

A Long Way to Dodoma: Deconstructing Colonial Legacy by Relocating the Capital City in Tanzania

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Abstract

The decision taken by the Tanzanian government to relocate its capital from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma in 1973 and the subsequent attempts to implement it is an important event that has not been thoroughly discussed by historians. Most of the knowledge of this event is in the form of the reports prepared by town planning experts during the 1970s. This paper addresses this lacuna by reconstructing a comprehensive history of the event in question. It examines, among other issues, the extent to which the decision to move the capital to Dodoma after independence was justified by the concepts of socialism (Ujamaa), national identity and the colonial legacy. An attempt is made to piece together the disjointed accounts from the various sources of information on the decisions and measures that were taken to move the capital after independence. This paper, unlike other studies, traces the idea of relocating the capital to the colonial period. It makes intensive use of archival information gathered from London and Dar es Salaam, and also benefits from the vast amount of information collected from newspapers and parliamentary records.

Key words: capital, relocation, ujamaa, legacy and identity.

1.0 Introduction

Attempts to move the seat of the Tanzanian government from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma started with the Germans and British, who planned to establish an inland capital. There is ample archival evidence of discussions on this matter. For some reason, colonialism ended without any attempt to transfer the capital, but the idea did not die with the end of colonial rule. On 1st October 1973, President J.K. Nyerere announced the decision to move the capital from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma at the 16th Congress of the TANU party.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ National Archives (London), hereafter NA, FCO 31/15559/JET 1/8, “The New Capital of Tanzania”, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 20th October 1973. TANU stands for Tanganyika African National Union.

Although there are several documented reasons for TANU's decision to move to Dodoma, there has not been much focus on how such decision was influenced or strengthened by the concepts of national identity, the *Ujamaa* philosophy and the colonial legacy. By the turn of the twenty-first century, relocation to Dodoma had, apart from various measures that the government had already taken, not been fully achieved, with the views of newspaper reporters suggesting that the project was bound to fail. In 2016, however, the government renewed its interest in moving the capital to Dodoma. Since then, several ministries, including their employees and senior government officials, have moved to Dodoma. This paper, apart from documenting the various reasons for relocating the capital, traces its history to the colonial and post-colonial politics of relocation. It bears testimony to the fact that the decision to move to Dodoma after independence was formerly driven by geographical and political factors, which were later reinforced by the fact that the government wanted at the same time to site its capital in Dodoma town which, unlike Dar es Salaam, was less influenced by the colonialists.

accommodate important national institutions or facilities such as the state house, law courts, the central bank, museums, public universities, the airport and theatres.⁸² They differ from other cities in that “they take on a particular political meaning”.⁸³ For example, they are sometimes designed in a particular architectural style as the government’s political symbol.⁸⁴ Scholars have argued that capital cities not only act as the economic powerhouse of nations, but they also are places purposefully chosen for political reasons.⁸⁵ Evidence in several studies supports this argument.⁸⁶ Vadim Rossman argues that “both the very concept of capital and the proposals for capital relocation are often based on certain concepts of state and power”, the so-called “normative tasks of the state”.⁸⁷

However, political reasons alone do not explain why countries embark on relocating their capital or why such projects have proliferated across the world in recent years.⁸⁸ Relocating a capital may also be due to the need for security, or because the government wants to experience what Rossman calls “national spatial perception.”⁸⁹ Relocating capitals is therefore a nation-building project aimed at achieving different national goals.⁹⁰

⁸² Enid Slack and Rupak Chattopadhyay. “Introduction”, in Sack and Chattopadhyay (eds.). *Finance and Governance of Capital Cities in Federal Systems* (Canada: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), p.3; Fassil Demissie. “Imperial Legacies and Postcolonial Predicaments: An Introduction”, in Fassil Demissie (ed.). *Postcolonial African Cities: Imperial Legacies and Post-Colonial Predicaments* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p.2; Simon Bekker and Goran Therborn. “Introduction”, in Simon Bekker and Goran Therborn (eds.). *Power and Powerlessness: Capital Cities in Africa* (South Africa: HCRC Press, 2012), p.1.

⁸³ See, for example, Michael Minkenberg (ed.). *Power and Architecture: The Construction of Capitals, the Politics of Space, and the Space of Politics* (Germany: Berghahn Books, 2014), p.6.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Bekker and Therborn, “Introduction”, pp.,1-2.

⁸⁶ Blair A Ruble. “Foreword”, in Vadim Rossman. *Capital Cities: Varieties and Patterns of Development and Relocation* (London: Routledge, 2017), p. x; Simeon Mesaki. “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital City in Dodoma, Tanzania, 1973-1981.” Paper presented in Conference for Research in Progress at the University of York (March 22-24, 1982), p.1.

⁸⁷ Rossman, *Capital Cities*, *ibid.*, pp.1-3.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p.xiii.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.1-4.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.6-7.

According to Lawrence J. Vale, “many capital cities are where they are because of who else is nearby and how close,” hence the concept of a neutral centre.⁹¹ Although this factor applies in different countries, it cannot fully explain why several African countries chose to relocate the capitals they inherited from their colonial masters. A.J. Christopher argues that “decolonization [in Africa] led to expectations that independent governments would establish new capitals devoid of the imprint of alien powers.”⁹² As a matter of fact, Africans were of the opinion that locating the seat of government at the geographic centre of their country would simplify administration and neutralize the colonial centre-periphery legacy. Another reason was that African nationalist leaders wanted to replace colonial capitals with new capitals, as they thought that the former were nothing other than colonial sites. However, some relocation projects in Africa were the idea of senior government leaders who advocated relocation for their own interests.⁹³ Relocation of this kind is often directed at achieving what Vale calls personal identity or sub-national identity.⁹⁴

Generally, the relocation of capitals in Africa not only resulted from the fact that governments wanted to base their administrative activities at the geographic centre, but also from the nationalistic desire to reconstruct indigenous urban images which had been destroyed by western imperialism.⁹⁵ The inherited African capital cities bore huge imprints of colonialism in terms of their architectural design, their residential patterns and their monuments.⁹⁶ As a result, “independence brought a reappraisal of the inherited

⁹¹ Lawrence J. Vale. “Capital Architecture and National Identity”, in Michael Minkenberg (ed.). *Power and Architecture: The Construction of Capitals and the Politics of Space* (Germany: Berghahn Books, 2014), p.35.

⁹² A.J. Christopher. “Continuity and Change of African Capitals.” *The Geographical Review*, Vol. LXXV (1985): 44.

⁹³ www.malawiproject.org, last accessed on 26th July 2017.

⁹⁴ See, for example, Vale, “Capital Architecture and National Identity”, *op.cit.*, pp.32-37.

⁹⁵ For a thorough discussion on how western imperialism destructed African indigenous urban culture see Aidan Southall. “The Impact of Imperialism upon Urban Development in Africa”, in Victor Turner (eds.). *Colonialism in Africa*, Vol.3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp.216-253.

⁹⁶ Discussion on the cultural legacies of imperialism can be seen in Dominik Geppert and Frank Lorenz (eds.). *Sites of Imperial Memory: Commemorating Colonial Rule in the Ninetieth and Twentieth Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).

capitals with their foreign images”.⁹⁷ Moreover, colonial capitals were established at strategic points or at ‘headlink positions’ to make it easier to control the colonies and exploit their resources.⁹⁸ To reverse this colonial ‘organization of space’, new capital cities shorn of imperial legacies had to be established at sites chosen by Africans themselves.⁹⁹

Even in countries where colonial capitals were retained, efforts were made to ‘africanize’ them. As Fassil Demise observes, “urban Africans “are remaking and imprinting postcolonial cities with their own forms of urbanity”.¹⁰⁰ A dramatic development in East Africa was the case of Nairobi, where the government changed its inherited imperial images after independence. In Nairobi, as elsewhere in East Africa, colonial monuments were replaced by new monuments and all streets with colonial names were renamed.¹⁰¹ Similar changes in street names took place in Dar es Salaam, as several streets with British names were renamed in the early 1960s.¹⁰² The elders of Dar es Salaam had even wanted to replace the inherited Askari Monument, which sits at the city centre, with a statue of Nyerere, but he turned down the offer.¹⁰³ These changes are explained by the fact that “the urban landscape and spatial layout of the capital city” should portray symbols of the state’s authority, such as monuments, street names and public spaces, to mention a few.¹⁰⁴ Aleida Assmann and Linda Short maintain that the transfer of power or regime

⁹⁷ Christopher, “Continuity and Change”, p.52.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.46.

