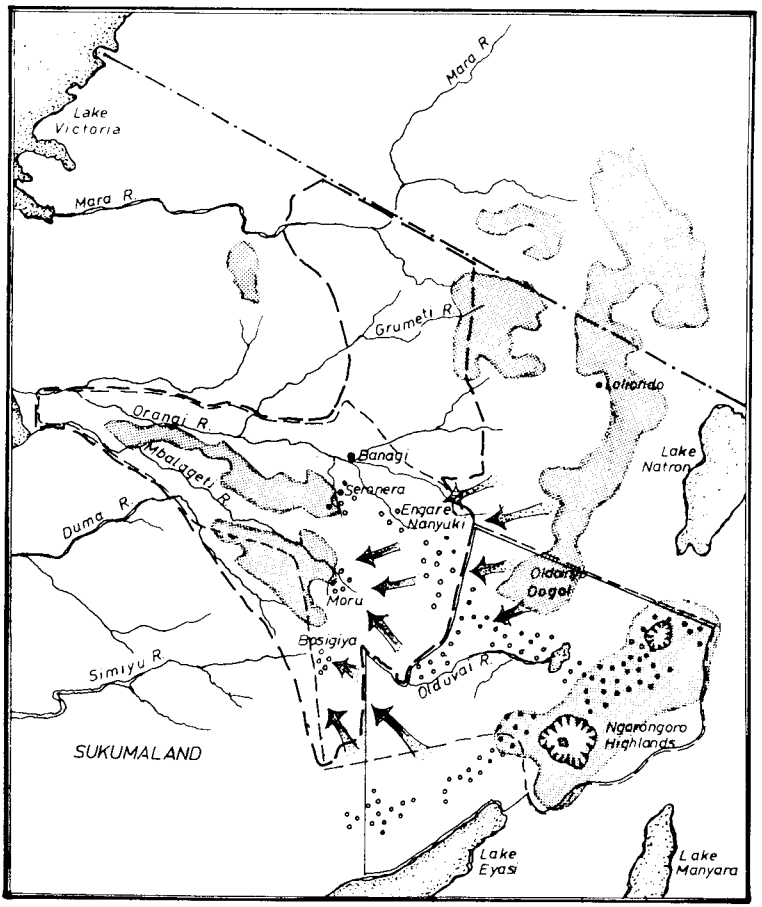
The cultural reality and the social system of which the Ngorongoro Maasai form a part embrace the whole of Maasailand on both sides of the Kenya-Tanzanian border. Similarly the pastoral ecosystem extends far beyond the boundaries of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area: people and livestock from outside the area may at times, particularly during periods of drought, move into the Ngorongoro highlands from the drier areas to the north and east. Conversely, people and livestock temporarily move north into the Loliondo hills and east to the floor of the Rift Valley in search of water and pasture.

The Development of Wildlife Conservation in Ngorongoro

The Serengeti-Ngorongoro area has been recognised as a wildlife area since the turn of the century. Big game hunting flourished there in the early decades of the century. The Ngorongoro Crater was declared a closed Reserve by the British administration in 1928. All hunting and agriculture in the Crater was forbidden by law. Yet hunting for sport continued unabated in the rest of the Serengeti-Ngorongoro area.

Towards the end of the 1930's, hunting had assumed such proportions that the British became concerned about the future of the area as a wildlife preserve. The entire Serengeti-Ngorongoro area was consequently declared a National Park in 1940 but it was not until 1951 that the conservation legislation was actively enforced. The year 1951 thus marks the beginning of effective wildlife protection in the Serengeti-Ngorongoro area. The legislation did not yet affect the rights of the people residing in the park; indeed they were explicitly protected. The resident Maasai were given positive assurances by the government that there would be no interference with their rights to live and subsist in the Park. However, in the course of the decade, conservation measures became increasingly strict within the Park: hunting was forbidden, human settlement and movement of domestic stock subjected to multiple restrictions, the use of fire strictly regulated and, in 1954, all cultivation prohibited in the area. A single-use concept of conservation, epitomized by the notion of National Park, came to dominate resource management in the park. Not surprisingly, the local pastoralists and cultivators reacted strongly against the Park authorities.

