

# Politics on the Growth and Development of the Agricultural Marketing Co-operatives in Tanganyika, c. 1920s -1930s

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## **Abstract**

*This article examines the politics and passage of the co-operative legislation in 1932 that led to the suffocation and eventual strangulation of the Kilimanjaro Native Planters Association (KNPA). In Kilimanjaro, Agricultural Marketing Co-operatives (AMCOs) were registered from 1933 onwards to market coffee. This similarly happened in Ngara District and Ruvuma Region. In Kilimanjaro, the colonial authorities as a whole were responsible for the introduction of AMCOs while in Ngara and Ruvuma the AMCOs were promoted by local colonial officials. In other parts of the country, senior colonial officials deprived support and undermined emerging interests for co-operatives. Additionally, the Registrar's efforts to promote co-operatives was undermined. Consequently, limited development of co-operative undertakings was evident in the territory during interwar years including in areas that produced cash crops. Generally, the promotion of AMCOs lacked central coordination. Political interests dominated the decisions regarding the promotion of AMCOs.*

**Key Words:** Tanganyika, co-operatives, colonial politics, Kilimanjaro, agricultural marketing.

## 1. Introduction

Co-operative movements and societies are not new in human history. The modern types of co-operative societies were first created under the rules guided by the Rochdale Society Equitable Pioneers and Germany's Raiffeisen that were set up across Europe from mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The Rochdale Pioneers established consumer co-operatives in Britain that supplied consumer goods and services to its members at reasonable prices. Raiffeisen promoted the credit co-operative societies in Germany in response to the failure of formal financial institutions to provide loans to farmers and urban artisans.<sup>1</sup> According to historians Rita Rhodes, Margaret Digby and C.F. Strickland, the success of co-operatives in Western Europe influenced the formation of similar organisations in the Northern and Southern America, Scandinavian and Eastern European countries.<sup>2</sup> The British Empire, with colonies across continents, facilitated the establishment of various types of co-operatives in her colonies. One of the earliest British attempts to promote co-operatives in her colonies took place in India where credit co-operative societies were established in 1904 to address the problem of rural poverty and control exorbitant interest rates charged

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<sup>1</sup> Somo M.L Seimu. "The Growth and Development of Coffee and Cotton Marketing Co-operative Societies in Tanzania, c. 1932 – 1982" (University of Central Lancashire, PhD thesis, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Rita Rhodes. *Empire and Co-operation: How the British Empire used Co-operatives in its Development Strategies 1900 – 1990* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2012); Margaret Digby. *The World Co-operative Movement* (London: Hutchinson and Company Limited, 1960); C.F. Strickland. *Co-operation in the Colonies* (London: George Allen and Unwin Co. Ltd., 1945).

by money lenders to small-scale farmers in rural localities.<sup>3</sup> Afterwards, similar co-operatives were formed for same reason in other Asian British colonies of Malaysia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka.

In African colonies, Britain promoted and encouraged farming of both food and cash crops at peasant and settler levels. The crop production in the colonial era targeted the external markets. In Tanganyika, now Tanzania, when Britain took over the territory from the Germans in 1918, they adopted a pro-small-scale growers' policy that contributed to the production of food crops like rice and maize as well as cash crops for industrial raw materials such as cotton and coffee. Put precisely, the British put the peasantry sector and its interests at the expense of settler sector. As a result, the cultivation of export crops by native peasants represented an important and long-established economic activity during the British colonial period since it was the main cash resource for small-scale growers. The export crop farming extensively promoted peasant agricultural development and integrated them into the global export market.

Britain had several colonies in Africa where the European settlers in Zimbabwe, Kenya and South Africa.<sup>4</sup> The settler communities in mentioned countries formed agricultural marketing co-operatives to facilitate or bulk their agricultural produce and marketing as well as credit co-

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<sup>3</sup> Digby, *The World of Co-operative Movement*.

<sup>4</sup> Rhodes, *Empire and Co-operation*.

operative societies which provided them with financial services such as soft loans with low interests to its members.<sup>5</sup> However, before the First World War, no attempt was made to promote agricultural co-operatives among the majority colonized natives in British colonies in Africa. Even the Germans who had preceded the British in colonial control of Tanganyika had not promoted rise of African marketing and financial co-operatives. Thus, when the British took over the territory, they introduced some policy changes in favour of the natives engaged in peasant production. However, as it will be shown below, the policy had deeper underlying objectives: to exert control over peasantry and their produce.

This article explores the colonial authority in Tanganyika concerted efforts in promotion of the agricultural marketing societies (AMCOs) in various parts of the territory. The paper traces the initiatives directed to formation of AMCOs. The papers established that such initiatives were not consistent from one district to the other and none of the existing literature has examined or assessed the factors that led to these myriad geographical differentiations in the development of the movement in the country and timing of the emergence of co-operatives.

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<sup>5</sup> Strickland, *Co-operation in the Colonies*, 38.

The AMCOs were formed as a political expediency to undermine the existing growers' associations like the Kilimanjaro Native Planters Association (KNPA), which appeared too ambitious and possibly a threat to the colonial interests. Having judged the KNPA as troublesome and incompetent organisation, the colonial officials at varied times and levels planned for its control by using various mechanisms. The critical mechanism in this regard was promulgation of the co-operative legislation in 1932.

However, there was inconsistency in promotion of AMCOs which was embedded in either lack of strong policy or lack of strong interest from the colonial officials. Some colonial officials, for instance, employed powers at their disposal to undermine any attempt from the Registrar of Co-operatives, local chiefs, growers or other stakeholders to establish AMCOs.

Upon passage of the co-operative legislation, it was envisioned the AMCOs and other types of co-operatives would be promoted. This was however contrary to expectations and a commitment made by Tanganyika's colonial authority to the Colonial Office (CO) in London. It is evident that there was a contestation in theory and practice between the local colonial authorities in Tanganyika and the imperial authorities in London. Following the formation and registration of AMCOs in Moshi district, inactivity prevailed in most other parts of the territory. However, some colonial officials in some districts made

some steps that were independent from the territorial colonial officials in Dar es Salaam. In these, officials at district and provincial level had to raise funds to accomplish the exercise. Disappointingly, the Registrar was rendered useless in effective his duties and responsibility, hence, during the 1920s and 1930s the AMCOs footprint in the country was limited to few pockets.

Generally, developments in most parts of the country were marred by uncertainties of which Lord Hailey describes such scenarios as 'hesitation approach'.<sup>6</sup> However, Lord Harley has not provided evidence or an account for such hesitation. Moreover, in 1944 the CO appointed Mr. W.K.H. Campbell to investigate the possibilities for co-operative development in East African countries. In his report on Tanzania Campbell identified six key factors that led to the slow progress.<sup>7</sup> First, shortage of co-operative staff; secondly, the KNPA experience; third, nervousness created by the 1937 coffee riots in Kilimanjaro; fourth, the inability of growers to manage societies; and sixth fears among the colonial officials that co-operatives would interfere with the Native Authorities' affairs. Basically, issues raised by Campbell were unsubstantiated and he did not point a finger to obstruction

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<sup>6</sup> Lord Hailey. *An African Survey: A Study of Problems Arising in Africa South of Sahara* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), 1467.

<sup>7</sup> W.K.H. Campbell's Report of Visit to Tanganyika, July 29<sup>th</sup> 1944, TNA 35783.

by the colonial officials. Against the backdrop, this paper attempts to fill the gap by providing new findings that demonstrates a double standard applied by colonial officials in the promotion of the AMCOs in Tanzania during interwar years.

The historians and social scientists Rohland Schuknecht, P. Hibbeln and Goran Hydén presented their own version regarding this development of co-operatives by suggesting that the emergence of the KNPA and other indigenous initiatives was driven by the communal traditions of African societies.<sup>8</sup> They invoked elements of precolonial African egalitarian principles which were also used by Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania to justify Ujamaa – African socialism.<sup>9</sup> John Iliffe's *A Modern History of Tanganyika* is a comprehensive and fully-documented history of Tanzania from 1800 to 1961 about the social, political and economic history of some ethnic groups' pre-colonial as well as the German and British colonial histories in the country.<sup>10</sup> Iliffe

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<sup>8</sup> Rohland Schuknecht. *British Colonial Development Policy After the Second World War: The case of Sukumaland, Tanganyika* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2010), 274; P. J. Hibbeln. "A Sacred Trust of Civilization: The B Mandates Under Britain, France, and The League of Nations' Permanent Mandates Commission, 1919-1939" (Ohio State University, PhD Thesis, 2002); Goran Hydén. *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 64.