⁹⁹ Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, *op.cit.*, p.1. For the concept of organization of space see James R.Brennan and Andrew Burton. “Introduction”, in James R. Brennan, Andrew Burton and Yusufu Lawi. *Dar es Salaam: Histories from an Emerging African Metropolis* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2007), pp.4-5.

¹⁰⁰ Demissie, “Imperial Legacies and Postcolonial Predicaments”, *op.cit.*, p.2.

¹⁰¹ Samuel Owuor and Teresa Mbatia. “Nairobi”, in Bekker and Therborn (eds.). *Power and Powerlessness*, *op.cit.* p.125; Unnamed Reporter, “Majina ya Ukoloni Mwiko Nairobi,” *Mwafrika*, 7th April 1964, No.1, 209.

¹⁰² Tom Mgondah, “Majina ya Barabarani Mjini”, *Ngurumo*, No.805, 18th November 1961, p.2; Anonymous Reporter, “Tubadili Sasa Lumumba Street”, *Ngurumo*, No. 769, 6th October 1961, p.3.

¹⁰³ Peter D.M. Bwimbo. *Mlinzi Mkuu wa Mwalimu Nyerere* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, 2015), pp.39-40.

¹⁰⁴ Bekker and Therborn, “Introduction”, in Bekker and Therborn (eds.). *Power and Powerlessness*, *op.cit.*, p.1.

change is usually followed by “an abrupt reorganization of memory”, which involves, *inter alia*, changing street names.¹⁰⁵

Tanzania, like other African countries, followed in the footsteps of countries in other continents which had successfully relocated their capitals. Brazil and Pakistan are good examples, as their old cities of Rio de Janeiro and Karachi were replaced by Brasilia and Islamabad in the 1960s, respectively.¹⁰⁶ Malawi’s capital was the first to be relocated in post-colonial sub-Saharan Africa. In 1965, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, the first president of Malawi, declared that Lilongwe, not the former colonial capital of Zomba, would be the political seat of government.¹⁰⁷ Tanzania followed suit in 1973. In 1975, the Nigerian government joined the race by announcing its decision to move its federal capital from the over-populated Lagos to the more central, environmentally healthier and less populated town of Abuja.¹⁰⁸ By 12th December 1991 Abuja had become the new capital of Nigeria.

3.0 Tracing the Idea of Relocation to German and British Times

As already mentioned, the decision to relocate the seat of the government from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma was made long before independence. Between 1915 and 1916, the Germans toyed with the idea of establishing a new capital or a ‘hill station’ inland.¹⁰⁹ In 1916, for example, they surveyed Kisii and Buga sites in Morogoro.¹¹⁰ They were prejudiced against Dar es Salaam, the capital (*Hauptstadt*) they had painstakingly built in the late 19th century, because it recorded a high number of deaths from malaria and because its

¹⁰⁵ Aleida Assmann and Linda Short. “Memory and Political Change: Introduction”, in Aleida Assmann and Linda Short, *Memory and Political Change* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.3.

¹⁰⁶ See, for example, Christopher, “Continuity and Change”, *op.cit.*, p. 52; Bekker and Therborn (eds), *Power and Powerlessness*, p.3; Orestes Yakas. *Islamabad: The Birth of a Capital* (London: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp.1-9.

¹⁰⁷ www.malawiproject.org, last accessed on 27th July 2017; Christopher, “Continuity and Change”, *op.cit.*, p.52.

¹⁰⁸ Laurent Fourchard. “Lagos”, in Bekker and Therborn (eds), *Power and Powerlessness*, *op.cit.*, pp.66-78; Wale Adebaniwi. “Abuja” in Bekker and Therborn, *Power and Powerlessness*, *op.cit.*, pp.84-101. See also www.britanica.com, last retried on 27th July 2017; J. Isawa Elaigwu. “Abuja, Nigeria”, in *Finance and Governance of Capital Cities in Federal Systems* (Canada: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), p.201.

¹⁰⁹ Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, *op.cit.*, p.2.

¹¹⁰ Tanzania National Archives (hereafter TNA), No. 20961/29, Director of Public Works to Chief Secretary (hereafter CS), 15th November 1932.

climate was too humid for them to settle there.¹¹¹ However, their efforts to relocate their *Hauptsadt* did not bear fruit. The outbreak of the First World War shattered their hopes of implementing the idea. During the war, they moved their Central Office (*Zentral Buero*), including volumes of government files and papers, to Morogoro (and soon afterwards to Tabora), due to fear of the impending bombardment of Dar es Salaam by the British Navy.¹¹²

The transfer of Tanganyika to the British as a Trust Territory after the First World War brought with it a new hope among British officials of building an inland capital. In the first instance, the British translated the German survey report, hoping to use the sites mentioned therein.¹¹³ Lying 25 miles south of Kidete, the German sites were recommended by certain government officials on account of their flat landscape and abundance of streams.¹¹⁴ Attracted by the sites, the Treasurer suggested that the Kings African Rifles should be stationed there for a particular period of time to gather more information about the sites.¹¹⁵ Like their predecessors, the British wished to establish “a special capital or a hill station” in place of Dar es Salaam.¹¹⁶ During the 1930s, government officials had abandoned the idea of using the German sites, and so looked for a site in the centre of the country.¹¹⁷ However, the government lacked the finance and political will to effect the move. This was clearly revealed by the Chief Secretary on 31st May 1932, “a move from Dar es Salaam is not practical politics immediately.”¹¹⁸ Although the government was financially unable to embark on the project in the early 1930s, preliminary surveys and earmarking of potential inland sites continued until 1936. In September 1932, the Chief

¹¹¹ Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, *op.cit.*, p.2.

¹¹² Joseph Kulwa Kahama. *SIR GEORGE: A Thematic History of Tanzania through His Fifty Years of Public Service* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 2010), p.73; Adolf C. Mascarenhas. “The Port of Dar es Salaam.” *Tanzania Notes and Records*, hereafter TNR, No.71 (1970), p.92. For transfer of records see J.M. Karugila. “A National Archives in a Developing Country.” *TNR*, Nos.84 & 85 (1980), p.118.

¹¹³ The report was compiled by Dr. Schnee, the Governor of the German East Africa Protectorate. Seen in TNA, No. 20961/20, from Assistant Registrar General of Documents to the Land Officer, 14th October 1932; TNA, No. 20961/1, Minutes by CS, 31st May 1932.

¹¹⁴ TNA, No. 20961/2, “Site for Capital or Hill Station”, Minutes by Treasurer, 30th May 1932.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ TNA, No.20961/3, From CS to the Directory of Surveys, 9th June 1936.

¹¹⁷ TNA, No.20961/5, Minutes by CS, 28th September 1932.

¹¹⁸ TNA, No.20961/1, Minutes by CS, 31st May 1932.

