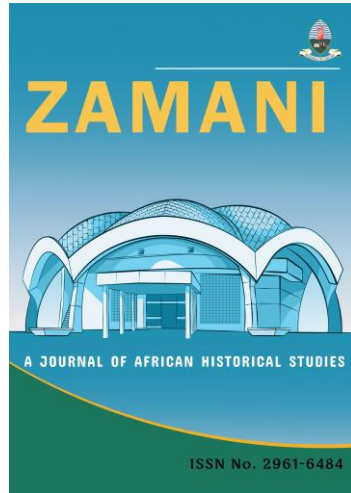


Zamani

A Journal of African Historical Studies



ISSN: 2961-6484 (print) Journal URL: <https://journals.udsm.ac.tz/index.php/zjahs>

* * * * *

Forum Article: Major Trends in Oral Historiography in Mainland Tanzania, 1960s to the Present: A Review of Published Sources.

Author: Albertus K Onyiego

Article URL: <https://doi.org/10.56279/ZJAHS1127>

Citation: Onyiego, Albertus K. "Major Trends in Oral Historiography in Mainland Tanzania, 1960s to the Present: A Review of Published Sources." *Zamani* 1, no. 2 (2024): 339-364.

Submitted: June 2024

Accepted: November 2024

Published: December 2024

Major Trends in Oral Historiography in Mainland Tanzania, 1960s to the Present: A Review of Published Sources

ALBERTUS K ONYIEGO

Abstract

This article examines the role of oral methodology in reconstructing historical knowledge in Mainland Tanzania over the last six decades. Although greater attention is paid to the period from the 1960s onwards, efforts have been made to illuminate on the use of oral methodology in the period before. The article is organised into four temporal sections, each representing a distinct phase of oral methodology. The first section explores the role of oral methodology before independence. It will be noticed that the gradual use of oral sources in the writing of history in Mainland Tanzania started way back during German and British colonial periods. However, the early post-colonial period, notably the 1960s and the early 1970s, is considered the most effective and productive phases as far as oral methodology in Mainland Tanzania is concerned. Unlike the preceding phase whereby the practitioners in this field were amateur historians, the early post-colonial period witnessed the onset of the first generation of trained historians. The third section covers the transitional period, from the mid-1970s through the 1980s, in which the use of oral methodology slightly declined compared to the previous periods. The last section reflects on theoretical and methodological developments that took place in the post-Ujamaa period, starting from the early 1990s into the 2000s. The reader will appreciate the degree at which the post-Ujamaa period exhibited breadth and diversity in thematic interests among oral historians in Mainland Tanzania. This article is based on library research conducted between 2010 and 2023 at the University of Iowa in the United States and University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

Keywords: Tanzania, African History, oral methodology, historiography, nationalist, structuralism, materialism, women, environment.

About the author:

ALBERTUS K ONYIEGO is a lecturer in history at University of Dar es Salaam. He holds a PhD in History from University of Dar es Salaam. Correspondence email: akonyiego@yahoo.com | 0000-0003-2224-5044.

Historiographical Overview about Oral Methodology

Up to the 1960s, many western scholars did not believe that history could be written using oral sources. Because of the long-standing tradition of

Citation: Onyiego, Albertus K. "Major Trends in Oral Historiography in Mainland Tanzania, 1960s to the Present: A Review of Published Sources." *Zamani* 1, no. 2 (2024): 339-364. DOI: 10.56279/ZJAHS1127

literacy in the western world, such scholars believed that history could only come from documented sources. This statement is verified by Lynn Abrams who has noted that:

. . . oral history was mistrusted by many historians and social scientists because it rested upon memory, and memory they regarded as unreliable. In an era when historical research was dominated by the document, oral history did not, in the main, produce data which could be verified and counted. It was not an objective, social-scientific methodology which could be rigorously tested.¹

The main limitation of document-based history is that it excluded non-literate societies from the domains of historical practice. Such societies were marginalised in historical writings and pejoratively viewed as primitive, static, and ahistorical. The societies that fell under this category included black Africans, American-Indians, aborigines from Australia, and communities in Oceania and other Pacific islands. Some western scholars even thought that these societies were closer to nature than to the civilised humanity. Commenting on the African character, for example, a nineteenth century German thinker, Georg WF Hegel, claimed that “what we properly understand by Africa, is the unhistorical, undeveloped spirit, still involved in the condition of mere nature. . . .”² One point that tended to be overlooked by the proponents of document-based history is that written records, as a source of historical knowledge, are not beyond reproach. The objectivity of written records could easily be a myth because the authors of written records, as in the case of oral informants, are also performers. One cannot simply take the information contained in written records as incontrovertible truth or context free.³

From the 1960s onwards, the complete disregard of oral methodology became increasingly unfashionable because new studies proved that oral

¹ Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 5.