<sup>9</sup> See in Julius K. Nyerere, *Freedom and Socialism* (Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968)

<sup>10</sup> John Iliffe. *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

has produced a well-documented history of the KNPA. However, Iliffe does not establish the reasons for its replacement and how the process was carried out.<sup>11</sup> Before Iliffe's work, Charlotte Leibuscher had attempted an explanation of the KNPA's intervention to have mainly resulted from financial difficulties and misappropriation of funds. The colonial state used the two reasons to restructure KNPA.<sup>12</sup> Not said Leibuscher is the hidden fear of the colonial state over KNPA's political activism that inherently triggered the promulgation of the co-operative legislation and consequential restructuring of the KNPA. Of course,

Andrew Coulson work in Tanzania covers political and economic development during pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial period.<sup>13</sup> Interestingly, Coulson work covers AMCOs during colonial era. In his work, Coulson provides some explanations about co-operatives in Kilimanjaro and the rest of the country. A review of his work has established that, Coulson is salient over how and why the KNPA was 'restructured' into the KNCU.<sup>14</sup> A linkage between the co-operative legislation and registration of the KNCU and its affiliated societies is not established in the Coulson's work.

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Charlotte Leibuscher. *Tanganyika Territory: A study of Economic Policy under Mandate* (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), 51 – 53.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Coulson. *Tanzania: A Political Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

<sup>14</sup> Coulson, *ibid.*, 61-62.



Also, the development in Ngara and Songea districts are not provided.

Like Coulson and Illife, Ally Kimario's work provides a comprehensive narration of AMCOs in Tanzania.<sup>15</sup> However, there are limited details or analysis regarding the processes, policy linkages and development that led to the 'reorganisation' of the KNPA into KNCU in Kimario's account. There is also a lack of clear description on uneven development of the co-operative movement in the country. In her work, Rita Rhodes has ignored the contribution of Tanzania's colonial authority in the late 1920s and early 1930s in providing the Colonial Office the impetus for promoting co-operatives in the colonies.<sup>16</sup> She also fails to acknowledge that Tanzania was the first East African country to promulgate co-operative legislation in 1932. Under the legislation, the natives had their agricultural marketing co-operative registered and it was not so for the natives in the two East African countries of Kenya and Uganda. But she acknowledges that, by 1961 Tanzania was the most co-operative-minded country of all East and Central Africa countries (Kenya, Uganda and Zambia).<sup>17</sup> Spaul proved to struggle as some evidence that she has generated distortions,

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<sup>15</sup> Ally M. Kimario. *Marketing Cooperatives in Tanzania: Problems and Prospects* (Dar es Salam: Dar es Salaam University Press, 1992), 8-9.

<sup>16</sup> Rita Rhodes. *Empire and Co-operation: How the British Empire used Co-operatives in its Development Strategies 1900 - 1990* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2012).

<sup>17</sup> Hebe Spaul, *The Co-operative Movement in the World Today*, (London: Barrie Rockliff, 1965), 96.

misleads and contradicting for example development in Kagera region. Additionally, he presents a general picture that does not reflect political and policy decisions that led to the fragmented AMCOs developments during interwar period. It worthy to note that, colonial officials' decisions led to the differentiations in the co-operative development in Tanzania from one region or districts to the other where or the small-scale cash crops were encouraged to produce export at the same time that this paper takes an interest to fill the gap.

Gorst illuminates a brief but a comprehensive history of the co-operative movement in the British colonies.<sup>18</sup> Gorst illuminates a brief history of co-operative movement in several countries but she generalises development in Tanzania by highlighting the colonial policies, political decision, and the role of various stakeholders in promoting, formation and registration of co-operative societies. An attempt is made in her work to show the development not only in Asian countries but also in African countries. The coverage however falls short of the historical development. For example, the development that took place in Tanzania in 1920s and 1930s that this paper expands further by examining the colonial policies and political decisions associated with

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<sup>18</sup> Sheila Gorst. *Co-operative Organisation in Tropical Countries: A Study of Co-Operative Development in Non-Self-Governing Territories under the United Kingdom Administration* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1959), 165-182.

promotion or strangulation of the natives' embryonic co-operative organisations.

Work by Dubell, suggests that, the KNPA was self-reorganised and believed that, the KNCU was a breeding ground of the co-operative movement in Tanzania.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, Dubell is in denial of the fact that senior colonial officials in Tanzania retracted attempts or initiatives from various stakeholders such as crop growers, local chiefs, traders and importantly the Registrar of co-operative societies among many other. Such contention by Dubell is challenged in this paper by generating how the KNPA evolved and eventual strangulation to provide a space for colonial government favoured structure through a co-operative legislation to facilitate for the control of the growers and their coffee crop.

Sadleir who was the officer in the Co-operative Department has published a brief work about the history of the co-operative movement in Tanzania from 1925 to 1960.<sup>20</sup> Given his position in the Department, obviously he had access to primary evidence to the co-operative development in the country. In his book the author presents a brief attention given to the KNCU, Ngoni and Matengo Co-operative Union (NGOMAT), Bugufi Coffee Co-operative Society (BCCS),

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<sup>19</sup> F. Dubell. *Handbook on Co-operative Education* (Arusha: Tanzania Litho Limited, 1970), 7.

<sup>20</sup> R. Sadleir. *The Co-operative Movement in Tanganyika* (Dar es Salaam: Tanganyika Standard Printing Ltd., 1963).

Bukoba Co-operative Union (BCU), Rungwe Co-operative Union as well as, the Victoria Federation of Co-operative Unions (VFCUs).<sup>21</sup> However, Sadleir downplays the policy and political decisions, which prompted the colonial authority in Tanzania to promulgate the co-operative legislation. Furthermore, Sadleir has not provided an account as to why the promotion of the co-operative movement in Tanzania was characterised by uneven growth.

Digby discusses the agricultural co-operative movement in the commonwealth.<sup>22</sup> Her focus on Tanzania is predominantly two societies, the KNCU, NGOMAT but not Bugufi. Eckert emphasises that such a move is ‘from below’, even though the idea was imported from Europe.<sup>23</sup> She also maintains and refutes a contention that the British imposed the co-operative movement in Tanzania upon Africans. In illuminating a new understanding, this paper provides a cross-case analysis that offers not only comparability but also, a departure from generalisations and distortions, which are common in existing literature such one by Eckert.

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Margaret Digby. *Agricultural Co-operation in the Commonwealth* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953), 147-150.

<sup>23</sup> Andreas Eckert. “Useful Instruments of Participation? Local Government and Cooperatives in Tanzania, 1940s to 1970s.” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 40, No. 1, Continuities in Governance in Late Colonial and Early Postcolonial East Africa (2007), 97-118, URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40034792> Accessed on October 5th 2020.

In principle, this paper unlike other literature not only enlightens how the colonial authority in Tanzania was committed to limit and strangle the KNPA but also was characterised by inconsistent co-operative promotion policy that undermined the co-operative growth during 1920s and 1930s in many parts of the country regardless of the fact that growers were encouraged to growth cash crop at the same time as in Kilimanjaro, Ruvuma and Ngara. Nevertheless, a critical literature gap remains in the overall background regarding political and policy decisions that led to the promulgation of the co-operative legislation and the promotion of co-operatives during inter war years. Additionally, none of the existing literature has examined or assessed the factors that led to the geographical differentiations in the development of the co-operatives by assessing political, policy and legal factors that led to uneven development of agricultural marketing co-operatives in the country.