Secretary commented that it was worth canvassing the merits of alternative places and exploring sites which might be suitable, and it would also be expedient to obtain the opinions of Europeans and Indians on the subject.¹¹⁹ Mr. Gillman and Colonel Maxwell were commissioned to prepare a memorandum on the project.¹²⁰ This task was completed in October 1932, and the document was forwarded to all senior government officials for their comments.¹²¹

The choice of the site for the capital was greatly contended, because three major considerations needed to be taken into account in selecting the site. First, the site should “naturally depend very largely on the governmental functions to be discharged there.” Second, it should have a suitable climate and an adequate source of water, and third, it should be located at the geographic centre of the territory to facilitate communication.¹²² In connection with the first criterion, there was also the question of “whether the Government and industrial and commercial headquarters should be together or separate.”¹²³ The government was worried that if the separate view was upheld, then it would have been detached “from the economic life of the country,” implying long journeys by businessmen or bankers, for example, wanting to meet high-level government officials on business matters.¹²⁴ It was emphasised that choice of the site should be based on geographical or climatic factors if the administrative activities of the government were detached from the commercial centres of the country. “If the limiting factor [was] accepted, that is putting government and commercial activities together, the choice [was] restricted to Dodoma, Mwanza, Arusha, Moshi or Morogoro”.¹²⁵ However, of all the possible sites reviewed, Dodoma was considered the most suitable. The following commentary revealed the advantages and disadvantages of siting the capital in Dodoma:

¹¹⁹ TNA, No.20961/5, Minutes by CS, 28th September 1932.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² TNA, No.20961/6 “Possible Move of Capital of Tanganyika from Dar es Salaam,” 8th October 1932

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

Dodoma is an important road, rail, and air junction, and probably the most accessible place in the Territory. It has no economic resources of its own (even in this “plant more crops” year its produce will not, I think, exceed 4,000 tons’) and no non-native population to speak of, nor reasons why there should ever be any. There being no water, there are few mosquitoes and it is comparatively healthy, but much hotter than Dar es Salaam at certain seasons of the year. As soon as a large town grew up, malaria would no doubt appear, but might not be difficult to control. Of the sites discussed so far, Dodoma is probably the least unsuitable.¹²⁶

Explanations were given as to why other regions in Tanganyika did not match Dodoma. For example, Arusha was considered unsuitable because land would be quite expensive to acquire there, and was, together with Mwanza and Moshi, described as being “too eccentric to the territory.”¹²⁷ The climatic and health environment of Morogoro made it unfit for being the capital. The Uluguru Hills would have been a potential site if it were less precipitous and not so overpopulated. Tukuyu and Songea were automatically rejected for being “completely eccentric to the Territory,” and Tabora was found to be highly infested with tsetse flies.¹²⁸ Despite its reliable source of water from Ruaha River, Iringa was thought to be located too far from the central railway line, and it would have cost a whopping £1.5 million to build a connecting line.¹²⁹

In view of the foregoing, the British selected Dodoma by the process of elimination. A list of possible sites was created and each was critically reviewed. The site had to meet the five following requirements: (i) easily accessible by existing forms of transport; (ii) a relatively healthy climate; (iii) a reliable source of water; (iv) the availability of natural sources of fuel; and (v) enough space for future expansion of the township.¹³⁰ Three more requirements were added later: (1) it must be easy to obtain enough workers and food locally; (2) the distance from the railway line should not exceed 20 to 30 miles; and (3)

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ TNA, No.20961/11, “Note on a Possible Site for a Future Capital of Tanganyika Territory,” October, 1932.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

consideration should be given to the future development of the Territory in regard to settlements, minerals, and other things needed by the capital.¹³¹ Of all the climatic requirements, altitude was the most important. It was decided that an altitude of 4000 feet would be conducive to “the mental and physical well-being of the Europeans in East Africa”.¹³² All these requirements confirmed Christopher’s argument that the relocation of capitals in colonial Africa resulted from “the administrative rearrangements of the colonial powers, the quest for healthy sites and the recognition of altering economic circumstances”.¹³³

4.0 Dodoma Site Confirmed

Although one of the reasons for selecting Dodoma was its central position, other similar sites had been suggested before. For example, although Itigi was believed to be the actual centre of the country, it was too dry, and so it was eliminated in favour of places nearby, like Kilimatinde and Manyoni.¹³⁴ None of these places met the interests of the British Officials. The reasons for choosing Dodoma were that it was located almost at the centre of the country, it was “the best junction for any north and south Railway, and [was] already on the Great North Road”.¹³⁵ Although Dodoma was semi-arid, the fact that it was healthier than Dar es Salaam, it had magnificent hilly surroundings that were an appealing sight and it had “unlimited space” cleared any doubt about the possible future expansion of the capital.¹³⁶ “I have always held the view”, opined the Chief Secretary, “that if the capital is ever moved from Dar es Salaam it must move to Dodoma”.¹³⁷

Another reason was given. Government departments and institutions, distributed as they were, could best be connected to the central government if its seat were to be established in Dodoma. As shown in the table below, of all the nine departments existing in

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ Christopher, “Continuity and Change”, *op.cit.*, pp.48-49.

¹³⁴ TNA, No.20961/11, “Note on a Possible Site for a Future Capital of Tanganyika Territory,” October 1932.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ TNA, 20961/16, from CS to PC, Dodoma, 8th October 1932.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

Tanganyika, only the Tsetse Research and Forestry Departments were temporarily established in Shinyanga and Lushoto, respectively, while the rest were permanently established in different places, and to transfer them, cautioned the Director of Public Works, would be extremely costly.¹³⁸

Table 1: Distribution of Colonial Departments and Institutions in 1932

Name of the Department	Location	Status
Seat of the Government including Headquarters	Dar es Salaam	Permanent
Vertenary Department	Mpwapwa (Dodoma)	Permanent
Agricultural Department	Morogoro	Permanent
Geological Department	Dodoma	Permanent
Forestry Department	Lushoto (Tanga)	Temporary
Tsetse Research Department	Shinyanga	Temporary
East African Research Station	Amani (Tanga)	Permanent
East African Coffee Research Station	Moshi	Permanent

¹³⁸ TNA, No.20961/29, Director of Public Works to CS, 15th November 1932.

East African Meteorological Station	Tabora	Permanent
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Source: TNA No. 20961/29, 11th November 1932.

A section of government officials objected to the idea of removing the seat of government from Dar es Salaam. For example, the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services for Tanganyika considered that Dodoma was not only too arid, prone to dust storms and strong winds, but was also full of flies and mosquitoes. Completely dissatisfied with it he wrote to the Chief Secretary: “Personally I should rather live in Dar es Salaam than in Dodoma”.¹³⁹

After the end of the First World War, the idea of a new capital city in the interior was unheard of in the British colonial government until 1960 when it was proposed again in the Legislative Council (LEGCO).¹⁴⁰ Although all members of the LEGCO had agreed upon moving the capital to Dodoma, Sir Ernest Vasey, the then Minister of Finance, declared that it was quite impossible for the government to raise money for the project, which was estimated to be £7,000,000, equivalent to Tanzania shillings 140,000,000.¹⁴¹ In addition, the colonial state could hardly embark on such a project when it knew full well that independence was just around the corner.

5.0 The Campaigns and Reasons for Relocation after Independence

After independence, the idea of relocating the capital to Dodoma was once again brought up.¹⁴² In 1966, Joseph Nyerere (MP) proposed in Parliament the relocation of the capital to Dodoma.¹⁴³ His proposal was based on the premise that moving the capital to Dodoma

¹³⁹ TNA No. 20961/49, Director of Medical and Sanitary Services to CS, 5th April 1933.

¹⁴⁰ The National Archives of London (hereafter NA), No. FCO 31/1559, “The New Capital of Tanzania,” The British High Commissioner at Dar es Salaam, Diplomatic Report No.474/73, 20th October 1973.

¹⁴¹Tanzania National Assembly Hansard, September-October 1973, p.493.

¹⁴² Dodoma as well as Singida was part of the former Central Province during British period. It became an independent region in 1963. See, for example, <http://www.dodoma.go.tz/profile>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

¹⁴³ Parliament of the Republic of Tanzania, Hansard, 22nd -28th February 1966, pp.325-331.

was in line with national development. According to him, Dar es Salaam was located at the edge of the country, leaving many regions, especially inland regions, unfairly connected to the country's capital in terms of distance, with the result that the country seemed bigger than it would be if the capital were to be located at its geographic centre. He went on to explain that it complicated administration of the country, as people had to travel a long way from Dar es Salaam to inland regions. He therefore thought that locating the seat of government at the centre of the country would reduce the distance considerably, while at the same time arresting the apparent imbalance in the development of some regions, which some Members of Parliament had been complaining about.

