

# University Report

**BBC** AFRICAN SERVICE, LONDON

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## UNIVERSITY REPORT

Broadcast 14th, 16th & 18th February 1971

COSMO PIETERSE:  
NARRATOR -

Hello, and this week a look at the relationship between an African university and the village communities around it. The university is that of Dar-es-Salaam, and the community of our report is a peasant community near the town of Dodoma, itself not too far from Dar-es-Salaam. A university group from Dar visited this village, an 'Ujamaa' - that is co-operative community.

But first let us hear, in the words of the President of Tanzania, what the over-all educational policy of the country has achieved. In a policy statement, published as EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE, President Nyerere gave the following outline of and perspective to Tanzanian education.

MR. F.D. MDGE:

Faster than would have been thought possible, our University College and other institutions are providing materials on the history of Africa and making these available to our teachers. Our national songs and dances are once again being learned by our children; our national language has been given the importance in our curriculum which it needs and deserves. Also, civics classes taken by Tanzanians are beginning to give the secondary school pupils an understanding of the organization and aims of our young state. In these and other ways changes have been introduced to make our educational system more relevant to our needs.

COSMO PIETERSE: President Nyerere on the educational outlook of Tanzania. Now, what is the role of a university in such an educational scheme?

Isn't there a whole history, even a tradition of the separation between village and varsity, resulting in a great gulf between town and gown? Later we shall turn to this issue again. In the meantime, back to the Dar University group visit.

Grant Kamenju is a lecturer in English on the staff of the university and was a member of the group that went to Dodoma communal village. Mansoor Ladha, our Dar reporter, first asked him about the purpose of the visit.

GRANT KAMENJU: Well the purpose of the visit to the Ujamaa villages in Dodoma was mainly to learn about the peasants and to see the kind of problems the peasants of Dodoma face in the creation of Ujamaa villages in that area.

MANSOOR LADHA: Did you actually live with the peasants in the village throughout your stay, or did you stay in Dodoma town and visit the village occasionally?

GRANT KAMENJU: No. I think it's very important to make this clear. We did in fact live with the peasants, we did not stay in the town. The purpose of our visit was to live among the peasants.

MANSOOR LADHA: How did the villagers react to your visit. Did they consider you as outsiders excluding you from their affairs?

GRANT KAMENJU:

Yes, I think to begin with they didn't quite understand how people like ourselves, coming from the University of Dar-es-Salaam, would be interested in their problems and would want to come and live and work with them. But I think as they got to know us, and as we got to make ourselves known to them, and were able to explain why we had come to live with them, that in fact, they accepted us and we were able to share very frankly, and in a comradly spirit in the working and in the problems of the village

COSMO PIETERSE:

Why might the peasants have regarded the university group as 'outsiders?' What causes or caused the possible differences and distance between villager and scholar. In the words of President Nyerere.

MR. F.D. MDOE:

A few people go to university. If they are lucky enough to enter Dar-es-Salaam University College they live in comfortable quarters, feed well, and study hard for their Degree. When they have been successful in obtaining it, they know immediately that they will receive a salary of something like £600 per annum. That is what they have been aiming for; it is what they have been encouraged to aim for. They may also have the desire to serve the community, but their idea of service is related to status and the salary which a university education is expected to confer upon its recipient. The salary and the status have become a right automatically conferred by the Degree.

It is wrong of us to criticize the young people for these attitudes. The new university graduate has spent the larger part of his life separated and apart from the masses of Tanzania; his parents may be poor, but he has never fully shared

F.D. MDOE:

that poverty. He does not really know what it is like to live as a poor peasant. He will be more at home in the world of the educated than he is among his own parents. Only during vacation has he spent time at home, and even then he will often find that his parents and relatives support his own conception of his difference, and regard it as wrong that he should live and work as the ordinary person he really is. For the truth is that many of the people in Tanzania have come to regard education as meaning that a man is too precious for the rough and hard life which the masses of our people still live.

COSMO PIETERSE:

President Nyerere's survey of university man and his attitude to the man in the village tells a history of social snobbery; a heritage of intellectual arrogance; a backlog of non-understanding. A case, then, for the university man being thrown in at the deep end of everyday life. Well, in that case, what did the Dar University group hope to gain from their experience of living in an Ujamaa village?

GRANT KAMENJU:

Well of course, the main thing is to learn. So I think that the main benefit for me has been to understand, to get to know the problems that face the peasants. When one stays at the university as a lecturer, one tends to talk about the problems of socialism in theory, but it's only when you get to the actual practical problems of implementing socialism in the countryside, and working with the peasants to deal with this problem, that you can get the real understanding, or should we say you combine the theoretical ideas of socialism with the actual practical experience.

COSMO PIETERSE: Practical experience of the hard life that the majority of our people still live. Now then the tempo, texture and temperature of a day in the life of an Ujamaa village as Grant Kamenju experienced it.