The resulting political unrest moved the colonial government to interfere and seek a permanent policy solution to the crisis which would satisfy both conservation concerns and the interests of the resident pastoralists. The result was the partition in 1959 of the original Serengeti National Park



Hills and Highlands
Serengeti National Park, before 1959
Serengeti National Park, present extension
Ngorongoro Conservation Area
Regular Dry Season Maasai settlement areas before 1959
Regular Dry Season Movements

The Serengeti-Ngorongoro area before and after the creation of the Serengeti National Park, 1959.

into two separate land use units: the western part (formerly called Western Serengeti) retained the original name of the park and was set apart as an exclusive wildlife area, while the eastern part, including the eastern fringe of the Serengeti plains, the Kakesio-Endulen area (previously outside the Park) and the whole of the Ngorongoro highlands, came to form the Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Although in the colonial records this solution appears as a compromise approved by the Maasai, the decision in effect forced all the inhabitants of the Western Serengeti to abandon their homeland. Under pressure from international wildlife interests and the colonial administration, the Maasai agreed to leave the rich grazing areas and the permanent springs and streams of Serengeti. Most of them moved into the Ngorongoro Conservation Area where they were promised permanent rights in the land as well as new water supplies in compensation for those that they had lost.

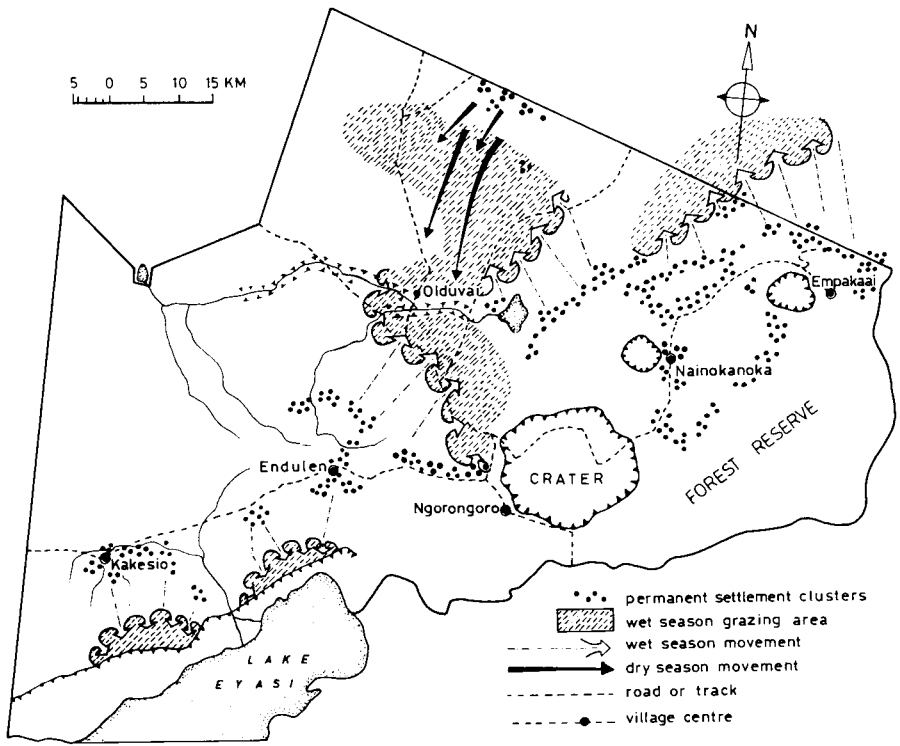
The Ngorongoro Conservation Area was created as an area of multiple land use; an area in which several different but compatible land use interests were to be combined within an integrated, comprehensive land use policy. These interests included - apart from the basic policy concern to conserve the natural resources in the area - the subsistence interests of the resident pastoralists and cultivators, tourist interests and archaeological interests.