Following this proposal, a week-long parliamentary debate ensued, attracting numerous yet conflicting comments from various MPs and Ministers.¹⁴⁴ The critics faulted the proposal on various grounds. They argued that the idea was premature, expensive and uneconomic, and was likely to inflame feelings of regionalism in the country. In particular, Paul Bomani argued against separating the capital from the University of Dar es Salaam, which was the country's think tank. He was of the opinion that should the government choose to relocate, it should consider building another university in Dodoma. The protagonists seconded most of Nyerere's arguments above.

Although the proposal got the support of the majority, including the President, the government was financially ill-equipped owing to many other public activities which needed immediate attention. But as time went by, some events took place that not only strengthened the proposed idea but also popularized it. For example, The Project Planners Associates Limited of Toronto (PPA) surveyed Dar es Salaam between 1966 and 1968 and reported that it was unfit to be a capital.¹⁴⁵ The report stirred the TANU leaders

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 444-488.

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.dodoma.go.tz/profile>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020. See also E. Mtei, "Town Planning Revolves Around the People: A Record of Ten Years," *TNR*, No.76 (1975), p.182.

to continue the debate on relocation. In his speech on 27th January 1972, Nyerere hit the nail on the head when he critiqued TANU's administrative system. He saw that over-centralization of government power in Dar es Salaam impinged on TANU's commitment to achieving rural development or *maendeleo vijijini*.¹⁴⁶ He foresaw the challenge of achieving *maendeleo vijijini* if all the Principal Secretaries, *Makatibu Wakuu*, were allowed to continue discharging their duties from Dar es Salaam.¹⁴⁷ Implicit in Nyerere's speech was the dire need to move the capital to a convenient site inland.

At Party level, the then Mwanza Region TANU Committee set the wheels in motion by launching a campaign to relocate the capital.¹⁴⁸ The campaign received strong support from TANU's Central Committee, and because TANU was the only political party, it soon became a nationwide campaign. The Party organized a national referendum, whereby 1017 TANU District Committees supported the idea against 842 which did not.¹⁴⁹ These results showed that seven regions (Ruvuma, Mtwara, Kilimanjaro, Morogoro, Ziwa Magharibi, Lindi and Pwani) voted against relocation and the remaining 11 regions approved it.¹⁵⁰ At regional level, the picture was different, as 15 out of 18 regions voted for relocation.¹⁵¹ Those which voted against the move were Kigoma, Ruvuma and Coast.¹⁵² Those who did not attend Party meetings were not given the vote, although the government encouraged citizens to air their views in local newspapers.¹⁵³ On 1st October 1973, President Nyerere formerly announced the results, which were in favour of relocation. During the event, he underlined the point that the decision to move the capital to Dodoma must remain permanent.¹⁵⁴ In reviewing the reasons provided by those involved in the referendum, Nyerere highlighted the point that the majority had voted for Dodoma because it was

¹⁴⁶ Unknown Reporter, "Hotuba ya Rais Kwa Taifa January 27, 1972," *Ngurumo*, No.4184, 29th January 1972, p.2.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ NA, No. FCO 31/1559, Report No.474/73, 20th October 1973; Mesaki, "The Conception and Building of the New National Capital", p.8.

¹⁴⁹ Parliament of the Republic of Tanzania, Hansard, September – October 1973, p.494.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Mesaki, "The Conception and Building of the New National," p.3.

¹⁵³ Parliament of the Republic of Tanzania, Hansard, September – October 1973, p.494.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p.498.

centrally located.¹⁵⁵ He emphasized that funds for the project should be sourced within the country.¹⁵⁶ Following this announcement, it was agreed that the capital would be moved from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma in ten years' time. The announcement was greeted with acclamation, with local bands, like *Morogoro Jazz*, improvising songs praising the decision.¹⁵⁷

As a result of the above deliberation, the Prime Minister's Office was transferred to Dodoma. Between 1974 and 1990 six Prime Ministers in a row worked in Dodoma, namely Rashid Kawawa, Edward Sokoine, Cleopa Msuya, Salim Ahmed Salim, Joseph Warioba and John Malecela.¹⁵⁸ The actual transfer of the capital from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma took place in 1974.¹⁵⁹ A recorded symbolic event to mark this transfer involved a farewell party organized for Kawawa in Dar es Salaam Train Station.¹⁶⁰ Between 30th September and 1st October 1974, 132 families of the officials working in the Prime Minister's Office were received at Dodoma Train Station.¹⁶¹

The reasons for selecting Dodoma as the nation's capital are widely documented. First, its central position was thought to act as a convenient junction between the Great North Road (Arusha to Mbeya Road) and the East-West Road (Dar es Salaam to Mwanza Road).¹⁶² Secondly, the region was described as having a comfortable climate and impressive landscape, making it more appealing than other towns."¹⁶³ Thirdly, although Dodoma was economically backward, it was thought that upgrading it to the status of a

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 494.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.499-500.

¹⁵⁷ Elizabeth Mahenge-Dandi. "Muziki wa Zamani wa Tanzania na Harakati za Ukombozi."

https://books.google.co.tz/books?id=1fPPDwAAQBAJ&dq=kuhamia+dodoma&source=gbs_navlinks_s, last accessed on 5th April 2020.

¹⁵⁸ Luqman Maloto. "Makala ya Maloto: Kuhamia Dodoma Kumbukumbu Halisi Kumuenzi Mwalimu Nyerere." 23rd October 2019, <https://www.mwananchi.co.tz/habari/Makala/siasa/MAKALA-YA-MALOTO--Kuhamia-Dodoma-kumbukumbu-halisi-/1597436-5321900-n7pl38/index.html>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

¹⁵⁹ Brennan and Burton, "Introduction", p.58.

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.mwananchi.co.tz/habari/Makala/siasa/MAKALA-YA-MALOTO--Kuhamia-Dodoma-kumbukumbu-halisi-/1597436-5321900-n7pl38/index.html>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

¹⁶¹ Simon Ng'hwaya. "Wahamia Dodoma," *Uhuru*, No.3133, 1st October 1974, p.1.

¹⁶² See, for example, Cameron McNamara. "Strategic Plan for the Development of the National Capital Dodoma, Tanzania: A Review of the National Capital Plan," volume 2, (1988), p.2.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

capital would act as a springboard for its development.¹⁶⁴ After all, President Nyerere's philosophy of *ujamaa* opposed unequal development of the regions, which was a legacy of colonial rule. In January 1972, for example, he suggested that Dar es Salaam's financial hegemony over other regions should not be tolerated.¹⁶⁵ Announcing the decision to move in October 1973, he argued that the move to Dodoma was in line with *villagization*.¹⁶⁶ The fourth factor concerned other problems facing Dar es Salaam at the time, especially population pressure. Dodoma was expected to "offset many of the deficiencies of Dar es Salaam."¹⁶⁷

There are two more important reasons. In the first place, because Dar es Salaam was a harbour, in 1966, Y.M. Nkurlu (MP for Iramba) argued that it was not strategically located to avert a possible external attack.¹⁶⁸ Nkurlu likened the State House to diamond or money, the owner of which must keep safe in a container in his house and lock the door, or padlock it to prevent it from being stolen. As "the gateway to Tanzania", Dar es Salaam was considered poorly located in relation to its security.¹⁶⁹ As a matter of fact, the question of security was at the core of TANU's socialism, thanks to the cold war politics. Brennan and Burton intimated that "the *Ujamaa* philosophy fortified official suspicions of urban populations".¹⁷⁰ Studies have also shown that the politics of the Cold War forced the British to use the Indian Ocean as one of their naval bases, which threatened the security of the East African region in the 1960s.¹⁷¹ In the second place, moving the capital to Dodoma was in line with the government policy of *decentralization*, which

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*; Mesaki, "The Conception and Building of the New National Capital," p.2.