² See Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* edited by Paul Armstrong (New York: WW Norton & Company, 2006), 212.

³ For a detailed discussion about the limitations of archival documents, see Edward H Carr. *What is History?* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1961); Edward Said, *Orientalism: 25th Anniversary Edition with a New Preface by the Author* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), and Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Colonial Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

method could be used in places where documented sources did not exist. In the field of African History, the most prominent advocate of oral methodology was a Belgian-born American scholar, Jan Vansina.⁴ Based on extensive fieldwork he undertook in the Equatorial region of Central Africa in the 1950s, Vansina developed a detailed framework for the collection, analysis and interpretation of oral traditions.⁵ The pioneering role of Vansina attracted the then emerging generation of African historians, including Bethwell A. Ogot from Kenya, Isaria N Kimambo from Tanzania, and Samwiri R Karugire from Uganda.⁶ With time, oral methodology became more and more acceptable and, today, it is not useful to the historians of African alone, but to the western and Asian scholars as well. Acknowledging the universal role of oral history and thereby challenging the conservative view of the famous 19th century German historian, Leopold von Ranke, Paul Thompson argues that oral history is “the first kind of history” and the basis of many other histories, including document-based histories.⁷ Scholars who have authored comprehensive works using oral methodology elsewhere in the world include Paul Thompson on

⁴ Jan Vansina published extensively using oral methodology. His key works include *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961 & 1985); *Kingdoms of the Savannah* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966); *The Tio Kingdom of the Middle Congo, 1880 – 1892* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973); *The Children of Woot: A History of the Kuba Peoples* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978); *Paths in the Rainforests: Towards a History of Political Traditions in Equatorial Africa* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); and *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyinginya Kingdom* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004).

⁵ This book was originally published in French language under the title *De la Tradition Orale* (1961), but was translated into English by HM Wright in 1965: see Jan Vansina. *Oral Tradition: A Study in Historical Methodology* (London: Routledge, 1965). Since then, it was revised twice. See Jan Vansina. *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985) and Jan Vansina. *Oral Tradition as History: A Study in Historical Methodology*, translated by HM Wright; with a new introduction by Selma Leydesdorff & Elizabeth Tonkin (New Jersey: Routledge, 2006).

⁶ Some of the key works authored by these scholars based on oral methodology include BA Ogot. *History of Southern Luo: Vol. 1 Migration and Settlement 1500-1900* (Nairobi: EAPH, 1967); Isaria N Kimambo. *A Political History of the Pare of Tanzania c. 1500-1900* (Nairobi: EAPH, 1969); Samwiri R Karugire. *A History of the Kingdom of Nkore in Western Uganda to 1896* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971). For similar works in East Africa see MSM Semakula Kiwanuka, *A History of Buganda from the Foundation of the Kingdom to 1900* (London: Longman, 1971) and Godfrey Muriuki, *A History of the Kikuyu, 1500-1900* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1974).

⁷ Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*. 3rd Edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 25

European history⁸, Shahid Amin on Indian nationalism,⁹ Peter Nabokov on American-Indian history¹⁰ and Richard Priest on Latin American history.¹¹

Despite the remarkable achievement made in the field of oral methodology over the last five decades, scholars still disagree on how to interpret African oral narratives. There are two contending parties on this debate. The first group of scholars, mostly Africans, argue that African oral narratives constitute genuine evidence that can be worked out to determine truth about the past. These scholars believe that African oral narratives represent true events that happened in the past. Of course, they are well aware that those narratives contain a large mix of mythical and artistic elements but they still believe that such elements can be carefully separated from the historical truth. However, the process of separation is always subject to criticism as hereby elaborated by Ogot:

. . . one of the major concerns of anthropologists and historians dealing with oral traditions is whether or not they are “true.” What we normally mean by this question is whether oral traditions conform to *our* concept of truth. But we should also be concerned about how other people view the past and how they define historical truth. For one of the aims of collecting oral traditions must be to get the people’s view of history...as opposed to *our* view of *their* history. If that is the case, then veracity in their terms is more important than veracity in our terms.¹²

The other group of scholars, mostly westerners, disagrees with the view presented above. To them, African oral narratives do not represent true events that happened in the past but they are just “stories” or ideological statements created recently to justify the social order that we see in African societies today. These scholars believe that African oral

⁸ Thompson, *Voice of the Past*.