GRANT KAMENJU: In Dōdoma, in this particular village where we stayed, the day starts quite early in the morning. The peasants get up about 6 o'clock- and some of them in this area keep cattle and they have to go out and feed the cattle before they start the mornings work. The real day for the collective work of the peasants starts about eight o'clock until about half past twelve or one o'clock, sometimes a little later than that. The peasants will be working on their communal farm, and then they have a break, have some food and some refreshments and then in the afternoon usually they had organised classes - classes in adult literacy, and they would also probably have meetings - political education meetings in which they would be discussing, at least when we were there, the politics of Ujamaa, and the political problems in the creation of Ujamaa villages. The day would end sometime about six or seven o'clock after which they would retire to their individual homes. But the day would not be over, because later in the evening, while we were there, they would in fact organise entertainment, and we took part in this. They had their own traditional dances and these dances would go on until quite late depending on how much energy was left after the days' work. Sometimes they would go on up to midnight or later.

COSMO PIETERSE: Ujamaa villages are co-operative, communal communities of farmers. They are the rural application of Tanzania's policy of African Socialism

COSMO PIETERSE :

This policy is centred on the concept of Ujamaa or kinship, family-hood: the village as a family ; the nation as a family. What problems does this policy raise at village level?

GRANT KAMENJU:

Well there are many problems, but I think that the biggest problem is one of awareness, the political awareness, political understanding, on the part of the peasants of what in fact they are doing, of what their objectives are in this transformation. So that before we can make much progress the peasants themselves have to be able to understand fully that the purpose is to create socialist society in Tanzania, and this, of course, is a very complex question; it's going to take a long time to create such a society, and for this purpose it is important that the peasants understand fully what the objectives are. I think that once they have acquired this awareness then the other problems can be solved more easily, but I think this is the biggest problem.

MANSOOR LADHA:

You mean that of political awareness?

GRANT KAMENJU:

That of a political awareness, of a socialist awareness.

MANSOOR LADHA:

How do you think this has been tackled?

GRANT KAMENJU:

Well I think that quite a lot of work has been done because, of course, the main solution is the work of the parties, the new instrument in fact for the creation of this awareness, and I think that the

GRANT KAMENJU: party has already started a lot of work in this area and this I think is what must be improved, it's the function of the party in creating this consciousness in developing/<sup>it</sup> that we must concentrate upon.

COSMO PIETERSE: I think it is important to point out here that Grant Kamenju, though Kenyan born, was speaking as a member of a Tazanian community. More specifically, the community to which he belongs, is that directly attached to Dar-es-Salaam University. An important, a most important part of this community is, of course, the student body. A worry about its role in the nation as a family, and in education for self-reliance prompted Mansoor Ladha's next observation and question.

MANSOOR LADHA: I see that there is/a <sup>not</sup> tremendous response from Tanzanian university students to the Ujamaa way of living. What reasons would you attribute to this situation?

GRANT KAMENJU: Well actually first of all, I would like to correct this, to say that, although not every student has been/<sup>out</sup> in the Ujamaa villages that there are nevertheless quite a substantial number of students, especially the students who belong to the TANU Youth League, who in fact have been very enthusiastic - it is they who organised this trip to the Ujamaa villages in Dodoma.

It is of course true to say there are many others who are apathetic, and I think this has to be attributed to the fact that we are still living in a society which is not yet socialist - we are

- GRANI KEMENJU: still victims of a colonial education, and I think these are the two main reasons why there may be apathy on the part of many students.
- MANSOOR LADHA: How should the university encourage the students to live in Ujamaa villages?
- GRANT KAMENJU: Well I think the only thing is for those who feel the need for this transformation to lead the way, and to hope that others will follow. Apart from that, the only other way the university can do it is by helping <sup>by</sup> hastening the change in the education that the students are getting so that, in fact, the students are equipped, are prepared for the new society, so that they themselves can participate out of their own understanding and awareness of the need of this transformation
- COSMO PIETERSE: TANU Youth League, i.e., the youth group of the Tanzania African National Union, and its role at the university and vis-e-vis., Tanzania's Ujamaa villages, as seen by Grant Kamenju, lecturer in English at Dar-es-Salaam University. And also the role of university education at Dar, to prepare graduate Tanzanians to live in a co-operative society of equals. In a phrase, education for social change. But isn't this synonymous with indoctrination? What happens to educational freedom? Especially in a one-party state such as Tanzania. These questions may be real worries to some people. But in the concluding words of EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE by the President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere.

MR. F.D. MDOE:

The education provided by Tanzania for the students of Tanzania must serve the purposes of Tanzania. It must encourage the growth of the socialist values we aspire to. It must encourage the development of a proud independent, and free citizenry which relies upon itself for its own development, and which knows the advantages and the problems of co-operation. It must ensure that the educated know themselves to be an integral part of the nation and recognize the responsibility to give greater service the greater the opportunities they have had.

This is not only a matter of school organizations and curriculum. Social values are formed by family, school, and society - by the total environment in which a child develops. But it is no use our educational system stressing values and knowledge appropriate to the past or to the citizens in other countries; it is wrong if it even contributes to the continuation of those inequalities and privileges which still exist in our society because of our inheritance. Let our students be educated to be members and servants of the kind of just and egalitarian future to which this country aspires.

COSMO PIETERSE:

Possibly one of Africa's most fully thought-out national plans, this Tanzanian educational policy; certainly challenging, exciting and controversial, especially in its application to university life.

But for now it is goodbye from me, Cosmo Pieterse.

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