¹⁶⁵ *Ngurumo*, No.4184, 29th January 1972, p.2.

¹⁶⁶ Parliament of the Republic of Tanzania, Hansard, September-October 1973, pp.495-496.

¹⁶⁷ McNamara, "Strategic Plan", p.5.

¹⁶⁸ Parliament of the Republic of Tanzania, Hansard, 22nd-28 February 1966, pp.441-442; Markus Mpangala. "Miaka 42 Serikali Imefeli Mkakati Wake Dodoma", <http://www.rai.co.tz/miaka-42-serikali-imefeli-mkakati-wake-dodoma/>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

¹⁶⁹ For Dar es Salaam as the gateway to Tanzania see "Dar City doesn't Reflect its People's Beauty", Letters to the Editor, *Sunday News*, No.3004, 18th August 1991, p.4.

¹⁷⁰ Brennan and Burton, "The Emerging Metropolis," p.61.

¹⁷¹ M. L. Baregu. "Perception of Threat and Conception of Defense before the Mutiny in Tanzania People's Defense Forces." *Tanganyika Rifles Mutiny January 1964* (Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 1993), p.64; N. N. Luanda. "The British Intervention 21st to 25th January 1964 Tanzania People's Defense Forces." *Tanganyika Rifles Mutiny January 1964*, *ibid.*, pp.127-129.

accompanied the efforts to implement *Ujamaa*.¹⁷² According to Christopher, “the shift from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma was part of the presidential aspirations for a philosophy of African socialism in Tanzania.”¹⁷³ Establishing the capital in Dodoma, it was argued, would enable the government to work closely with the rural population in implementing *villagization*.¹⁷⁴

With only two percent of its population employed in the agricultural sector between 1966 and 1977, Dar es Salaam could hardly meet the requirements of *Ujamaa*, which emphasized collective rural farming.¹⁷⁵ George Kahama underscored this point when addressing a delegation from China on 21st December 1974. “The mistakes made in our current cities like Dar es Salaam, where its inhabitants rely on foodstuff imported from other regions, must not be repeated in Dodoma.”¹⁷⁶ Not surprisingly, those who drafted the 1976 Dodoma Master Plan had to make sure that the capital aligned with the *ujamaa* philosophy of promoting rural development.¹⁷⁷ The idea was by and large to build a “man-centred city”, which would be in touch with the national policy of socialism and self-reliance.¹⁷⁸ The concept of self-reliance, for example, was incorporated in the Master Plan by setting aside *shamba* spaces.¹⁷⁹ By the early 1970s, Dodoma was the most prosperous region in terms of *villagization*.¹⁸⁰ In keeping with *Ujamaa*’s doctrine of equality, residential areas in Dodoma were expected to accommodate different types of

¹⁷² Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital,” pp.2, 4; Davis Mwamfupe. “Urban Expansion and Population Displacement: A Case Study of the Peri-Urban Zone of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.” *Tanzania Journal of Population Studies and Development*, Vol.4 No.2 (1997), p.82.

¹⁷³ Christopher, “Continuity and Change”, p.52.

¹⁷⁴ Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, pp.4-5.

¹⁷⁵ For the statistics see Brennan and Burton, “The Emerging Metropolis”, p.59.

¹⁷⁶ Simon Ng’hwaya, “Ujenzi wa Makao Makuu ni Rasilimali Dodoma”, *Uhuru*, No.3201, 21st December 1974, p.5.

¹⁷⁷ CDA, “National Capital Master Plan Dodoma, Tanzania: Technical Supplement No.4”, April, 1976, p.196.

¹⁷⁸ Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, p.11.

¹⁷⁹ CDA, “National Capital Master Plan Dodoma”, p.198.

¹⁸⁰ Unknown Reporter, “Wagogo Waanzisha Vijiji vya Ujamaa”, *Ukulima wa Kisasa Tanzania*, No.195, September 1971, p.9; Unknown Reporter, “Vijiji vya Ujamaa”, *Ukulima wa Kisasa Tanzania*, No.204, 3rd June 1972, pp.8-9.

people.¹⁸¹ The idea was to avoid having settlements based on class or race, as in Dar es Salaam.¹⁸²

It is important at this juncture to explain the extent to which the concept of colonial legacy formed part of the debate on relocating the capital. TANU party leaders, particularly Nyerere, claimed that Dar es Salaam, whose urban history goes back to the era of Seyyid Majid (the Sultan of Zanzibar) before it came under the Germans and British, lacked a typical African urban image and identity. Its history and cultural legacy were considered to be influenced too much by the Arabs, Indians, Germans and British. Therefore, by siting the Tanzanian capital in Dodoma it was hoped that the characteristics of the colonial legacy of Dar es Salaam would no longer dominate. Brennan and Burton wrote “The legacy of colonial rule remains abundantly clear in contemporary Dar es Salaam”, which is manifested in its architecture, monuments, street layout and settlement patterns.¹⁸³

During Majid’s era (1862-1870), Dar es Salaam, which formerly consisted of Mzizima, Msasani and Kunduchi villages, was politically linked with Zanzibar. However, with the death of Seyyid Majid in 1870, the town lost its political tie with Zanzibar and continued to grow, albeit slowly.¹⁸⁴ Following coastal resistance in the late 19th century, it was captured by the Germans, who in January 1891 declared it the capital of the then *Deutsch Ostafrika*.¹⁸⁵ The Germans constructed modern buildings, introduced a new administration and established racially-based settlements. By the early 20th century, the town exhibited an impressive image of German imperialism, both physically and

¹⁸¹ CDA, “National Capital Master Plan Dodoma”, pp.197-198.

¹⁸² James R. Brennan. *TAIFA: Making Nation and Race in Urban Tanzania* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2012), p.31. At independence, settlements in Dar es Salaam were divided into High density areas for Africans, Medium density areas for Indians and Low-density areas for colonial administrators. See Mtei, “Town Planning”, p.180.

¹⁸³ Brennan and Burton, “Introduction”, p.4.

¹⁸⁴ Andrew Burton. *African Underclass: Urbanisation, Crime & Colonial Order in Dar es Salaam* (London: The British Institute in East Africa, 2005).p.44.

¹⁸⁵ Bernad Calas. *From Dar es Salaam to Bongoland: Urban Mutations in Tanzania* (Paris: Karthala, 1998).p.31.

symbolically.¹⁸⁶ It survived the Maji Maji skirmishes without any recorded destruction of its buildings concentrated along the harbour.¹⁸⁷ The outbreak of the First World War led to bombardment by the British Navy of the German Wireless Tower, part of the Railway Station and the former Government House.¹⁸⁸

The British took over the capital after the war without changing its physical setting, but as a matter of necessity, they set about a major symbolic transformation of the city soon after. For example, the British removed the von Wissmann monument and replaced it with the Askari Monument.¹⁸⁹ Other monuments involved included the bust of Bismarck, the statue of Carl Peters and the Kaiser Wilhelm I memorial.¹⁹⁰ German streets were renamed, with the result that twenty six of them had been renamed by 1920.¹⁹¹

The foregoing imperial legacy partly explains why TANU raised the banner high, supporting the move to Dodoma. There is clear evidence that Nyerere himself did not like Dar es Salaam and its huge State House, which was rebuilt by the British in 1922 after the former German palace was bombarded during the First World War.¹⁹² According to William Smith, “Nyerere had never liked the place [the State House], and referred to it privately as [his] prison, [...] he never wanted to live there”.¹⁹³ His dislike of the State House notwithstanding, he cheered up his audience soon after he was sworn in as the first President of Tanganyika: “you have taken me to that big German house and I have had

¹⁸⁶ See, for example, Juhani Koponen. *Development for Exploitation: German Colonial Policies in Mainland Tanzania, 1884-1914* (Finland: Finish Historical Society, 1994), p.183; Gideon S.Were and A. Wilson. *East Africa through a Thousand Years: A History of the Years A.D.1000 to the Present Day* (London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1968), p.237; R.F. Eberlie. “The German Achievement in East Africa,” *TNR*, No.55 (1960), p.202.