⁹ Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

¹⁰ Peter Nabokov, *A Forest of Time: American Indian Ways of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹¹ Richard Price, *First Time: The Historical Vision of an Afro-American People* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

¹² BA Ogot, “The Construction of Luo Identity and History”, in *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History* edited by Luise White, et. al. (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), 32.

narratives are socially constructed and are remarkably influenced by the social environment in which they are told. Such claims purportedly suggest that African oral narratives are not reliable and are difficult to verify. According to Jan Shetler: “Historians using oral tradition as their principal source of evidence have been confounded by the central problem of the reliability of this source in accessing an objective rather than a mythical past. . . . Because of these difficulties, many have despaired of finding any verifiable historical content in oral traditions.”¹³ What we see from this citation is that some of the western scholars are worried about the reliability and veracity of African oral narratives. However, the proponents of the first view contend that the questions raised by such scholars are so peripheral and should not be an issue at all. According to Ogot:

For the past four decades, heated debates have been conducted in learned journals and books about the use and importance of oral traditions in African studies. Are they reliable? Are they valid? Can we use them for dating? Are they relevant to the contemporary situations in Africa or they are merely of antiquarian interest? Such questions, I wish to argue in this paper, do not deal with the real issues we should seriously debate. We need studies which seek to achieve an understanding of a people through a study of their treasure chest, the profound aspects of their culture, knowledge of their history, literature, and world-view, their philosophy, language and art; not for curiosity, or out of antiquarian interest, but as fit explanation for contemporary situations.¹⁴

Another question that has raised debate among scholars is how to classify oral narratives. Jan Vansina makes a distinction between “oral traditions” and “oral accounts”, and he argues that the time-lapse is the key factor distinguishing the two forms of oral evidence. According to Vansina, oral traditions are those narratives that have been told in a community for many generations beyond the present, while oral accounts represent events and social experiences that happened in the recent past, usually within the lifetime of the informants. The difference in temporality also translates into the question of ownership. In this case, oral traditions

¹³ Jan B Shetler, *Imagining Serengeti: A History of Landscape Memory in Tanzania from Earliest Times to the Present* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007), 18-19.

¹⁴ Ogot, “Construction of Luo Identity and History.”

constitute an integral part of the collective memory of a particular group while oral accounts belong to individual persons, families, or smaller groups.¹⁵

This mode of classification has been disputed by a British anthropologist, Elizabeth Tonkin, who argues that time factor alone is not enough to provide a clear distinction between the older and recent narratives. Apart from the time factor, Tonkin argues, important variations can still exist among story tellers depending on the social context in which a particular story is told. According to Tonkin, "The study of oral representations of pastness involves the study of their narrators and audiences as well, because they will affect the content and direction of the narrative...The social contexts of oral histories include the additional condition that their tellers must intersect with a palpable audience at a particular moment in time and space. What they choose to say is affected by these conditions..."¹⁶ The idea that oral narratives are influenced by the prevailing social conditions was earlier acknowledged by Vansina but Tonkin developed it much further. The same idea has also been emphasised by Jan Shetler based on her findings among the Bantu-speaking communities of western Serengeti in northern Tanzania.¹⁷

One limitation of Tonkin's approach is that she takes the idea of social representation of the past too far and undermines the possibility of getting any truth out of the oral narratives. For example, she challenges Vansina that "he treats [story tellers] as performers, with their own interests and social space, but he still looks for the core knowledge which they may be dressing up differently through different genres...The problem is to find stability in the flux of oral performances. In this book I argue that the conditions of transmitting memory and the nature of past-oriented discourses are different from those posited by Vansina."¹⁸ From a historical point of view, one finds Tonkin's argument untenable because, even though oral narratives are influenced by social conditions in which they are told, they still contain important traces about the past. Moreover,

¹⁵ Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*.