## **2. The Motivation behind Promotion of Co-operatives**

In the early 1920s, there were several members-based organisations which handled growers' crops of which most of them were not registered. But the colonial Department of Agriculture guided and provided supervision. Such arrangements were in place in Mahenge district for marketing rice and<sup>24</sup> the Native Growers Association in

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<sup>24</sup> Memorandum of the SNA on the Agricultural and Credit Co-operative Societies, TNA 13698.

Bukoba district for marketing coffee.<sup>25</sup> The settlers organised themselves under the Tanganyika Planters Association (TPA). The most popular small-scale growers' association was the Kilimanjaro Native Association (KNPA) which was registered in 1925 under the Indian 1912 Industrial and Provident Societies Act.

KNPA was not only the most popular and largest coffee growers' organisation in the territory. KNPA emerged out of friction with the colonial government in Tanganyika that championed and encouraged the natives on the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro and Pare Mountains, Arumeru district and as far as growers around Mount Kenya in Kenya.<sup>26</sup> KNPA emerged as a response to the settlers' challenge against the colonial authority support of small-scale growers to grow coffee which particularly intense from 1922 to 1925.<sup>27</sup> In extreme cases, the settlers threatened African growers that they would manoeuvre through the colonial authority to get them banned from growing coffee.<sup>28</sup> Such intimidations were

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<sup>25</sup> Seimu, "Growth and Development of Coffee and Cotton Marketing".

<sup>26</sup> P.W. Westergaard. "Co-operatives in Tanzania as Economic and Democratic Institutions." In Widstrand, C.G. (ed.). *Co-operatives and Rural Development in East Africa* (New York: African Publishing Corporation, 1970), 124.

<sup>27</sup> Report on the Kilimanjaro Native Planters Association, Coffee Ordinance and Regulations Attitude of the KNPA, TNA 13060.

<sup>28</sup> Extract of an interview between the Acting Governor and settlers' representatives on January 25<sup>th</sup> 1934, TNA 11908/19.

techniques to thwart the growers from maintaining their economic autonomy. Clearly, the idea was that, if the growers abandoned coffee growing, they would be forced to cheaply offer their labour in settlers' plantations to earn an income.

The settlers also complained to the colonial authority of theft of which the key suspects were small-scale African growers.<sup>29</sup> The settlers were so worried that if this development goes unchecked it would result in the spread of diseases because African coffee growers lacked coffee farming expertise. Joseph Merinyo, who worked in the agriculture office, came across complaints over several intimidations of growers by settlers and informed Dundas, the then District Commissioner. Merinyo managed to convince Dundas to meet the growers. In 1922, Dundas met the growers to discuss the problem. Interestingly, an idea came out from a meeting to form an institution to protect their interest, by aping TPA. Soon after, KNPA was born and got Dundas' approval<sup>30</sup> and was registered in January 1925 under Section 26 of the provisions of the Indian Companies Act, 1913.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Iliffe, *Modern History*, 154.

<sup>30</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Northern Province, to CS, February 24<sup>th</sup> 1931, TNA 13060.

<sup>31</sup> R.J. M. Swynnerton, A.L. B. Bennett and H.B. Stent. *All about KNCU Coffee* (Moshi: The Moshi Native Coffee Board, 1948), 4; Minutes of the Inaugural KNPA's Meeting held on January 15<sup>th</sup> 1925.

From onset, the general objective of KNPA was to combat settlers' opposition to coffee growing by the small-scale growers.<sup>32</sup> Specifically, KNPA objectives were: first, to protect small-scale coffee producers from the settler community threats against farming of the crop. Secondly, since the colonial authority supported small-scale growers to grow coffee, it supported KNPA as a key player in facilitating the promotion and development of the industry among the small-scale growers.

In 1925, KNPA managed to influence the colonial government to grant it the monopoly over handling coffee produced by smallholders in Kilimanjaro. Such monopoly was provided under Section 15 of the *Native Authority Ordinance* (No. 18, 1926) that compelled all African growers in Kilimanjaro to sell their coffee through KNPA with effect from April 1<sup>st</sup> 1926.<sup>33</sup> Any person who contravenes any provision of these rules shall be liable to a fine<sup>34</sup> or imprisonment not exceeding one month.<sup>35</sup> The rules provided that:

- a) All native coffee had to be sold through KNPA; and

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<sup>32</sup> Swynnerton, Bennett and Stent, *All about*, 12–13.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> A fine not exceeding 100/-

<sup>35</sup> North Province Commissioner to the Chief Secretary, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1932, TNA 20378.



- b) Members could sell their coffee otherwise than through any agent of the Association as they see suitable. But coffee sold to the agent must pass through the Association channels.

However, from 1926 some elements against KNPA began to emerge. The earliest opposition was led by the Moshi district Commissioner named Captain F.C Hallier. Such opposition was weak because the Provincial Commissioner maintained his support for KNPA. At a time, support by senior colonial government officials in the province for KNPA was crucial because KNPA was regarded as the most appropriate institution in guiding small-scale coffee industry. Moreover, the Association provided protection to growers from unscrupulous traders.<sup>36</sup>

However, support from colonial officials at Provincial level waned when KNPA opposed some of the colonial policies. For example, opposition against growers' coffee farms registration.<sup>37</sup> KNPA successfully challenged the measure to the territorial level and the colonial authority decided to withdraw coffee farms' registration exercise. Withdrawal of the exercise not only embarrassed but also infuriated district and provincial officials that had to plan for a retaliation against KNPA by playing cards that would lead to the

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<sup>36</sup> Northern Province Provincial Commissioner to Chief Secretary, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 1928, TNA 13060.

<sup>37</sup> KNPA to SNA, October 6<sup>th</sup> 1928, TNA 12809.

disbandment of the Association.<sup>38</sup> The Provincial Authority mobilised all Chiefs to rally their support against the KNPA.<sup>39</sup>

When the attempt to disband the Association by the Provincial Commissioner was leaked, KNPA successfully managed to challenge it with support from the Chief Secretary. Again, this embarrassed and infuriated the Provincial Commissioner. The colonial authority as a whole turned against KNPA when its 'conspired' operate independently from colonial influence especially in determining foreign markets for its coffee. At this juncture, one allegation after the other like financial embezzlement, poor business management, bankruptcy<sup>40</sup> were well fabricated by colonial officials to justify its mission to dismantle KNPA.

These were not the only issues that KNPA raised as at one point, the Association successfully opposed attempts by the colonial authority to transfer land to Kenya so settlers could alienate it. Such an attempt was viewed by KNPA leadership as necessary to protect its members and the native coffee industry. Obviously, the colonial authority saw the Association as time went by a threat just for defending the

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<sup>38</sup> Government of Tanganyika (1928): Annual Territorial Report. London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, appendix I, paragraph 11.

<sup>39</sup> KNPA to the CS, October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1928, TNA 12809.

<sup>40</sup> Sessional Paper no. 4, 1937, 6, TNA 263034.

interest of growers. Of course, keeping it longer could endanger colonial interests and likely spark serious political challenges. Therefore, the option was to get rid of it.