Initially the decision-making body of the Conservation Area included the Maasai. However, the original administration set-up was dissolved within a year and a new administration appointed in 1961, now without Maasai representation. Since then the resident pastoralists lacked representation in the successive administrations of the Conservation Area until 1981 when the Member of Parliament for the Ngorongoro District - who happens to be a Maasai - was included in the Board of Directors of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority.

In the early years following the creation of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area some efforts were made by the administration to promote the rights and interests of the Ngorongoro Maasai. Range water supplies were constructed in compensation for the natural water sources lost in Western Serengeti. However, the artificial water supplies proved grossly inadequate and most of them are today defunct.

In the course of the 1960's and 1970's the conservation regime successively hardened. The pastoralists experienced a steady shrinkage of their grazing land. Several prime grazing grounds in the Conservation Area were closed to grazing and settlement, including the Ngorongoro, Empakaai and Olmoti Craters, the Northern Highland Forest Reserve, the Lemakarot and Olosirwa mountains slopes, Olduvai Gorge and the Laitole archaeological site. Fire as a traditional tool for pasture management was prohibited. The ban on grass burning resulted in the expansion of unpalatable grasses like Eleusine jaegeri in the highlands (Branagan, 1974). Where traditionally unpalatable grasses had been kept at bay by burning, they now expanded over the entire highland plateau suppressing the palatable grasses and radically reducing the dry season pastures. The spread of the tall, coarse grasses in the highlands also led to an increase in the incidence of tick borne diseases, as ticks thrive in the tall, moist highland grasses (ibid).

The most critical land loss was experienced by the pastoralists living on the floor of the Ngorongoro Crater. As a consequence of the villagisation programme of the mid 1970's and the hardening conservation rule they were evicted from the Ngorongoro Crater in the late 1970's. Grazing and watering of livestock in the Crater, covering an area of some 250 square km. was prohibited. Since the Maasai occupation of the Ngorongoro-Serengeti area, the Crater had been the home and dry season base of a small community of Maasai pastoralists as well as an essential dry season grazing ground and salt



Pastoral land use and settlement pattern in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area

lick for the pastoralists living in the surrounding highlands. This community, comprising at the time of eviction of some four settlements, was then moved to a newly formed village on the western rim of the Crater.

In 1975, finally, all cultivation within the Conservation Area was prohibited. Prior to this date, cultivation had been allowed as one form of land use under the multiple land use policy, though increasing pressure had been exerted by the Conservation Authority to restrict cultivation since 1970. In some areas, such as Endulen and Empakaai, cultivation was quite extensive by the mid 1970's. However, all over the Conservation Area small scale subsistence cultivation of maize and beans provided supplementary food to the pastoralists. This supplement to the pastoral diet was considered essential by the pastoralists, particularly in the dry season. The availability of grain crops within the Conservation Area made them less dependent upon the insecure market and the irregular supply of grain from outside. To the pastoralists in Ngorongoro, the prohibition on agriculture was a serious infringement of their subsistence rights and experienced as a threat to their very existence.

As in 1959, when the pastoralists were urged by the government to move out of Western Serengeti and abandon the pastures and water sources there, the authorities now promised compensation, this time for giving up agriculture. The pastoralists were promised sufficient supplies of grain and other commodities in the village shops, together with veterinary services and help in improving their livestock economy through dairying and ranching. None of these promises has so far been fulfilled. Grain and other essential consumer goods continue to be in short supply in the Conservation Area. No grain storage facilities or stocks against hard times have been established and plans for improving the livestock economy are still, at best, in the draft stage.