¹⁶ Tonkin, *Narrating our Pasts*, 86.

¹⁷ Shetler, *Imagining Serengeti*, 17-19.

¹⁸ Tonkin, *Narrating our Pasts*, 86.

Tonkin is not clear as to what type of oral narratives are actually problematic in terms of interpretation. She does not say whether the social conditions affect older traditions in the same way as they do to recent accounts. This point is reflected in the following statement by Ogot:

But we must distinguish between those traditions which relate to the origins of societies and those that deal with the migrations, settlements and external relations as well as the internal developments of societies. The former in any society are usually expressed in myths and legends that are difficult to interpret, while the latter are normally straightforward narratives, with sprinkling of myths and legends. It is with the second category of traditions that a historian is primarily concerned.¹⁹

My own reservation about Tokin's approach comes from the type of oral evidence I used in the study of Luo migration from western Kenya to northern Tanzania. The Luo migration accounts reflect the events that happened very recently, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The memories about these migrations are still fresh in the communities and some of those migrations were witnessed and documented by the British administrators.²⁰ Under such circumstances, we cannot rule out the possibility of getting truth from such accounts. Of course, the narrators may "perform" those stories with their own interests and biases, but that does not remove the possibility of getting truth about those migrations. Members of the Luo community know very well where their ancestors came from, their migration leaders, the routes they used, and the key events that happened on the way. In the following sections, a temporal analysis of major trends of oral history methodology is developed. The analysis builds from the extensive library research that was conducted in Tanzania and United States of America between 2010 and 2014.

Oral Histories in Mainland Tanzania before the 1960s

¹⁹ Ogot, *History of Southern Luo*, 17.

²⁰ See Albertus K Onyiego, "Luo Expansion and its Implications on Suba Communities in Rorya District, 1850–2000" (University of Dar es Salaam: MA Dissertation, 2008) and Albertus K Onyiego, "Ethnic Consciousness and Political Change in Rorya District, Tanzania, 1800 to the Present" (PhD Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam, 2019)

Although major historical works based on oral methodology started coming out in the 1950s/1960s, it would be erroneous to think that similar works never existed in Africa before. The Yoruba people of southwestern Nigeria, for instance, started writing their local histories based on oral traditions from about the 1850s onwards.²¹ Similar efforts existed in Mainland Tanzania whereby interested persons from different parts of the country collected and compiled local narratives. Such people included an Afro-Arab man namely Abdallah bin Hemedi l'Ajjemiy who wrote a lengthy Swahili history of the Shambaa people of northeastern Tanzania in the 1860s²² and Francis Xavier Rwamugira who wrote a book on the history of the Kiziba people of northwestern Tanzania in the 1940s.²³

In some parts of Mainland Tanzania, especially places where literacy had not penetrated enough, there existed special councils of local historians which were responsible to oversee the proper transmission of their oral histories. Among the Matumbi and Ngindo people of southeastern Tanzania, for instance, there was a local council called *makolo* (literally "history") through which the traditions and memories of the past were preserved and handed over to the younger generations. The production and reproduction of historical accounts under that council were subject to careful scrutiny before the particular accounts were accepted as authentic. In the due process, a local expert bearing the similar title, *makolo*, would recite a piece of account while the other members kept silent. The youth listened attentively for the purpose of acquiring knowledge while the elderly people listened carefully in order to correct

²¹ See RCC Law, "Early Yoruba Historiography" in *History in Africa*, 3 (1976): 69-84 and Michael R Doortmont, "Recapturing the Past: Samuel Johnson and the History of the Yoruba" (Erasmus University Rotterdam, PhD dissertation, 1994). Both sources have been adopted from Jan B Shetler, *Telling Our Own Stories: Local Histories from South Mara, Tanzania* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), p. viii.

²² This work, known as *Habari za Wakilindi*, was written in the 1860s, but it was later translated and published by JWT Allen and William Kimweri bin Mbago (Nairobi: EALB, 1962). For further information see Steven Feierman, *The Shambaa Kingdom: A History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 15.