As a thought of replacing KNPA was gaining momentum, a forum was built to promote co-operatives in the territory and to legitimise demise of KNPA. One of the forums was the District Officers and District Administrators conference by the Secretary for Native Affairs in October 1929 in Dar es Salaam to discuss promotion of co-operatives in the country. With the colonial officials in Tanganyika lacking expertise on how to promote and managing the co-operatives, the agenda discussion could not yield concrete measures. A glim of hope over the agenda rose in 1930 when the Colonial Office wrote a memorandum for promotion of co-operatives to facilitate handling of small-scale growers' crops and protecting them powerful merchants and companies.<sup>41</sup>

The CO's memorandum was important to the colonial state as it provided a ground for laying down plans for promotion of co-operatives and eventual replacement of KNPA. Tanganyika expressed its desire and commitment to promote co-operatives in line with CO's memorandum which was approved during the 1930 British Colonial Governors conference.<sup>42</sup> Emboldened by the governors' resolutions, the colonial authority of Tanganyika asked the CO to send an

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<sup>41</sup> CO Memorandum: Co-operation in the Colonies, Protectorates and Mandated Territories, May 21<sup>st</sup> 1930, TNA 13698.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

expert, Mr. C.F. Strickland to help in drafting the co-operative legislation that would facilitate for registration of co-operative societies.<sup>43</sup> On arrival in Tanganyika, Strickland worked along with the colonial government's appointed committee members that consisted of civil servants. It was after a series of meetings that the attributes of the Registrar and a place to locate the co-operatives department were agreed.<sup>44</sup>

The CO and Tanganyika's colonial authority presented to Strickland terms of reference to consider when drafting the law.<sup>45</sup> The terms of reference among others highlighted a roadmap to overhaul coffee marketing in Kilimanjaro,<sup>46</sup> of which KNPA had a monopoly. The terms and discussion between the colonial authority and Strickland revolved around having a suitable mechanism in place that would

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<sup>43</sup> CO Telegram No. 252, December 1930, TNA 13698; Some scholars have argued that Strickland was a government but not the architect of co-operative law. As archival records depict, that argument is untenable. See such argument in <sup>43</sup> Susan G. Rogers. "The Kilimanjaro Native Planters Association: Administrative Responses to Chagga Initiatives in the 1920's." *Transafrican Journal of History* 4, no. 1/2 (1974): 94-114. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24520201>.

<sup>44</sup> Extracts from P.E. Mitchell report on conversation with C.F. Strickland on organisation of co-operative societies in Tanzania held on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1931, TNA 19005.

<sup>45</sup> Telegram No. 252 from the Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies, December 1930, TNA 13698.

<sup>46</sup> Telegram No. 252 from the Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies, December 1930, TNA 13698.

pave a way for the replacement and side-lining of the Association by ensuring that growers compulsorily market their produce through co-operative societies.<sup>47</sup>

Whereas Strickland concentrated on writing a legislation draft, the civil servants who were assisting him were writing a report. The report recommended that “the advance of Africans through co-operative societies will be only achieved by placing them under guidance and supervision of a trained officers.”<sup>48</sup> It was also recommended that, the control of the native co-operatives by the Registrar or Director of Co-operative Societies.<sup>49</sup> The committee proposed a new structure different from that of KNPA of which coffee buying posts had to be setup within villages across the Mountain.<sup>50</sup> It also reduced the size of affiliated societies to the level of one or two villages. Finally, it stressed on the employment of qualified Registrar of co-operative societies.

When the CO received the legislation draft from Tanganyika, it asked Tanganyika not to table it at the LEGCO based on

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<sup>47</sup> Telegram No. 252 from the Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies, December 1930, TNA 13698; Pennington Report, TNA 13060/203-234.

<sup>48</sup> Extract from a report of a committee appointed to consider the marketing organisation of native and non-native produce, Application of Co-operative Methods in Economic Development of the Territory, TNA 19005.

<sup>49</sup> Extract from a report of a committee appointed to consider the marketing organisation of native and non-native produce, TNA 19005.

<sup>50</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Northern Province to CS, August 25<sup>th</sup> 1931, TNA 26038.

the recommendations made by the committee. The Secretary State for the Colonies, Sidney Webb (Lord Passfield), recommended further that, the Tanganyika colonial authority should not embark upon promotion of co-operatives until when the Registrar of co-operative societies was available to facilitate guidance to co-operatives'.<sup>51</sup> However, a dramatic development occurred in August 1931 when Lord Passfield was replaced in the Colonial Office following the defeat of Labour Party by the Conservatives in the general election. The Conservatives appointed Sir Phillip Cunliffe-Lister (later Lord Swinton) to replace Lord Passfield as Secretary of State for Colonies. Tanganyika's colonial state capitalised on departure of Lord Passfield by re-lodging for the approval of the co-operative societies' legislation.

In her work, Roger narrowly focuses on the transfers of the local colonial officials as the main factor. This paper goes beyond that. It associates how significant the political changes in Britain became advantageous to Tanganyika in revitalizing pressure to the CO to approve the co-operative legislation. Moreover, Roger suggests that, the new senior staff were ignorant of the matter. On contrary, the retrieved archival records reveal that, Douglas James Jardine, who was Deputy CS (1927-29) and P.E. Mitchell the CS (1928-1934), were well aware of the matter. For instance, Jardine as the

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<sup>51</sup> Passfield to Governor, Dispatch No. 507, July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1931, TNA 13060.

acting Governor with advice from Mitchell had written the CO to consider “the early enactment of a co-operative draft submitted in the dispatch No. 372 of April 23<sup>rd</sup> 1931”.<sup>52</sup> In asking for approval, Jardine argued his case against KNPA by writing that they have “to discontinue incorporation of KNPA as a company in accordance with the amended provisions of the *Companies Ordinance* (No. 46 of 1931) because it does not appear to be practicable and it is quite clear to me that the correct course is formally to constitute the enterprise as a co-operative society.”<sup>53</sup>

The Governor argued further that, to approve the implementation was important and it was in favour of the prosperity and development of the co-operative movement.<sup>54</sup> The governor emphasized further that, once KNPA was discontinued it would constitute correct course to formally initiate such enterprises as co-operative societies in Kilimanjaro.<sup>55</sup> Sir Phillip Cunliffe-Lister, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies was convinced on reading Governor’s arguments and he eventually approved the *Co-operative Societies Ordinance of 1932* in May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1932. Upon the *Ordinance* approval, the colonial authority acted immediately.

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<sup>52</sup> Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, November 20<sup>th</sup> 1931, TNA 13060.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

As attempts to get *Ordinance* approval were underway and hopes high, the colonial state was interfering with KNPA. The Governor appointed A.L. Pennington to take over management of the Association.<sup>56</sup> It was the moment when KNPA President, Joseph Merinyo, was removed from office on misconduct grounds. When in office, Pennington established that KNPA was in poor financial situation generating an impression among KNPA members and committee that an urgent rescue mission of the Association was necessary to rescue it from collapse. Consequently, Pennington recommended to KNPA leadership, members as well as to the colonial state that, with existing conditions, it was wise to 'restructure' the Association. The members were informed about the idea which they agreed in an extraordinary meeting of October 21<sup>st</sup> 1931 chaired by Moshi District Officer, Mr. A.O. Flynn.<sup>57</sup>

The landmark replacement of KNPA was the setting up of the Kilimanjaro Native Co-operative Society Ltd (KNCS) on May 30<sup>th</sup> 1932 by colonial officials of which Pennington and A.O. Flynn were responsible.<sup>58</sup> Thus, KNCS became not only a new co-operative society but also the first organisation

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<sup>56</sup> Provincial Commissioner Northern Province to CS, September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1930, TNA 12809.

<sup>57</sup> Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies, November 20<sup>th</sup> 1931, TNA 13060.

<sup>58</sup> *Uremi*, No. 2, June 1932.



named 'co-operative' in Tanganyika. KNCS was formed without the Colonial Office consent. Apparently, the CO was and the LEGICO were ill-advised over the intention to have the co-operative *Ordinance* that was basically aimed at restructuring KNPA.<sup>59</sup>

Upon creation of KNCS, KNPA's members and membership was automatically transferred to the KNCS.<sup>60</sup> The transfer of members to KNCS signified a step toward the demise of KNPA. As KNPA lost all its members, it became a technically null and void as it was forced to cease trading and dispose of its assets and liabilities to KNCS. Furthermore, Mr. Arthur Leslie Brice Bennett was hand-picked by the colonial authority to manage KNCS as manager with effect from May 30<sup>th</sup> 1932.<sup>61</sup> The appointment of Mr Bennett signified the control of the organisation by the colonial state. In a letter Colonial Office, the Governor said that 'the future of the Association is now, I hope, assured'.<sup>62</sup>

The understanding to 'restructure' KNPA is widely shared and maintained to date by a number of studies on co-operative development in Kilimanjaro or Tanganyika. But the fact is, KNPA was neither restructured, reorganised nor disbanded but it was replaced, a case that this paper

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<sup>59</sup> Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies, November 20<sup>th</sup> 1931, TNA 13060.

<sup>60</sup> *Uremi*, No. 2, June 1932.

<sup>61</sup> Governor to Colonial Office, November 20<sup>th</sup> 1931, TNA 13060.