All in all, there is a clear trend in the evolution of conservation policy in Ngorongoro. Wildlife conservation in Ngorongoro, as elsewhere in East Africa, has come to mean a move away from a multiple land use concept of conservation towards the single use concept of land use epitomised by the notion of the National Park. The expansion and consolidation of the conservation regime in the Serengeti-Ngorongoro area can be seen as a parallel to the evolution of the livestock policies in Tanzania as a whole - from the early colonial efforts to improve traditional livestock economies to the current policy aimed at the development of large scale, state-controlled beef ranches and dairy farms at the expense of traditional livestock economies. Indeed, the national park can be seen as the direct counterpart of the beef ranch: a huge, monocultural estate, producing services for consumption by foreign tourists. People, the indigenous producers, are no longer seen as a resource and a basis for development but as an obstacle to development. Like the ranch, the national park is easier to handle and control than traditional human use systems, easier to gear towards the overriding national development goal of increased, export-oriented production under firm state control.

Peasantisation and Marginalisation of the Ngorongoro Maasai

To the Ngorongoro Maasai the conservation regime has meant restrictions on resource use and an increasing dependence on the external market. The resettlement of the Serengeti Maasai in Ngorongoro after their expulsion from the Western Serengeti in 1959 and the increasingly strict regulation of resource use in the Conservation Area during the following two decades resulted in growing pressures on shrinking resources: a reduction of dry season pastures, a decline in pasture quality and an intensified competition between wildlife and domestic stock for pastures and water resources. The productive and reproductive capacities of the domestic

herds, particularly cattle, declined in consequence.

The cattle per capita ratio, a crude measure of economic prosperity and subsistence standards among pastoralists, fell from a value of about 13 in 1960 to 7 in 1977. During the same period the ratio of small stock per capita increased from 8 to 15. The proportion of small stock in the total livestock herd in Ngorongoro increased from 38% in 1960 to 55% in 1980, with a peak figure of 69% in 1977 (Århem, 1981a). The increase in size of the small stock herd reflects a conscious effort by the Ngorongoro Maasai to make up for the decline in the cattle herd and the falling ratio of cattle per capita. Small stock, with their faster growth rate, increasingly take the place of cattle in the pastoral economy of the Ngorongoro Maasai. But small stock give less milk and have a lower market value than cattle. To the Maasai cattle still mean wealth, and small stock are considered the poor man's substitute. The changing composition of the pastoral herds in Ngorongoro over the past two decades thus indicate a process of impoverishment. There is less milk available per family and each family's potential cash returns from livestock sales are smaller than they were 20 years ago. The demand for supplementary foods - grain - has consequently increased.

A survey of the food situation among the Ngorongoro Maasai in 1980-81 revealed that the current system of pastoral production in Ngorongoro is not capable of supporting the pastoral population on an all-year-round and self-sustaining basis (Århem, 1981b). The total food yields from the domestic herds - milk, meat and blood - satisfied only about 60% of the total community energy requirements for the year 1980, a relatively good year in terms of rainfall. There was, in other words, a demand for supplementary foods corresponding to about 40% of the total energy needs of the pastoral community. As agriculture is prohibited in the Conservation Area, the Ngorongoro Maasai are entirely dependent on the purchase of grain to satisfy this need - and in order to

Women queuing for grain outside the village shop

purchase grain the pastoralists must sell livestock, i.e. cull their herds. They are caught in a vicious circle: as their herds decline in size they are increasingly forced to sell animals to obtain grain, thus further reducing the reproductive capacities of their stock. So they become more and more dependent on the irregular supply of grain in a market, over which they have no control.