²³ Francis X Rwamugira, *Amakuru ga Kiziba na Abakama Bamu* (1949), edited, translated and published by Galasius B Kamanzi & Peter R Schmidt as *The History of Kiziba and Its Kings* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2020). For further details see Israel K Katoke, *The Making of the Karagwe Kingdom* (Nairobi: EAPH, 1970), 32.

the narrator, in case he made mistakes in chronology or facts. The narrator would derive much respect and pride if he recited the account correctly and received approval of the other *makolo*.²⁴ Such tournaments, which usually took place at a beer party or informal gatherings, were similar to those among the Jlao people of Liberia. Elizabeth Tonkin has noted that Jlao culture is highly rhetorical, in that speaking skills are valued and many issues are supposed to be publicly debated.²⁵

The foregoing consciousness among the local people of Mainland Tanzania in preserving their own pasts should not be confused with the colonial initiative to document “tribal” histories in Africa. While the local historians were essentially moved by the desire to preserve their local histories, the colonial administration had a different motive altogether, that is, to promote ethnic divisions and thereby discourage a sense of common identity among the African people. From colonial point of view, the awareness of common history would foster common grievances among the African people, particularly with the rise of nationalist movements in the post-war period. To promote ethnic loyalties, the British in East Africa sponsored divisive indigenous histories that extolled local customs, traditions, and colonial-supported chiefs. This motive often coincided with the desire of literate African men to create their own local histories that were not just the history of Europeans in Africa.²⁶

Throughout the British colonies in eastern and southern Africa, educated Africans, often associated with Christian missions, produced local histories for their own ethnic groups based on oral traditions and ethnographies. Mathias E Mnyampala - a peasant, devout Catholic, and a Native Authority clerk in Dodoma region of central Tanzania - is one of the famous examples in Mainland Tanzania. Sponsored by the British colonial administration, he consulted with the elders throughout Dodoma and Manyoni districts and collected clan histories of the Gogo people. These ethno-historical accounts were published in 1954 in Swahili language as an attempt to combat “detrribalisation” in the area. On the other hand,

²⁴ Gilbert CK Gwassa, *The Outbreak and Development of the Maji Maji War 1905-1907* (Köln: Rudiger Koppe Verlag, 2005), 28.

²⁵ Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts*, 26.

²⁶ Mathias E Mnyampala, *The Gogo: History, Customs, and Traditions*, edited by Gregory H Maddox (New York: ME Sharpe, 1995), xi.

Mnyampala sought to promote ethnic cohesion among the Gogo by emphasising their essential cultural unity despite diverse origins of the different Gogo clans and dialectical differences across the region.²⁷

In other cases, colonial administrators themselves would take initiatives to document ethnic histories in the areas under their control. Thus, Major Charles Dundas, the British administrator of the Kilimanjaro area in northeastern Tanzania, published a book titled *Kilimanjaro and its Peoples* in 1924.²⁸ Major Dundas commissioned Nathaniel Mtui who was a teacher at Marangu Lutheran Mission, to go all around the Chaggaland collecting material about their past. According to Kathleen Stahl, Mtui had shown a propensity for collecting and writing down the legends, customs and history of the Chagga people long time before he was commissioned by Major Dundas. In addition to Kichagga which by then was already a written language, Mtui learnt Kiswahili and some German to enable him accomplish the task. He soon attracted attention of the German Lutheran pastors, who also commissioned him to collect oral information on their behalf. Mtui was initially commissioned by Johannes Raum to collect material about childhood customs. Then Raum introduced him to his colleague, Bruno Gutman, who was then serving in Moshi chiefdom. Gutman asked Mtui to collect material on the history of certain chiefdoms and clans. After the First World War and the British had take-over colonial administration of Mainland Tanzania, Raum introduced Mtui to the then serving British administrator, Major Dundas. Mtui spent more than a year visiting one chiefdom after another, asking questions and filling out the collected information in the notebooks.

Starting from about the 1930s, the British colonial administration employed trained officials to undertake colony-wide ethnographic

²⁷ Maddox, *The Gogo*. For further discussion on detribalisation see Jomo Kenyatta. *Facing Mount Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Gikuyu* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1938; reprinted 1961). This work was originally written as part of his degree programme in Anthropology at the University of London. In that book, Kenyatta made an appeal in defense of Africa, specifically Gikuyu culture, as humane and civilised.