<sup>62</sup> Governor to the Secretary of State for the colonies, November 20<sup>th</sup> 1931, TNA 13060.

enlightens and corrects from previous persistent historical distortion. In that effect, KNCS take over the functions of KNPA was a politically expedient solution. Under such conspiracy, the transfer of functions was underway.

The approval of the legislation by the CO gave the colonial state powers to appoint the Registrar of co-operative societies for the territory. This was not the only case that demonstrated the colonial state's determination to control cooperatives. To attain the legislation approval, CS Jardine appointed Acting Registrars of Co-operative Societies on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1932. The urgency was also reflected at local level in Moshi District by appointment of A.O Flynnas as Assistant Registrar of co-operatives. Both appointments were provided for under Government Notice No. 61 of 1932 issued on 4 March under Section 3 of the *Co-operative Societies Ordinance* of 1932. Mr. A.O. Flynn facilitated the formation and registration of the KNCS affiliated primary co-operative societies that completely cleared out all KNPA bases and influences<sup>63</sup> (see Table 1 below).

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<sup>63</sup> Memorandum on the working of the co-operative societies' ordinance, November, 1934, TNA 19005.

**Table 1: Registered Co-operative Societies and membership**

S/No	Name of the Society	Date of registration	Reg. No.	Members in 1935
1	Kibong'oto	1.1.1933	1	441
2	Machame Lyamungo	1.1.1933	9	5057
3	Kibosho West	1.1.1933	8	920
4	Kibosho East	1.1.1933	7	2,045
5	Uru East	1.1.1933	14	1,299
6	Mbokomu	1.1.1933	6	392
7	Old Moshi	1.1.1933	5	852
8	Kirua Vunjo West	1.1.1933	4	2385
9	Kilema	1933	3	1589
10	Marangu West	1.1.1933	20	892
11	Marangu East	1.1.1933	18	900
12	Mamba	1.1.1933	2	1225
13	Mwika West	1.1.1933	21	1345
14	Uru West	1933	14	646
16	Keni Mriti	1933	15	623
18	Mwika East	1933	17	855
19	Mwika West	1933	21	460
20	Mwenge	1933	22	335

Source: *Uremi*, No. 15. November 1<sup>st</sup> 1933.

An analysis provided above emanated from the colonial authority's policy as well as political decision. Such a decision had far-reaching implications in the control of growers and their produce by the colonial authority. The very decisions shaped the Tanganyika's co-operative development during interwar years. Such developments were demonstrated by having KNPA replaced.

Rogers argued that the colonial authority in the territory facilitated killing of KNPA.<sup>64</sup> However, the argument raised by Roger provides a political move. Legal dimension that facilitated demise of KNPA have not been considered. This paper has established that, specific clauses, in particular, Section 36 (Subsect. i. & ii.) of the *Ordinance* were applied. The clause directed that all agricultural producers should be sold through one agency or co-operative society. Since Section 36 (i) of the *Ordinance* compelled growers to sell through the co-operative societies, KNPA deprived of its members and coffee business was curtailed. Subsection ii. of the *Ordinance* that provided for compulsory co-operatives membership.

The application and enforcement of the Section 36 (i) implied that KNPA would not handle coffee on the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro and the Pare Mountains where it had members since 1925. Such a function was handed over to KNCS, and later transferred to KNCU when it was registered in 1933. Again, coffee growers in the Pare Mountains were no longer beneficiaries. This development marked a final blow to KNPA as it was divested revenue by denying its engagement in marketing coffee. Also, growers in the Pare Mountains were deprived of co-operative society

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<sup>64</sup> Susan G. Rogers, "The Kilimanjaro Native Planters Association".

membership. Such a decision partly undermined the chances for the coffee growers in the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro to voluntarily become members of co-operative society.

### **3. Co-operatives Intervention and Its Implications**

Soon after the legislation of *Co-operative Ordinance*, the colonial state was preoccupied with appointment of permanent Registrar of co-operative societies. Some of the outlined qualifications of the Registrar were familiarity with Tanganyikan culture and experience in civil service of not less than four years. The challenge was to earmark an officer with such desired attributes. As such, the CS contacted the Central, Lake and Tabora Provincial Commissioners to propose a suitable candidate for the position.<sup>65</sup> The Central and Lake Provinces had no suitable candidates. The Western Provincial Commissioner proposed Mr. Ronald Cecil Northcote who was immediately appointed by the Governor to fill the position and the CO was updated over the appointment.<sup>66</sup>

As none of the colonial civil servants in the country had co-operative management knowledge or training, Tanganyika

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<sup>65</sup> CS to Central PC, September 9<sup>th</sup> 1930; CS to Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province, September 9<sup>th</sup> 1930; CS to Tabora Provincial Commissioner. The provincial commissioners responded to CS in Provincial Commissioner, Central Province to CS October 6<sup>th</sup> 1930; Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province to CS, October 9<sup>th</sup> 1930. All of them have been retrieved in TNA 19005.

<sup>66</sup> Tabora Provincial Commissioner to CS, October 9<sup>th</sup> 1930; Governor to CO, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 1931, TNA 19005; Governor to CO, July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1931 TNA 19005,

sought to have the prospective Registrar receive appropriate training abroad. Sri Lanka and Malaysia were identified as suitable destinations given many years of experience in agricultural marketing.<sup>67</sup> Tanganyika contacted Sri Lankan and Malaysian colonial governments as well as the Horace Plunkett Foundation asking for some guidance associated with managing co-operative societies. Tanganyika sought the guidance because plans were underway to “establish co-operatives in primitive and ignorant societies.”<sup>68</sup> It was reiterated further that “our problem is rather to harness co-operation as to influence an experience that proved successful in South America among the Negro.”<sup>69</sup> It is fair to interpret that the colonial state believed that it was fulfilling its civilization mission through establishment and control of co-operatives in Tanganyika.

Lacking funds, Tanganyika could not immediately send Mr. Northcote for training. An application for the funds were made to the Colonial Office.<sup>70</sup> The Colonial Office had no funds too, and suggested postponement of the study tour.<sup>71</sup> In 1932, Tanganyika made more applications in 1932 to the

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<sup>67</sup> CO's Memorandum on Co-operation in the Colonies, Protectorates and Mandated Territories, (H.M.S.O, May 21<sup>st</sup> 1930), TNA 13698.

<sup>68</sup> CS to Plunkett Foundation, November 21<sup>st</sup> 1930, TNA 13698.

<sup>69</sup> SNA to Sir Charles Campbell Woolley (Sri Lanka), December 6<sup>th</sup> 1929, TNA 13698.

<sup>70</sup> CS to Provincial Commissioners, November 18<sup>th</sup> 1930, TNA 19005.

<sup>71</sup> CO to CS, Dispatch No 507, July 22 1931. TNA 19005.

Carnegie Foundation which was accepted.<sup>72</sup> However, funds were made available from August 1934 to April 1935 to facilitated Northcote's study tour to India, Burma, Zanzibar and Sri Lanka.<sup>73</sup>

On his return in May 1935, Mr. Northcote published a report which had key policy issues as well as technical recommendations associated with administrative machinery for managing the co-operative organisations in the country.<sup>74</sup> Some of the recommendations provided a clear direction for co-operative development, proposed types of co-operatives (credit, dairy, livestock and tertiary apex body) and setting up of the Co-operative Department. Northcote was critical of Section 36 (Subect. i & ii) of the 1932 *Co-operative Ordinance*. Noteworthy, he challenged the two provisions of the legislation because were against co-operative principle and voluntary association.

Northcote's criticism came at a wrong time when the government official's mind and policy was not the same as when he was appointed. Such criticism featured in neither Lord Hailey's work nor Campbell's report.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, senior

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<sup>72</sup> CO to the Governor, January 23<sup>rd</sup> 1933, TNA 19005.