¹⁸⁷ John Iliffe. *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp.193-194; Richard Reusch D.D. *History of East Africa* (Hamburg: Evang. Missionverlage, 1954), p.323.

¹⁸⁸ Gardner, *German East*, pp.114-115; Judith Listowel. *The Making of Tanganyika* (London: Chatto and Windus Ltd, 1965), p.55; James R. Brennan and Andrew Burton. “The Emerging Metropolis: A History of Dar es Salaam, circa 1862-2000”, in James R. Brennan, Andrew Burton and Yusufu Lawi. *Dar es Salaam: Histories from an Emerging African Metropolis* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2007), p.29.

¹⁸⁹ Michael Perraudin and Juergen Zimmerer (eds.). *German Colonialism and National Identity* (London: Routledge, 2011), p.4.

¹⁹⁰ F.S. Joelson. *Germany's Claims to Colonies* (London: Hurst & Blackett, LTD, 1939), p.114.

¹⁹¹ The Tanganyika Territory: Official Gazette, Vol. I., No.35, 4th October 1920, p.209.

¹⁹² W.T. Casson. “Architectural Notes on Dar es Salaam.” *TNR*, No.71 (1970), p.182.

¹⁹³ William Edgett Smith. *Nyerere of Tanzania* (UK: Random House, 1973), p. 23.

a good sleep there”.¹⁹⁴ However, Nyerere’s negative feelings concerning the colonial concept of a state house were personal, not TANU’s attitude, but it can certainly be argued that the decision to relocate the capital was partly grounded on what the British High Commissioner in Dar es Salaam referred to as *African authenticity*, the ardent supporter of which was Nyerere himself.¹⁹⁵ He wrote:

...doubtless more important in the President’s mind is the fact that, where even the name Dar es Salaam is not African but Arabic, Dodoma is wholly African, owing nothing to Portuguese, Arabs, Indians, Germans, British or other rapacious intruders. So, the move is in some sense an African gesture, a return to “authenticity”, and the nationalistic motive...¹⁹⁶

Thus, apart from its central position, Dodoma was “a microcosm of the history of Tanzania”.¹⁹⁷ According to President Nyerere, the main reason for relocating the capital to Dodoma was its central position; the rest were advantages that could be derived from moving the capital to Dodoma.¹⁹⁸ With an average distance of 300 miles from all edges of the country, Nyerere was convinced that Dodoma would be “the logical location of a capital or administrative centre,” which would “prevent the country becoming over centralized around Dar es Salaam”.¹⁹⁹ Thus, although geographical and political factors contributed to TANU’s decision to move the capital to Dodoma, it was supported by President Nyerere’s conception of national identity and colonial legacy.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ NA, No.FCO 31/1559/JET/8, Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London to British High Commissioner, Dar es Salaam, 7th November, 1973.

¹⁹⁶ NA, No. FCO 31/1559/1/15, British High Commissioner Dar es Salaam to The Right Honourable, 20th October 1973.

¹⁹⁷ Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, p.2.

¹⁹⁸ Parliament of the Republic of Tanzania, Hansard, September-October 1973, p.494.

¹⁹⁹ NA, FCO 31/1559/JET 1/8, “The New Capital of Tanzania, 20th October 1973; NA, FCO 31/1559/1/10, “Nyerere Chooses Dodoma,” *The Guardian*, 4th October 1973.

In Tanzania, as elsewhere in Africa, attempts were made to erase the colonial urban legacy after independence.²⁰⁰ In Dodoma, the Town Planners were instructed to build a capital which “symbolize[d] the essence of Tanzania both to its own people and to the outside world”.²⁰¹ The Capital Development Authority (CDA) blueprint stated explicitly: “The city would be a home and not a monument”.²⁰² These nationalistic views were not without criticisms. J. Ngolela, for instance, criticized the Tanzanian and Malawian governments for their decision to “forsake well established existing capitals for raw, poor and incompetent centers” for mere national pride.²⁰³ In 1993, *The Express* reported of Tanzanians who complained about the cost incurred by the government “to turn a tiny, dry and dusty [Dodoma] town into the country’s capital.”²⁰⁴

6.0 The Process and Challenges of Relocation: From Nyerere to the Magufuli Era

Implementation of the Dodoma capital project started by setting up administrative machinery for that purpose. On 5th October 1973, the Ministry of Capital Development or The Ministry for the Affairs of the Capital was established, and the next day it was placed under Chief Adam Sapi Mkwawa. Mr. Machumba became the Principal Secretary. This Ministry, with headquarters in Dodoma, was placed under the Minister of State in the President’s Office, which was then under Peter Siyovelwa.²⁰⁵ CDA was placed under George C. Kahama.²⁰⁶ It consisted of an eight-man Board of Directors: The Director General (George C. Kahama), The Chairman (Chief Adam Sapi Mkwawa) and The Regional Commissioner of Dodoma (Mr. J.W.Kihampa). Others were the Minister of Commerce and Industries; the Minister of Finance; the Minister of Economic Affairs and

²⁰⁰ See, for example, Terence Ranger. “The Politics of Memorialisation in Zimbabwe”, in Susana Carvahlo and Francois Gemenne (eds.). *Nations and their Histories: Constructions and their Representations* (UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.64.

²⁰¹ CDA, “National Capital Master Plan Dodoma”, p.193.

²⁰² Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, p.8.

²⁰³ J. Ngolela as quoted by Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, p.23.

²⁰⁴ Edna Ndejemi, “Twenty Years After: How Close are to Dodoma?” *The Express*, No.088, October 10-13, 1993, p.8.

²⁰⁵ Unknown Reporter, “Dodoma Yapewa Wizara”, *Mfanyakazi*, No.351, 6th October 1973, p.1.

²⁰⁶ Cameron McNamara, “Strategic Plan for the Development of the National Capital Dodoma, Tanzania: A Review of the National Capital Plan: Plan Objectives, Strategies and Recommendations”, volume 3, June 1988, p.1.

Development Planning; the Minister of Communications and Works and the Minister of Housing and Urban Development.²⁰⁷

The immediate tasks of CDA were to select the site, prepare the Master Plan, and supervise implementation of the transfer.²⁰⁸ CDA was at the same time expected to (1) make plans for the development of Dodoma, (2) transform it into a capital, (3) advise the government on how to transfer its offices to Dodoma, (4) make sure that land and other immovable property were acquired for the purpose, and (5) facilitate and organize transfers to Dodoma.²⁰⁹ The first ten-year phase of moving the capital was expected to cost 3,710 million Tanzania shillings, equivalent to £220 million.²¹⁰ It was hoped that “if Tanzania was undisturbed for 10 years”, the capital would move to Dodoma by 1984.²¹¹ However, the costs involved in this project raised doubts and objections from some people and institutions. For example, a British Diplomat questioned: “the total is alarming, who is going to pay, and is it worth it?”²¹² The Diplomat continued:

...the President claims that costs are less than most people supposed; he says it is a matter of people, not of buildings. If need be, he would have Ministers, Government and party up at Dodoma in next to no time housed in caravans or barracks, and the National Assembly in session under a baobab tree. He does not dream of towered cities; he would not be much distressed if the new capital turns out to be a modest *kraal*, provided only that it is full of happy, co-operative and equal Africans; for small is beautiful.²¹³

²⁰⁷ NA, FCO 31/15559/JET 1/8, “The New Capital of Tanzania,” Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 20th October 1973.

²⁰⁸ NA, FCO 31/15559/ME/4418/B/3, 8th October 1973; Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital,” p.15.

²⁰⁹ NA, FCO 31/15559/5/28.