²⁸ See Charles Dundas, *Kilimanjaro and its Peoples* (London: HF & G Whitherby, 1924). For each full notebook Mtui was paid 16 shillings. It is not known how many notebooks Mtui filled for his three sponsors, but certainly the number was considerable. Gutman's work alone filled 9 notebooks. For further notes, see Kathleen M Stahl, *History of the Chagga People of Kilimanjaro* (London: Mouton & Co., 1964), 16-17.

surveys. This was the context in which Hans Cory, Edward C Baker and other British colonial officials undertook ethnographic surveys across the country.²⁹ Such surveys became very instrumental in the establishment and facilitation of colonial administration in the local areas.

Political Histories and Stimulation of Oral History Methodology

The writing of history in Mainland Tanzania immediately after independence was driven by different motives compared to the period before. While the works produced earlier were meant to facilitate colonial administration, the works produced in the 1960s and early 1970s were heavily influenced by the nationalist sentiments that dominated the respective period. Like other countries across the continent, Tanganyika had just obtained political independence, so there was a great desire for the kind of histories that could promote African identity and a sense of nationhood. On the other hand, it was expected that nationalist historiography could challenge the conservative colonial view by emphasising the role of African initiative rather than foreign agency in understanding African past.

The quest for nationalist historiography in Mainland Tanzania coincided with a world-wide debate on the validity and relevance of oral sources as alternative source of information in the reconstruction of the past. It was in the mid of that debate when Jan Vansina published his *Oral Tradition as History* in the early 1960s. That debate drew inspiration and sparked interest among students and scholars in various parts of the world. Such students included Isaria N Kimambo who was undertaking

²⁹Hans Cory collected a large body of ethnographic information from different communities in Mainland Tanzania. Some of his best known works include: *Historia ya Wilaya ya Bukoba* (Mwanza, n.d.), summary histories of the former eight kingdoms of Bukoba and Karagwe districts, written both in English and Swahili; H Cory & MM Hartnoll, *Customary Law of the Haya Tribe* (London: International African Institute, 1945); "Land Tenure in Bukuria" in *Tanganyika Notes and Records (TNR)*, No. 23 (1947), 70-79; *The Ntemi: the Traditional Rites in connection with the Burial, Election, Enthronement and Magic Powers of a Sukuma Chief* (London: International African Institute, 1951), *The Indigenous Political System of the Sukuma and Proposal for Political Reform* (Dar es Salaam: East African Institute of Social Research/Eagle Press, 1954); *Sheria za Kawaida za Wanyamwezi* (Dar-es-Salaam: East African Institute of Social Research/Eagle Press, 1955); *African Figurines: Their Ceremonial Use in Puberty Rites in Tanganyika* (London, 1956); "The Sambia Initiation Rites for Boys," *TNR*, No. 58-59 (March-September 1962); "Tambiko (Fika)" in *TNR* No. 58-59 (March-September 1962).

PhD studies at North-Western University and Steven Feierman who was also a PhD student at the University of Wisconsin, both in the United States. Using oral methodology, Kimambo conducted research on political evolution among the Pare people of northeastern Tanzania.³⁰ His research problem was to test validity of the generalisation made by Roland Oliver and John D. Fage about the common origins of the African states. This generalisation was based on the idea that all African kingdoms were essentially similar and that they were linked together by common institutions connected with divine kingship which developed first in Egypt and then diffused to the rest of Africa.³¹

In fact, this hypothesis, popularly called Sudanic civilisation hypothesis, had been proposed earlier by European and American anthropologists, such as Charles G Seligman and George P Murdock. Writing in 1930, Seligman stated that “the civilisations of Africa are the civilisations of the Hamites.”³² Similarly, in 1959, Murdock claimed that there existed a common political system, which he called “African despotism”, extending from Negro Africa to Madagascar and to the Cushitic-speaking peoples of southwestern Ethiopia.³³ Kimambo argues that the idea of “Sudanic states” diffusing either from Egypt or from western Sudan must be regarded as an oversimplification which was caused by racial stereotypes, on the one hand, and by lack of proper understanding of the African past, on the other. He sought to replace the idea of diffusion with the concept of independent African invention. According to Kimambo, “I am convinced that when most states have been thoroughly studied, it may become evident that independent invention did play a more significant part in the origin of African states than hitherto realized.”³⁴ Other works falling under the similar category in Mainland

³⁰ This PhD dissertation was later published as a book under the titled *A Political History of the Pare of Tanzania, c. 1500-1900* (Nairobi: EAPH, 1969). For further reference on similar discussion see Isaria N Kimambo. *Three Decades of Production of Historical Knowledge at Dar es Salaam* (Dar es Salaam: DUP, 1993).