The same survey also revealed that the supply of grain in Ngorongoro fell far short of the estimated demand. There is not enough grain available in the local shops to meet the demand. Between August 1980 and July 1981, when records were available, the supply of grain in the Conservation Area satisfied less than 85% of the total demand for supplementary food in the pastoral community (Århem, 1981b). The shortage of grain is particularly pronounced during the dry season when milk yields are at their lowest. Of the grain consumed by the pastoralists only a fraction, some 15%, came from the state-owned company responsible for providing and distributing grain and other consumer goods to the shops in the area. The bulk of the grain available (i.e. 85%) was obtained by the pastoralists from private shopkeepers or directly from the producers in neighbouring agricultural areas. In fact, the survey showed that the commercial offtake (in 1980) from the pastoral herds in Ngorongoro was potentially sufficient to satisfy the community energy needs through the purchase of grain, had grain been available in the shops (ibid).

This situation has produced radical changes in the pastoral economy. The pastoral diet has changed in quality and composition and the food situation among the Ngorongoro Maasai has, on the whole, deteriorated. The pastoral economy has changed from a cattle-based economy to a small stock-dependent economy, and from a self-sufficient subsistence economy to an exchange-oriented, partly commercialised livestock economy, tied to the external market. The pastoralists are becoming increasingly dependent on grain as a supplement

to their purely pastoral diet. A detailed study of food consumption in 10 pastoral households during the dry season of 1981 showed that grain on average, provided 53% of the household energy intake in Ngorongoro, while milk and meat together provided 44% (Århem, 1981b). In other words, grain, not milk, is at present the dry season staple among the Ngorongoro Maasai, supplying more than half of the total household energy intake. But neither grain nor milk and meat are available in adequate quantities to satisfy the household energy needs. Though protein needs seem to be well satisfied, there is a marked energy deficiency in the dry season pastoral diet. On the whole, the average total household food intake satisfied only some 70% of the estimated energy requrements (ibid).

The escalating food crisis and the increasing commercialisation of the pastoral economy in Ngorongoro have brought other changes with profound social and economic consequences. The system of livestock exchange, which traditionally served as an economic levelling mechanism, is giving way to an increasingly individualistic, fragmented household economy: instead of ritually sharing slaughtered domestic animals in communal feasts and occasionally bestowing livestock on families or individuals in need, the pastoral household today sees itself forced to sell stock in order to obtain grain for its own sustenance.

The individualisation of the pastoral economy in this way leads to an enhanced differentiation between rich and poor livestock owners. Whereas formerly the poor herd owner could rely on the traditional system of livestock exchange for rebuilding his herd, he is now left on his own. The number of poor herd owners is consequently increasing. Surveys among the Ngorongoro Maasai in 1980-81 showed that some 15% of the total number of pastoral households had less than 10 head of cattle, which is far below subsistence minimum, while less that 5% had more that 300 head of cattle, which is well above this level. The majority - some 70% - own a herd of

Warriors with cattle waiting for their turn at the cattle dip.

some 30-50 head of cattle, which implies that they barely manage to subsist on the offtake from their herds and the exchange of livestock for grain (Århem, 1981 a & b).

To sum up, for the Ngorongoro Maasai 20 years of conservation rule has brought falling living standards and increasing poverty. For the majority of pastoralists, food and health standards have declined. From being self-sufficient pastoralists, capable of maintaining a modest but adequate standard of subsistence through their traditional system of pastoral production, they have turned into impoverished pastoral peasants, tied to the market and subject to increasing state control.

Conclusions

Despite the radical political and economic changes brought about by Independence, there are remarkable similarities in the evolution of development policies during the colonial and post-colonial regimes in Tanzania. From the point of view of the pastoralists, the state-peasantry relationship has only changed form, not character. The early relationship between the colonial state and the indigenous peoples of Tanzania has been replaced by the structurally similar relationship of internal colonialism between the post-colonial state and the pastoral peasantry. The overt modernisation ideology of colonial times, founded in a capitalistic ethic, has turned into a covert belief in modernisation, equally dominant in development practice but hidden behind a socialist rhetoric. The vision of development in the Arusha Declaration, stressing democracy and self reliance, popular participation and local initiative, has in actual practice yielded to a blatant investment approach to development. Development has become a matter less of reducing poverty among the peasants than of extracting wealth from them. The similarities between the policies of conquest of the Germans

the "new colonialism" of the British and the increasingly coercive development policies of the current regime in Tanzania derive from the fact that they all address the same fundamental problem: to subordinate the peasants to the demands of the state (cf. Hydén, 1980:209).