²¹⁰ NA, FCO 31/15559/JET 1/8, “The New Capital of Tanzania”, 20th October 1973.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² NA, FCO 31/15559/1/15, “British High Commissioner, Dar es Salaam”, 20th October 1973.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

It appears that the President could not allow the question of cost to deter TANU from transferring the capital. He seconded most of the comments made by MPs that the cost of building a new Parliament or Party headquarters was unavoidable, even in the absence of the Dodoma project.²¹⁴

In December 1973, PPA started surveying the sites.²¹⁵ The three sites of Ihunwa (12 miles from Dodoma), Hombolo (23 miles) and Dodoma town were recommended.²¹⁶ A two-day meeting held by CDA chose Dodoma town as the ideal site.²¹⁷ In August 1974, CDA contracted PPA to develop the Master Plan.²¹⁸ The Plan was completed and approved in 1976.²¹⁹ Although it was agreed that the Plan would be reviewed every five years, it was not until 1988 that the second review took place.²²⁰ The third review was due in 1992.²²¹

The transfer was planned to start by moving 40% of the central government from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma between 1976 and 1988 and the remaining 60% in the next five years.²²² However, in February 1981 it dawned on those involved that such a plan was bound to fail.²²³ The Master Plan faced implementation challenges.²²⁴ CDA was forced to seek technical support from The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) to review the Plan. From 1987 to 1988, the UNCHS sent Cameron McNamara Pty Ltd. from Australia for that purpose.²²⁵ A number of changes to the Plan were suggested. It is not the intention of this paper to give details of the recommendations made. Suffice it to say that the Plan was improved in the areas of housing, engineering, infrastructure,

²¹⁴ "Tanzania to Move Capital", *Financial Times*, 2nd October 1973.

²¹⁵ Mesaki, "The Conception and Building of the New National Capital", p.9.

²¹⁶ Simon Ng'hwaya, "Makao Makuu: Sehemu Tatu Zependekewa kwa Ujenzi", *Uhuru*, No.3170, 13th November 1974, p.1.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*

²¹⁸ N.O.E.Nkya, "Solve Dodoma Water Supply Problem", Letters to the Editor, *Sunday News*, No.3006, 1st September 1991, p.4.

²¹⁹ Mesaki, "The Conception and Building of the New National Capital", p.9; *Sunday News*, No.3006.

²²⁰ *Sunday News*, No.3006.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² Mesaki, "The Conception and Building of the New National Capital", p.15.

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ McNamara, "Strategic Plan", vo. 3, p.3.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.1.

transportation and land use.²²⁶ With the new Plan, objectives were set to ensure that the transfer of the capital was “carried out in a planned, economic and orderly manner”.²²⁷ The role of the capital was clearly defined: “to develop the national capital as the centre of interaction and communication, for the political legislature, cultural, administrative, foreign affairs and commercial business”.²²⁸ To achieve this, it was recommended that buildings for ministries, Parliament and CCM’s headquarters should be constructed immediately.²²⁹ In January 1991, the construction of CCM’s Headquarters on Chimwaga Hill was already underway and was due to be completed by July 1992.²³⁰

The cultural image of the capital was given serious attention by the new Master Plan, which encouraged the construction of cultural facilities such as monuments and “buildings of national importance”.²³¹ The concept of cultural image implied anything physical or social that was in line with the promotion of national identity and culture.²³² Things like “a conference centre, religious centres, a national stadium, a market, hotels and a number of commercial and recreational facilities” were to be concentrated in the centre of the capital.²³³ In response to this demand, CDA spent more than 195 million shillings constructing a new market, *Majengo Market*, between 1985 and 1991.²³⁴ As regards monuments, in 2000 CDA erected the Nyerere Square with a life-sized statue of President Nyerere in the heart of Dodoma.²³⁵

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.3.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.2.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.4.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

²³⁰ John Kulekana, “Kolimba Inspects Party Building”, *Daily News*, No.3459, 22nd February 1991, p.5.

²³¹ McNamara, “Strategic Plan”, vol.3, p.4.

²³² *Ibid.*, p.4.

²³³ Mesaki, “The Conception and Building of the New National Capital”, p.12.

²³⁴ Revocatus Makaranga, “Soko Jipya Mjini Dodoma Kuanza Kutumika Machi”, *Mzalendo*, No. 1027, 13th January 199, p.2.

²³⁵ The information provided here is based on the information available at the site. The site was officially opened by Frederick T. Sumaye, the then Prime Minister of the Republic of Tanzania.

Like similar projects elsewhere in Africa, the Tanzanian capital project was constrained by lack of finance, which prolonged its accomplishment.²³⁶ The Kagera War of 1978/79 and the economic crisis of the 1980s complicated the move.²³⁷ These events worsened the economy, thus inflating the cost of the capital relocation project.²³⁸ The government had to battle for alternative sources of funds but to no effect.²³⁹ In attempting to solicit funds for the project, it consulted The Arab Bank for Economic Development of Africa, The African Development Bank, *Bank di Sicilia* of Italy, Industrial Bank of India, *Girozentrale und Bank* of Austria, The Tanzania Investment Bank and Tanzania Housing Bank.²⁴⁰ Pius Msekwa reminisced that three major factors were brought to bear on the failure to relocate the capital within the period planned.²⁴¹ First was the Kagera War which drained the government's financial resources. Second was the collapse of the former East African Community, which forced the government to divert its resources to projects affected by the break-up. Third was the oil crisis of the 1980s, which adversely impacted the value of the currency.

Serious efforts were made to move the capital during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The new plan after the oil crisis was to move five important ministries to Dodoma between 1988 and 1993.²⁴² Although nothing of this kind had taken place by the early 1990s, efforts had been made to move the parliament to Dodoma. Parliamentary meetings, which were formerly held in Dar es Salaam, had already started in Dodoma. These meetings took

²³⁶ Mesaki, "The Conception and Building of the New National Capital", pp.15-16.

²³⁷ ippmedia.com, "Magufuli Kuhamia Dodoma," last accessed on 30th October 2017.

²³⁸ Mesaki, "The Conception and Building of the New National Capital", p.16.

²³⁹ Christopher, "Continuity and Change", p.52.

²⁴⁰ *The Express*, No.088, October 10-13, 1993, p.8.

²⁴¹ Pius Msekwa as interviewed by Kizitto Noya, "Pius Msekwa Aibua Siri ya Kuhamia Dodoma", <http://jambo-leo.blogspot.com/2016/08/pius-msekwa-aibua-siri-ya-kuhamia-dodoma.html>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

²⁴² Markus Mpangala. "Miaka 42 Serikali Imefeli Mkakati Wake Dodoma", 28th April 2016, <http://www.rai.co.tz/miaka-42-serikali-imefeli-mkakati-wake-dodoma/>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

place in CCM Hall beginning in 1974 and by the 1980s were held in Pius Msekwa's Hall.²⁴³ They are currently held in the new parliamentary building.

As the government gradually established itself in Dodoma, it confronted the challenge of having civil servants migrating to the new capital. By the early 1990s, a large number of government servants had established themselves in Dar es Salaam and frowned at the thought of moving to Dodoma. Senior government officials found themselves at loggerheads with these civil servants over the government's instructions to move. For example, the then Prime Minister-cum-Vice President, John Malecela, was furious with these officials and issued a verbal warning which hit the headlines. On 16th July 1991, *Uhuru* published one such warning with the title: "*Kuhamia Dodoma ni Lazima*", loosely translated "*Moving to Dodoma is Mandatory*."²⁴⁴ In this article, Malecela warned those who remained adamantly opposed to the move that their offices would be moved with or without them.²⁴⁵ In December 1991, he instructed that all records of his office should be moved from Dar es Salaam to his new office in Dodoma, and he demanded that henceforth all correspondence be sent to his new office.²⁴⁶

The foregoing pronouncements were met with a good deal of criticism by the media, particularly the newspapers. One of the counter-arguments was that Dodoma was too underdeveloped to attract people to live there.²⁴⁷ A similar backlash against the move to Dodoma was witnessed in 1993, when the government announced it would transfer 6 out of 25 ministers from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma in twenty years. The critics mocked the announcement, arguing that the process would take too many years to finish and the only

²⁴³ Parliament of Tanzania, "Lijue Bunge la Tanzania",

[https://www.parliament.go.tz/uploads/documents/publications/en/1481626675-](https://www.parliament.go.tz/uploads/documents/publications/en/1481626675-LIJUE%20BUNGE%20LAKO%20final.pdf)

[LIJUE%20BUNGE%20LAKO%20final.pdf](https://www.parliament.go.tz/uploads/documents/publications/en/1481626675-LIJUE%20BUNGE%20LAKO%20final.pdf), last accessed on 2nd April 2020. CCM stands for Chama cha Mapinduzi.

