

Juhani Koponen

People and Production in Late Precolonial Tanzania. History and Structures

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This book discusses and analyses the history of the late precolonial Tanzania. The discussion and analysis is done by examining not only the historical facts but tying them to the social and economic factors that shaped the productive structures of the many different communities living within the boundaries of what is today known as Tanzania. The book provides the reader with the insight of Tanzania's history thus disproving the thesis of many writers who claimed that Africa has no history. History had to be made by outsiders since Africa was basically a subject for discovery by the many explorers.

The book has been well researched, and logically and carefully placed, building strongly on the main theme of the book. All chapters carry almost equal importance. The first chapter is the introduction, but critically examines the history and historical knowledge. Important here is the question of methodology in the collection of data and facts which build history. Koponen poses some questions as to the authenticity of the oral tradition, but he does not disqualify it as a reliable source. Positions of other historians are carefully discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 2 examines basically the economic affairs as well as development of the various societies by extra reflecting on the commercial interests or structures involved in the long distance trade. The author produces a lot of data in support of his thesis.

Chapter 3 gives a fresh look on the horrors of the slave trade and slavery. He provides a lot of information about the parties involved in this particular trade and views critically the statistics so far provided in regard to slaves exported out of Tanzania through Zanzibar. He comes forward with fresh data and statistics in support of his position. Therefore, attempting to minimize the statistical exaggeration that had been employed by many other historians. In the same chapter the author examines the nature of trade and exchange among the various African societies.

Chapter 4 deals with common problems at the time, i.e. wars, famine and disease. In this way he examines the causes for famine, wars as well as the diseases affecting both human beings and their cattle.

In Chapter 5 he looks into the political structures of the societies under examination while in Chapter 6 he looks into the entire question of production, i.e. agriculture, livestock or crafts, social organisation of production aspects of reproduction as well as the question of residence and settlement are dealt with in the remaining chapters of the book.

The book in general apart from dealing with historical facts, engages itself in the study of traditional African societies. It overrules the thesis that the traditional African societies were basically egalitarian since most societies, according to the study, were marked by clear social distinctions. In his findings Koponen has tended to rely more on secondary sources, but this is understandable. The room for oral traditions is getting narrower and

even those who are still there who once lived in the precolonial era may not be able to recollect facts with some measure of precision for a historian. This fact, presumably, leaves Koponen with no other choice but deal basically with secondary sources. The bibliography is very rich and impressive. A good number of it is by European authors, and mainly Germans. Koponen has done a good job in this work in the sense that he has managed to make his points clear without being influenced by the almost topsided literature he had to go through. It is indeed not only a good reading, but a scholarly work deserving all respect.

Costa R. Mahalu

Paul de Waart / Paul Peters / Erik Denters (eds.)

International Law and Development

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Die vorliegende Veröffentlichung beruht auf Studien, die international angesehene Wissenschaftler für ein Seminar über "Völkerrecht und Entwicklung" an der Freien Universität Amsterdam im April 1987 beigesteuert haben. Neben "einführenden Überlegungen" des Mitherausgebers de Waart sind auch die Begrüßungsansprachen des früheren Präsidenten des Internationalen Gerichtshofs, Singh, und des ehemaligen Außenministers von Bangla Desh, Hossain, abgedruckt. Singh beschäftigt sich mit dem "Recht auf Entwicklung", vor allem mit dessen Begrenzungen. Er kommt zu dem Schluß, daß das "Recht auf Entwicklung" mittlerweile ein anerkannter Grundsatz des Völkerrechts sei, der allerdings vom Gebot der Verträglichkeit ("imperative of sustainability") geprägt und von anderen völkerrechtlich geschützten Interessen begrenzt werde. Hossain erörtert die wirtschaftliche Lage der unterentwickelten Welt und plädiert nachdrücklich für eine neue Weltwirtschaftsordnung. Er geht dabei von der durchaus anfechtbaren Prämisse aus, daß globales Wirtschaftswachstum ein allgemein anerkanntes Ziel der internationalen Gemeinschaft sei. Der zweite Teil des Werkes ist dem Thema "wirtschaftliche Souveränität" gewidmet. Kahn bewertet in seinen Überlegungen zum Recht der Staaten, ihr soziales und wirtschaftliches System zu wählen, die 1986 in Seoul verabschiedete Erklärung der ILA (Seoul-Deklaration) als Rückschritt auf dem Weg zu einer neuen Weltwirtschaftsordnung. Kritikwürdig sei, daß die Entwicklungsländer durch die in der Seoul-Deklaration vorgenommene Konkretisierung des Solidaritätsprinzips und des Rechts auf Entwicklung mehr als Verpflichtete (gegenüber ihren Völkern) denn als Berechtigte (gegenüber den entwickelten Staaten) erscheinen. Diese etwa im Vergleich zur Resolution 3281 (XXIX) der VN-Generalversammlung ("Charta der wirtschaftlichen Rechte und Pflichten der Staaten") stärker betonte Verantwortung jedes Staates für seine eigene Entwicklung ist m.E. durchaus zu begrüßen. Die Akzentverschiebung in Richtung auf eine "innere Dimension" des "Rechts