<sup>73</sup> Phillip Cunliffe-Lister, (the Secretary of State for the Colonies) to CS, September 29<sup>th</sup> 1934; CS to all Provincial Commissioners, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1936 TNA 22929.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> See in Lord Hailey, *An African Survey: A Study of Problems Arising in Africa South of Sahara*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), 1467; and W.K.H. Campbell's Report of Visit to Tanganyika, July 29<sup>th</sup> 1944, TNA 35783

colonial officials who supported him had been transferred. P.E. Mitchell, who was the Secretary for Native Affairs and CS, for instance was appointed Governor of Uganda in 1935 and later Kenya. Tanganyika had new Governor, Sir Harold McMichael, and the acting CS W.E. Scupham in 1935. These new officials were irritated by such criticism. For example, the acting CS, Gerald Fleming Sayers, was sceptical about co-operative policy and pointed out that the government had no doctrinaire or predilection for co-operatives and had no wish to impose it on anyone.<sup>76</sup>

The CS viewed Mr. Northcote report as racially biased as he argued that, the government cannot accommodate “any group, European, Asiatic or African, and would not set up Co-operative Department because nothing of that kind (whatsoever) is needed, at any rate unless there is a genuine local desire on the part of anybody”.<sup>77</sup> On contrary, the CS was in favour of the spontaneous growth of co-operatives instead of government intervention and support. In 1935, the Central Province Commissioner invited Northcote in his Province to initiate creamery co-operatives.<sup>78</sup> To prove that the senior officials of Tanganyika were displeased by Northcote’s report, his invitation was put on hold by the CS

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<sup>76</sup> CS to all Provincial Commissioners, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1936, TNA 22929.

<sup>77</sup> C.F. Sayers to all Provincial Commissioners, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1936; Extract Minute from CS to the Governor, May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1935, TNA 22929.

<sup>78</sup> Central Province, PC to CS, June 14<sup>th</sup> 1935, TNA, 22929.



who authoritatively disclaimed any attempt for co-operation or any official to wish to urge it on anyone.<sup>79</sup> The CS emphasised that was the government position and could not change unless an approval from the CO was granted.<sup>80</sup>

CS also stressed that, could accommodate co-operatives that emerge spontaneously out of the growers' interest.<sup>81</sup> It is important to be noted here that, historically, spontaneous growth of co-operatives was possible in Europe its pioneers commandeered high levels of exposure. The condition set out by CS was unrealistic in Tanganyika where growers lacked the Rochdale and Raiffeisen co-operative exposure and majority of them were illiterate. Such development was a challenge in Tanganyika and many other British colonies in Africa as argued by Strickland that "it appears that co-operation is almost unknown in tropical Africa".<sup>82</sup>

The decision by the CS was an obstruction over co-operatives from within the colonial government. It also marked a significant political and policy shift against promotion of co-operatives. This ended the enthusiasm shown in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The CS's obstruction affected development in many other localities in the country. Moreover, his decision was also adopted by many other officials at departmental and provincial levels. For example,

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<sup>79</sup> CS to all Provincial Commissioners, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1936, TNA 22929.

<sup>80</sup> CS to all Provincial Commissioners, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1936, TNA 22929.

<sup>81</sup> CS to all Provincial Commissioners, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1936, TNA 22929.

<sup>82</sup> C. F. Strickland. "Co-operation for Africa." *Journal of the International Africa Institute* 6, No. 1 (1933), 15-26, TNA 24870.

when the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Mr. Northcote, recommended promotion of co-operatives in Kagera in mid-1936<sup>83</sup>, it was outrightly rejected because the colonial authority feared opposition from Arabs and Asians who had a stake in coffee marketing.<sup>84</sup> They feared that such direction could generate political unrest.<sup>85</sup> Such decisions had far-reaching impact for stunted growth of the AMCOs in the country and where developments existed the footprint remained limited to three localities, that is, on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro, Ngara and Ruvuma.

#### **4. The AMCOs' Promotional Approaches**

A study by Margaret Digby discusses the growth and development of agricultural co-operative movement in the commonwealth.<sup>86</sup> But her study fails to illuminate the colonial policy and political intervention aspect in Tanganyika. In this work, we have uncovered how political and policy shift by new colonial officials was against promotion of co-operatives and had far-reaching consequences in Tanganyika. It has presented an account of ups and downs of spontaneous and premeditated promotion

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<sup>83</sup> A report on Bukoba Coffee Marketing, TNA 141011.

<sup>84</sup> DA to CS, November 28<sup>th</sup> 1936, TNA 141011.

<sup>85</sup> Bukoba District Officer to Provincial Commissioner, April 15<sup>th</sup> 1937 and July 9<sup>th</sup> 1937, TNA 141011.

<sup>86</sup> Margaret Digby *Agricultural Co-operation in the Commonwealth*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953), 147-150.

approaches of AMCOs. KNPA rise a product of spontaneous approach from below. KNCS was a brainchild of planned and statist approaches. The latter approach was objected by CS of Tanganyika government following the report of Northcote in 1935.

The CS's objection was also communicated to the CO by indicating his reluctance to have co-operatives promoted from above. Part of his dissatisfaction read: "to be frank, Northcote's report was disappointing and contained some extraordinary opinions to which the government could not subscribe".<sup>87</sup> The CS was critical of the report because it was biased and paid no attention to non-natives especially, Europeans and Indians. It inclined too much on natives that he feared it would fuel misunderstandings. CS also demonstrated his political and policy position beyond Tanganyika borders by communicating to the Carnegie Foundation that funded Northcote study tour asserting that, the report "contained a good deal of theoretical matter and contentious nature that the government cannot subscribe".<sup>88</sup> Additionally, the CS disregarded the setup of the Department or Organization to deal with co-operation as the government would not allocate resources for that. He stressed further that, Northcote would only be able to act in a consultative capacity, mainly to advice when a genuine local desire for co-operation emerged and that all co-

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<sup>87</sup> CS to Carnegie, September 12<sup>th</sup> 1935, TNA, 22919.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

operatives matters should be finally sent to CS office for approval.

With CS position, Northcote training fund was a waste as the government withdrew support to promote co-operatives. The CS opted to disagree with technical expertise provided by the Registrar and, demonstrate policy inconsistency as well as lack of political commitment to promote co-operative societies by senior colonial authorities in Tanganyika. This approach placed the Registrar's responsibility to promote co-operatives in Tanganyika into jeopardy and difficulties that led to uneven development throughout interwar years. Lord Hailey termed this development merely as 'hesitancy'.

This work posits that, senior colonial officials coldshouldered any support for development of co-operatives. The refusal was a significant policy shift. This is demonstrated in new evidence showing that when Jardine, then acting governor, visited Lake Province in October 1933 insisted that this should be considered when staff were available for the purpose.<sup>89</sup> However, his promise never accomplished in the Bukoba district, Southern Highlands and Central Provinces where interest in forming co-operatives was high. Unlike Kilimanjaro, Jardine showed no

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<sup>89</sup> TNA 19005, Extracts of notes taken on HE's safari in October 1933 in Lake Province.

interest in either appointing or assigning civil servants on a short-term basis at district level. To fill the void, some district commissioners (DCs) decided to promote co-operative societies in their districts. For example, in Biharamulo District initiatives were made by the DC at the end of December 1933.<sup>90</sup> Sadly, the governor maintained his biased position even at the East Africa Governors' conference. For him, promotion was to be restricted and confined within Kilimanjaro and that other areas had to wait until a trained Registrar was available.<sup>91</sup> This was not accidental position: the governor was responding to the rivalry between the European settlers and African peasants who produced coffee for export market in the Northern Province, especially in slopes of Mount Meru and Mount Kilimanjaro.<sup>92</sup>

The territorial slowness and disinterest in developing co-operatives in Tanganyika influenced district and provincial officials to act in their own over the areas they controlled. One of the attempts made in May 1932 by Chief Mgemela of Bakwimba in Kwimba District.<sup>93</sup> Chief Mgemela interest came during the economic depression when cotton price was

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<sup>90</sup> TNA 19005, DO, Biharamulo District to CS and SNA, 22 December 1933.

<sup>91</sup> Extracts from a paper by the Governor of Tanganyika presented at the East Africa Territories Governors' conference, April 1932.

<sup>92</sup> See Iliffe, *Modern History*, 316, 455.