³¹ R Oliver & JD Fage, *A Short History of Africa* (London: Penguin, 1962), 44-52.

³² CG Seligman, *Races of Africa, 3rd edn.* (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd, 1957), 85.

³³ GP Murdock, *Africa: Its Peoples and Their Culture History* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959), 36.

³⁴ Kimambo, *Political History of the Pare*, 4.

Tanzania included *The Making of the Karagwe Kingdom* by Israeli K Katoke.³⁵

Apart from Kimambo and Katoke who were local scholars, there were foreign scholars, such as Steven Feierman³⁶, who worked on similar topics but from a slightly different direction. Using historical and anthropological methods, Feierman collected and analysed oral sources among the Shambaa people of northeastern Tanzania, between 1966 and 1968. His major interest was to study a history of the Shambaa people, with a particular focus on kingdom formation.³⁷ He also collected information on the Shambaa culture and society, earning him another doctorate in Social Anthropology at the University of Oxford.³⁸ In order to accomplish the two projects, Feierman collected extensive information, including Shambaa religion, political culture, myths, sacrifice, warfare, traditional justice, inheritance and land tenure.

The myth of Mbegha is probably the most interesting aspect of the Shambaa history. This myth is a hero tradition which tells the story of a hunter called Mbegha, who came to the Shambaa country from the wilderness. Because of his generosity, wisdom, and skills in killing wild pigs, he was welcome by the Shambaa people and given a wife. The wild pigs were destructive to the Shambaa crops but at the same time they were important source of protein in the Shambaa diet. One night, a lion attacked cows at an outdoor enclosure at a place called Kihitu. Mbegha appeared with his dogs and spears, and killed the lion. The next morning the Shambaa people decided to make him their king.³⁹

One contribution of Feierman in the oral historiography of Mainland Tanzania is his demonstration that myths are important historical materials. His method calls for a systematic analysis of a myth before its

³⁵ Katoke, *Karagwe Kingdom*.

³⁶ Steven Feierman taught African History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1969-1989. In the next six years (1989-1995), he taught at the University of Florida. He is currently based at the University of Pennsylvania.

³⁷ This project was the basis on his PhD dissertation which was later published under the title *The Shambaa Kingdom: A History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974).

³⁸ This project, titled "Concepts of Sovereignty among the Shambaa and Their Relation to Political Action", was submitted for a PhD thesis in Social Anthropology at the University of Oxford, 1972. It was later published as *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990).

³⁹ Feierman, *Shambaa Kingdom*, Chp.2.

historical value is determined. He was able to transform the story of Mbegha from its mythical form to a meaningful historical account regarding the founding of the Shambaa Kingdom. He treated the humanisation of Mbegha as a changing variable and systematically analysed the implication of that change in the process of state formation among the Shambaa. For instance, Mbegha appears as a wild, obscene and dangerous creature at the beginning of the story, but ends up as a kind and protective prince. The changes in humanisation go along with nuances in the scenes, social roles and relationships, until Mbegha finally becomes a hero (king).⁴⁰ It should be noted that structural analysis had been used since the 1950s by the French anthropologist, Claude Levi-Straus, and his followers like Luc de Heusch.⁴¹ Altogether, Feierman stands out as a scholar who applied structural method into a comprehensive historical analysis.

The works by Kimambo, Katoke, and Feierman are only selected cases in a myriad of political histories written in Mainland Tanzania during the 1960s and 1970s. Similar works were written to reflect political evolution among several other societies, including the Chagga of northern Tanzania⁴², Nyamwezi of western Tanzania⁴³, Hehe of southern highlands⁴⁴, Kimbu of western Tanzania⁴⁵, and Ngoni of southern Tanzania.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ De Heusch received a doctorate in anthropology from Brussels University, 1955. Between 1955 and 1992 he taught at the Université libre de Bruxelles where he became a full professor in 1960. In his *The Drunken King or The Origin of the State* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), de Heusch offers a structural analysis of 26 versions of the oral traditions about the origins of the Africans kingdoms in the Congo area. The fieldwork leading to these traditions was done in the area in the 1950s.