In this perspective there are good reasons for the Tanzanian Maasai to be sceptical about current development policies and deeply concerned about their own future. The villagisation campaign and the Masai Range Project both form part of a more comprehensive strategy of societal transformation working against the pastoralists. Maasai history since the turn of the century is a history of land loss and marginalisation. Grazing land has been taken over by individual farmers, private companies and the state, usually in this order. Development projects have been, and still are, investment-oriented, aiming at the rationalisation and industrialisation of the livestock economy rather than the development of the pastoral communities. State policies intentionally aim at, or unintentionally result in, the elimination of pastoral forms of land use rather than their improvement. The concentration of people in villages has contributed, not only to land depletion, but also to an intensified competition between pastoralists and agriculturalists and to an increased dependence among pastoralists on agricultural foods. The concentration of social services and the infrastructural improvements in the villages have attracted agriculturalists and increasingly excluded the pastoralists. There are cases of whole villages created for the pastoralists which have been entirely taken over by agriculturalists and agro- pastoralists (Kjaerby, 1979, 1980; see also Ndagala, 1981). The commercialisation of livestock production has tended to increase resource competition and economic differentiation among the pastoralists themselves. The gap between rich and poor herders has widened.

The evolution of conservation policies in Tanzania

closely parallels that of rural development in general; in fact, the conservation policy forms an integral part of the national development strategy. Rural development and wildlife conservation are two related forms of state intervention into the rural society. In terms of their impact on the pastoralists, current conservation and development policies in Tanzania are similar: they both tend to marginalise the pastoralists and replace indigenous production systems with large scale agro-industries on the one hand and tourist development-estates on the other.

Similar processes operate among the Maasai in Kenya. Though post-colonial Kenya has followed a very different political route, the consequences of national development policies for the pastoral Maasai have been much the same as in Tanzania. After Independence in 1963 all "communal" land - the tribal trust land of colonial times - in Kenyan Maasailand was converted to private farms and Individual or Group Ranches. This shift in land policy from government-controlled trust land to freehold titles was initiated to encourage surplus production in farming and the commercialisation of traditional livestock economies. It resulted in a "land grabbing" situation among the Kenya Maasai of gigantic proportions (Jacobs, 1973). Landless cultivators encroached on Maasai grazing land and successful farmers bought up large tracts of the best grazing land from the pastoralists (Galaty, 1980). To secure freehold titles to land, the Maasai created a number of Individual Ranches and later Group Ranches. This process accelerated in the late 1960's when externally-financed wheat schemes were introduced in the high-potential areas of Kajiado and Narok districts. As the Maasai Group Ranches currently face mounting organisational problems, large-scale agro-business corporations continue to establish themselves in the region at the expense of the pastoralists (Galaty, 1980; Hedlund, 1971).

The main pont I have made in this document is that there

is nothing inherently inevitable about development. There are different notions and strategies of development which lead to different outcomes but the basic differences do not follow the conventional lines of cleavage between political ideologies and economies such as "capitalism" and "socialism". From the point of view of peasants and ethnic minorities, the difference lies in the way development strategies recognise and build on the values and the social rationality on which their particular societies rest. Concluding on a positive - and perhaps normative - note, the document points towards an alternative, endogenous and culture-oriented, vision of development, based on a society's own particular way of life and work and the concepts of reality and "good life" embraced by its members. I am aware of the fact that this seemingly simple notion of development is explosively radical in its implications and therefore impossible for most development theorists and practicians to accept. To them, brought up or trained in the universalistic and standardised cultural environment of the "modern" world, development is universal and given, modelled on their own historical experience.

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