<sup>93</sup> Extracts from meeting between P.M. Huggis, the DO of Kwimba and Chief Mgemela, May 20<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 20999; Iliffe, *Modern History*, 295.

very low and, in some cases, barter trade affected income of its subjects. Again, a plan to build a hospital in his Chieftdom could not materialise because the government withdrew the plan due to lack of funds.<sup>94</sup> For him, co-operatives offered a solution to the two difficulties. Chief Mgemela envisioned co-operatives that would improve their income.<sup>95</sup>

Illife points out that, the reasons for Chief Mgemela “unsuccessful proposals are not clear”.<sup>96</sup> Mgemela’s proposal was unlikely to succeed because, it can be argued here, firstly, the co-operative legislation was yet to be approved by the Colonial Office. Secondly, the territorial policy at the time was against promoting co-operative societies except in Kilimanjaro. It is important to note that the District commissioner did not obstruct Chief Mgemela’s proposal as he forwarded it with positive remarks to the Provincial Commissioner.<sup>97</sup> The Provincial Commissioner too forwarded favourably to the CS for the approval.<sup>98</sup> However, the CS was against it and cautioned that “if the society is

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<sup>94</sup> District Commissioner, Kwimba to Lake Province, Provincial Commissioner, May 30<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 20999.

<sup>95</sup> Extracts from meeting between P.M. Huggis, the DO of Kwimba and Chief Mgemela held in May 20<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 20999.

<sup>96</sup> Illife, *Modern History*, 295.

<sup>97</sup> District Commissioner, Kwimba to Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province, May 30<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 20999.

<sup>98</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province to the CS, June 24<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 20999.

allowed, it must progress with care, and with great care without conflict among the members of the Chief”.<sup>99</sup> The CS declined the proposal by stressing that, “it is not therefore, possible to contemplate the immediate registration of co-operative societies in Kwimba or anywhere else with exception of KNPA with whose peculiar circumstances you are no doubt acquaintance”.<sup>100</sup> The colonial state was all along suspicious of institutions that were founded by natives as in the case of KNPA, which on a number of occasions challenged colonial policies.

While Chief Mgemela’s request and responses from the CS were still fresh, A.A. Wills law firm presented a new proposal, on behalf of the BCGA, and noted that “the idea of co-operatives and ginning was tickling in the minds of some of Natives”.<sup>101</sup> The idea was strongly rejected by the Secretary for Native Affairs (SNA) who pointed out that “time to accommodate them (co-operatives) was not ripe”.<sup>102</sup> The SNA reacted at a time when co-operative legislation had an approval of the Colonial Office. The rejection of both Chief Mgemela and the BCGA attempts by the colonial authority demonstrates clear evidence that there was an unsupportive environment for growth and development of co-operatives

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<sup>99</sup> CS to Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province, July 19<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 20999.

<sup>100</sup> CS to Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province, July 19<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 20999.

<sup>101</sup> A.A Wills to SNA, July 12<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 21032.

<sup>102</sup> SNA to A.A Wills, July 25<sup>th</sup> 1932, TNA 21032.

long before Northcote's report. Similarly, an attempt to promote co-operatives in Bukoba district where coffee was grown earlier as in Kilimanjaro and much earlier than in Ngara district was affected during the interwar years.

During the 1930s the colonial officials in Bukoba district experienced a number of challenges associated with small-scale growers' coffee industry. Some of the challenges were that coffee was grown without proper attention, trees were exposed to diseases and pest risks, growers processed poorly the coffee beans hence affecting their quality.<sup>103</sup> As a result of the poor coffee quality beans, foreign buyers lost interest and those who kept on buying paid poor prices.<sup>104</sup> This led to the decline in government revenue prompting the Provincial authority to intervene by inviting Mr. Northcote, the Registrar of Co-operatives, to investigate the challenges and recommend how best the marketing can be conducted in 1936.

Mr. Northcote met provincial and district officials as well as local chiefs, growers and traders. He also had an audience with leaders of the native embryonic (unregistered)

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<sup>103</sup> C. Harvey (undated) 'Coffee Cultivation in Bukoba', TNA 11969/19 Vol. II; Illife, *Modern History*, 282; Charles D. Smith. *Did Colonialism Capture the Peasantry: A case Study of the Kagera District Tanzania* (Uppsala: Scandinavia Institute of African Studies, 1989), 19 – 20.

<sup>104</sup> Harvey, *Ibid.*



organisation, the Native Growers Association (NGA) under the leadership of Herbert Rugazibwa as President, and Clemens Kiiza as Secretary. Mr Northcote established that NGA was operating as a co-operative society and that it bulked its 970 members coffee from Kianja, Ihangiro, Kiziba, Kiamtware, Kinyangereko, Bugabo, Misenyi and Karagwe chiefdoms.<sup>105</sup> By 1936, NGA's members produced and marketed an average of 156 tons of coffee.<sup>106</sup>

Mr. Northcote learnt that the NGA was financially weak, lacked some business skills and was facing competition from Indian coffee merchants.<sup>107</sup> Mr. Northcote saw the NGA potentiality and recommended "the Associations should be encouraged with concomitant formation of a co-operative society".<sup>108</sup> He added that, NGA required business expertise and recommended the Association be considered for £500 loan as business capital, and envisioned that it could be transformed into a co-operative society.<sup>109</sup>

Nonetheless, the provincial officials were not in favour of the NGA. This was evident when the Provincial officials opposed the recommendations. In one instance, the Provincial

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<sup>105</sup> R.C. Northcote, Inquiry Report on Bukoba Coffee Industry in Report on Bukoba Coffee Marketing, 1936, 28, TNA 24545.

<sup>106</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province to CS, July 6<sup>th</sup> 1936, TNA 41011.

<sup>107</sup> R.C. Northcote, Inquiry Report on Bukoba Coffee Industry in Report on Bukoba Coffee Marketing, 1936, 28, TNA 24545.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> Report on Bukoba Coffee Marketing, TNA 24545.

Commissioner, Mr C. MacMahon, disapproved the NGA's funding proposal because "that will be simply throwing money away".<sup>110</sup> MacMahon was sceptical about promotion of NGA as he feared that it would create political and racial tension in Bukoba if it was allowed into coffee marketing monopolized the Asian traders. At territorial level, The Director of Agriculture opposed NGA because "co-operatives would threaten livelihoods of Arab and Indian traders; thus, introducing them may lead to the eruption of riots".<sup>111</sup> On the other hand, the Indians dominated the Chamber of Commerce and were lobbying the colonial state to disregard the promotion of co-operative marketing societies like NGA in Bukoba.<sup>112</sup>

The disregard of the recommendations lacked viable alternatives too. This came at a time when the NGA through its members' contributions imported a hulling plant for coffee processing which was installed in Mbatama village.<sup>113</sup> A new hulling machine was to address years of using wooden huller and outcrops in coffee beans processing.<sup>114</sup> However,

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<sup>110</sup> Report on Bukoba Coffee Marketing, TNA 24545.

<sup>111</sup> Director of Agriculture to CS, November 28<sup>th</sup> 1936, TNA 24545.

<sup>112</sup> Extracts from Resolutions the Chamber of Commerce Conference held in Tabora Easter, 1935, TNA 19005.

<sup>113</sup> R.C. Northcote, Report on Bukoba Coffee Marketing, TNA 24545, 9

<sup>114</sup> C. Harvey (undated), Coffee Cultivation in Bukoba, TNA 11969/19 Vol. II.

its license was withdrawn by the government in 1939 as its leaders were the ring leaders in the protest against the 1937 colonial coffee rules that seemed to subjugate small-scale growers' coffee industry in Bukoba.<sup>115</sup> This demonstrates three things. First, the colonial officials and administrators never tolerated any organisation that seemed a threat to its presence in the territory. Second, it indicates how colonial officials were in contestation against themselves in identifying the best approach of developing co-operatives. And thirdly, it indicates how the officials used the racial card to favour the Asians at the expense of the African natives and their co-operatives, thus denying their interests and voices.