²⁴⁴ Unknown Report, "Kuhamia Dodoma ni Lazima – Malecela", *Uhuru*, 16th July 1991, No.8770, p.1.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁶ Emmanuel Mimbi, "Malecela Aagiza Wakuu Kuhamia Dodoma Haraka", *Mzalendo*, No.1064, 29th September 1991, p.1.

²⁴⁷ Munga Tehenan, "Kuhamia Dodoma Nishai", *Mzalendo*, No.1061, 8th September 1991, p.9.

solution they gave was for the government to call the whole thing off.²⁴⁸ “All the ministers and the president himself love Dar es Salaam. They use Dodoma offices when they visit there”, *The Express* reported.²⁴⁹ The same broadsheet concluded, “no Tanzanian has complained that he or she was under-represented simply because the capital was in Dar es Salaam”.²⁵⁰

Already in the period between April and July 1991 a special committee, chaired by Malecela, had been formed to advise the President on matters of relocation, which had met twice.²⁵¹ In January, President Ali Hassan Mwinyi issued a statement urging government institutions to build houses in Dodoma for their employees.²⁵² The lack of housing and water discouraged civil servants from migrating to Dodoma.²⁵³ Malecela complained that these were lame excuses, for almost all regions in Tanzania faced similar challenges.²⁵⁴ Efforts were made to overcome the challenge of housing. For example, apart from several construction projects under CDA, the National Provident Fund (NPF) launched the construction of “252 housing units in Area D” in September 1991.²⁵⁵

Campaigns for the capital relocation project escalated in the 1990s, as well as the objections against it. A reporter associated with *The Guardian* wrote in 1999, “the Dodoma phenomenon is fast becoming forgotten history”.²⁵⁶ He likened the move to Dodoma to “a ghost by [then] growing horns.”²⁵⁷ Seeing no hope of its success, he made a sarcastic comment, “A small American town will probably have been built on the Moon

²⁴⁸ *The Express*, No.088, October 10-13, 1993, p.8.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ *Mzalendo*, No.1061, 8th September 1991, p.9.

²⁵² Revocatus Makaranga, “Mwinyi Ahimiza Taasisi Kujenga Nyumba Dodoma”, *Uhuru*, 23rd January 1991, No.8621, p.5.

²⁵³ See, for example, Musalali Musambili, “Dodoma Receives Daily Insufficient Water”, *Daily News*, No.3592, 1st August 1991, p.4; *Sunday News*, No.3006, 1st September 1991, p.4.

²⁵⁴ *Mzalendo*, No.1064, 29th September 1991, p.1.

²⁵⁵ Musa Luputu, “NPF Builds 252 Houses in Dodoma”, *Sunday News*, No.3010, 22nd September 1991, p.1.

²⁵⁶ Walusanga Ndaki, “Move-to-Dodoma Ghost Becomes Increasingly Dreadful”, *The Guardian*, No.1440, 16th July 1999, p.8.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

before Bongo's capital moves to Dodoma".²⁵⁸ However, the pendulum swung back in favour of the same 'forgotten history' or 'ghost' in July 2016, when President John Pombe Magufuli vowed to move to Dodoma by 2020.²⁵⁹ All ministries were required to have transferred their departments and employees to Dodoma by June 2020.²⁶⁰ The Prime Minister, Kassim Majaliwa, showed the way by transferring his office to Dodoma on 26th September 2016.²⁶¹ By March 2017, all ministers and their deputies, including 2,069 civil servants, had already moved to Dodoma.²⁶² The number of civil servants who had moved to Dodoma had reached 2,346 by the end of the year.²⁶³ On 12th October 2019, President Magufuli officially announced that he would move to Dodoma.²⁶⁴ But what made this long awaited transfer possible? There are three possible explanations in my opinion. First, there have been renewed efforts by the government to revamp projects of national interest. Secondly, although the transfer process that began in 1974 was gradual and faced a number of challenges, it reached its peak in the last decade. By that time, a number of projects necessary for establishment of the capital had been accomplished, including, for example, the construction of the University of Dodoma, a huge achievement by President Kikwete's government. Thirdly, the complete transfer of the capital was expected to reduce the government's administrative costs.²⁶⁵

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ "Rais Magufuli Atangaza Kuhamia Dodoma Rasmi", <https://www.bbc.com/swahili/habari-50033713>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020; Sabato Kasika, "Hii Ndiyo Safari Ya Miaka 40 Kuhamia Dodoma", 3rd August 2016, <https://www.ippmedia.com/sw/safu/hii-ndiyo-safari-ya-miaka-40-kuhamia-jijini-dodoma>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

²⁶⁰ "Ratiba ya Serikali Kuhamia Dodoma", 22nd September 2016, <http://www.jamhurimedia.co.tz/ratiba-ya-serikali-kuhamia-dodoma/>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

²⁶¹ <https://www.bbc.com/swahili/habari-50033713>, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

²⁶² "JPM: Nimekaribia Kuhamia Dodoma", <https://www.habarileo.co.tz/habari/jpm-nimekaribia-kuhamia-dodoma.aspx>, last accessed on 5th April 2020; "Achana na Dr.Magufuli, Mawaziri Waanza Kufunga Vilago Kuhamia

Dodoma", http://www.archivioradiovaticana.va/storico/2016/07/25/achana_na_dr_magufuli_mawaziri_waanza_kufunga_vilago_kuhamia_dodoma/sw-1246486, last accessed on 5th April 2020.

²⁶³ Valentine Oforo, "UN Opens Offices in Dodoma", Online Citizen Newspaper, www.thecitizen.co.tz, last cited on 8th December 2017.

²⁶⁴ "Rais Magufuli Atangaza Kuhamia Mji wa Dodoma", 13th October 2019, https://parstoday.com/sw/news/africa-i56586-rais_magufuli_atangaza_kuhamia_katika_mji_wa_dodoma, last accessed on 2nd April 2020.

²⁶⁵ "Kuhamia Dodoma ni Kuwakomboa Walipa Kodi", *Rai*, 28th July 2016.

7.0 Conclusion

This paper has traced the idea of relocating the capital in the last one hundred and sixteen years of the history of Tanzania Mainland. The paper has shown that the colonialists wanted to move the capital inland from the coast, but could not do so due to warfare and financial constraints. Although the idea of relocation lingered for years after independence, it became increasingly vocal in the early 1970s. There were, in my view, three fundamental reasons for TANU's decision to move to Dodoma. First, the Dar es Salaam model of urbanization, especially its disengagement from agriculture, was thought to contradict TANU's policy of socialism, which encouraged rural development. The second equally important reason and closely connected to the above was President Nyerere's desire to leave Dar es Salaam, the history and cultural legacy of which largely glorified foreign cultural influence. The third reason was the central location of Dodoma which appealed to TANU's officials, who argued that it was strategic for the country's administration and security. The TANU government was optimistic that the process of moving the capital would take ten years, but the odds were against them. The oil crisis, which paralleled the Kagera War, affected the progress of the project. As the country slowly recovered from the economic downturn and, despite the opposition of the public, efforts were made to resume the project. This paper has reminded us that as we celebrate the achievement of moving the capital to Dodoma, we should bear in mind that the achievement did not happen overnight.