Albeit all fetters to promote co-operatives from below and above the Tanganyikan colonial society, a number of co-operatives were formed. Some of agricultural marketing co-operative societies were formed in 1936 included the Bugufi Coffee Co-operative Society (BCCS) in Ngara district that handled coffee; and the Ngoni-Matengo Co-operative Union in Songea district. The BCCS was registration number was 28 whereas NGOMAT was number 27. NGOMAT, unlike BCCS had several affiliated societies in Songea district that handled not only coffee but also tobacco.

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<sup>115</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province to CS, December 22<sup>nd</sup> 1937, TNA 24545.

However, the BCCS and NGOMAT, like the KNCU, did not emerge spontaneously. The colonial officials in Ngara district and Ruvuma region were behind their promotion with an approval of the superiors in Dar es Salaam. The initiatives of this nature enjoyed support not only from colonial officials in Tanganyika but also from Britain as they complied and met the obligation in encouraging small-scale growers to produce best coffee and tobacco in their areas. They were also encouraged because there were either little Asian involvement or European producers who would have seen the Africans posing a threat in their interests.

In the registration of NGOMAT and its affiliated societies in 1936, the Department of Agriculture played a critical role<sup>116</sup> (see Table 2). By 1936, NGOMAT registered 6,640 members, and by 1939 NGOMAT had 6721 members.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Northcote to J.D Rheinallt Jones, the Director of South African Institute of Race Relations, December 11<sup>th</sup> 1944 in TNA 37192; Tanganyika Government. Report on Co-operative Development (Dar es Salaam: Government Printer, 1947), Appendix 1-6

<sup>117</sup> Report to the League of Nations on Tanganyika Territory, 1939, TNA 5/243.

**Table 2: Primary societies affiliated to the NGOMAT**

S/N.	Society	Number of Members
1	Liula	438
2	Litola	377
3	Msindo	354
4	Matogoro	263
5	Mbinga	170
6	Lumecha	163
7	Gumbiro	122
8	Lipumba	116
9	Ndirima	92
10	Likuyu	81
11	Namtumbo	65
12	Mlali	44

Source: TNA 504, Co-op/27/II, Annual Report for 1937/38, Ngoni-Matengo Cooperative Marketing Union, Ltd.

The formation of co-operatives in Ngara and Songea was justifiable given increased volume of the produce that required a reliable market to encourage growers to keep on producing and to evade smuggling of coffee to Burundi and Rwanda. Under the coffee marketing compulsion, growers were compelled to join the BCCS through coffee handling posts that were set up in 4 locations of which their number and respective villages are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Coffee Buying Posts in Bugufi**

Buying posts	Number of Members
Mukarahe	721
Mususenga	1451
Ngudusi	1200
Mwivusa	1013

Source: TNA 23556: Bugufi Coffee Society

The local colonial officials used the narrative of enhancing self-reliance among growers in their quest to justify establishing and promotion of co-operatives in Ngara and Songea. They went further to offer guidance in managing them. The expenses to form societies were borne by co-operative members in the form of a loan from the Colonial Development Fund (CDF). In Songea, £2,000 loan was provided by the CDF for setting up NGOMAT.<sup>118</sup> The loan had 3.5% interest rate per annum and was set to be paid by 1940.<sup>119</sup> The loan was considered as a motivation for encouraging small-scale growers to produce tobacco and provide them with marketing facilities of their produce. Similarly, the CDF made available £3,000 at 3.5% interest rate per annum to the BCCS to facilitate its formation.<sup>120</sup> This loan was used as capital for purchase of coffee, storage facilities and house for managers. In true terms, this colonial paternalism over co-operatives in Ngara and Songea was influenced by the desire to improve produce quality and control smuggling crops outside Tanganyika in order to improve their coffers.

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<sup>118</sup> Tanganyika Government. Report on Co-operative Development (Dar es Salaam: Government Printer, 1947), Appendix 1- 6, TNA 37192.

<sup>119</sup> Report to the League of Nations on Tanganyika Territory, 1939, TNA 5/243.

<sup>120</sup> Minute, Northcote to CS, May 6<sup>th</sup> 1935, TNA 22919.

In the same period, the Southern Highlands Provincial Commissioner applied for a grant amounting to £5,660 from the CDF to promote co-operative coffee and rice marketing societies in his Province, particularly in Mbozi and Rungwe districts.<sup>121</sup> To achieve this, the provincial and district officials as well as the Native Authority indicated £2,600 was presented as their contribution for Mbozi and £3,377 for Rungwe that was available for construction of crops' storage facilities and purchase of equipment for the planned co-operative societies. Nine (9) groups were earmarked for transformation.<sup>122</sup> The Commissioner made further justification for loan application to form co-operatives by arguing that such a grant would confer a great benefit since it would ensure the future economic prosperity of the natives and would stimulate trade in general by increasing their spending power.<sup>123</sup> Additionally, it was argued that, the province had no other method of acquiring the necessary capital other than a grant or a loan from the CDF.<sup>124</sup>

The Colonial Office rejected the application of grants for such purpose but it had some funds that could be provided as a loan.<sup>125</sup> The Provincial and district officials as well as NA

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<sup>121</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Southern Province to CS, March 20<sup>th</sup> 1936, TNA 22983.

<sup>122</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Southern Province to CS,

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, Provincial Commissioner, Southern Province to CS.

<sup>124</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Southern Province to CS, February 18<sup>th</sup> 1946.

<sup>125</sup> CS to Provincial Commissioner, South West Highlands, August 31<sup>st</sup> 1937, TNA 22983.

were highly motivated and well prepared to ensure that formation of co-operatives was successful. Despite unveiled financial commitment by the provincial, district officials and NA, the CO was not prepared to provide the grant requested unless it is a loan. When they applied for the loan they were denied too. It was argued that KNCS was founded without external support.<sup>126</sup> As such, the provincial and district officials were asked to generate funds locally that would facilitate promotion of co-operatives for Rungwe and Mbozi. As a result, no co-operative society was formed in the 1930s in Tanganyika's South West Highlands Province.

The grant and loan rejection did not discourage the colonial officials. They carefully considered some options, among which the best was engaging the Native authority. To achieve this, it was decided to create a Suspense Account provided under the Native Authority to facilitate rice handling and accounts to handle coffee.<sup>127</sup> These accounts had two objectives. First for accumulation of savings to promote co-operative societies and second, they were treated as temporary measure to facilitate purchase crops pending the transformation and preparation of growers into fully-fledged co-operative societies.<sup>128</sup> The Provincial

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, CS to Provincial Commissioner, South West Highlands, TNA 22983.

<sup>127</sup> Provincial Commissioner, Southern Province to CS.

<sup>128</sup> Extract from Proceedings of all Provincial Commissioners, TNA 22997.



Commissioner also showed interest to promote coffee marketing in Rungwe and Mbozi clustered in nine (9) groups which for coffee were Undali, Kiwira, Masebe, Masoko, Manow.<sup>129</sup> There were also rice-marketing groups in Selya, Mbozi, Mwakaleli East and Mwakaleli West. These groups had to be formed following the failure to register co-operative societies in the 1930s to market growers produce.

## 5. Conclusion

During interwar years, the colonial authority in Tanganyika was paradoxically preoccupied with supporting KNPA while covertly inhibiting its growth and eventually stifled it through legislation manifested by the 1932 *Co-operative Ordinance*. Understandably, the *Ordinance* articulated enthusiasm of the Registrar of co-operatives as well as from colonial officials across districts and provinces in the territory as a platform to promote co-operative societies in their areas of jurisdiction. Notably, such enthusiasm in some districts and provinces were successful while others experienced a setback. This suggests that, the promotion of co-operatives during the interwar years lacked a clear due to absence of central co-ordination. The successful initiatives were accidental and not guided by a common political and policy from the colonial authority. Clearly, a commitment to promote agricultural marketing co-operatives in the territory was a stooge as the whole scenario was driven from above by political decision, policies and legislations that

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<sup>129</sup> Rungwe District Book, 1935.

surreptitiously subdued KNPA while allowing the formation of others as a way of exerting colonial authority in the territory and as a way navigating competing commercial and economic interests.