⁴² Read, for example, Stahl, *History of the Chagga*.

⁴³ JB Kabeya, *Mtemi Mirambo, Mtawala Shujaa wa Kinyamwezi* (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1966); Norman R Bennett. *Mirambo of Tanzania, ca. 1840-1884* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

⁴⁴ Michael Musso, *Mkwawa na Kabila Lake* (Dar es Salaam: EAPH, 1968).

⁴⁵ AEM Shorter, "Ukimbu and the Kimbu Chiefdoms of Southern Unyamwezi" (Oxford University: PhD Thesis, 1968); *Idem*, "Nyungu-ya-Mawe, Leadership in 19th Century Tanzania", HAT Paper No. 7, 1969); *Idem*, *Chiefship in Western Tanzania: Political History of the Kimbu* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1972).

⁴⁶ See Patrick M Redmond, "A Political History of the Songea Ngoni from the mid-nineteenth century to the rise of the Tanganyika African National Union (University of

One point of note is that not all historians of the 1960s and 1970s were interested in political histories. While the majority of scholars were preoccupied by the tradition of political histories, there were other scholars who used oral methodology to pursue different research topics. Gilbert K Gwassa, for instance, conducted extensive research on the *Maji Maji* War against German colonial occupation in southern Tanzania, 1905 – 1907. The research was done as part of a PhD thesis at the University of Dar es Salaam⁴⁷ and it provides an example of an African resistance movement whose historiography had hitherto been dominated by colonial reports and interpretation by foreign scholars.⁴⁸ Another scholar was Peter R Schmidt, a historical-archaeologist from the University of Florida in the United States who conducted a study among the Haya people of northwestern Tanzania. Using archaeological materials and oral tradition, Schmidt explained how the Iron Age traditions in the interlacustrine region evolved from the early to recent past. He explored several aspects of the Haya culture, including their mythology, agricultural patterns, iron working, royal genealogies, and spirits mediums, to see how the Haya concept of the past relates to the pattern of material remains left by the Iron Age communities over the last 2,500 years, especially at a site called Katuruka.⁴⁹

Materialist History and The Decline of Oral Methodology

From the mid-1970s, the economic situation in Mainland Tanzania changed drastically as commodity production in the country declined. Under such circumstances, the political histories done in the 1960s and 1970s lost relevance and became less exciting to the people. People's interests became focalised on exposing the "imperialist enemy" and its manifestations in exploiting and underdeveloping African countries. Such

London: PhD Thesis, 1972); and Pamela H Gulliver. "Political Evolution in the Ngoni Chiefdoms, 1850 - 1905." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 37, no.1 (1974).

⁴⁷ This research was done between 1966 - 1969 under the supervision of Walter Rodney. It was published posthumously as Gwassa. *The Maji Maji War*.

⁴⁸ Jigal Beez, "Gilbert Clement Kamana Gwassa 1939-1982: A Tribute to the Founder of Tanzania Maji Maji Research," in *Habari Infobrief des Tanzania Network*, No. 4 (2008): 64-67.

⁴⁹ Peter R Schmidt, *Historical Archaeology: A Structural Approach in an African Culture* (London: Greenwood Press, 1978).

currents prompted a theoretical shift Mainland Tanzania, not only in the field of history but throughout humanities and social sciences. Greater emphasis was put on the advocacy of the materialist (sometimes Marxist) approaches to Tanzanian history. The overall implication of such changes is that the popularity of oral histories in the country went considerably down, as the focus had now moved to economic and class-based histories. The new theoretical and methodological trend favoured class analysis based on material relations and struggles against capitalism. Some of the notable proponents of the materialist historiography at the University of Dar es Salaam included Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, Jacques Depelchin and Issa Shivji.

The shift from political to economic histories in Mainland Tanzania went along with necessary changes in the methodologies of history. Whereas the political histories focused mainly on the pre-colonial period and heavily relied upon oral methodology, the economic histories mostly covered the colonial and post-colonial periods and considerable amount of information came from archival documents. One way of verifying the popularity of economic histories in Mainland Tanzania at that particular period is by looking at the ratio of students' dissertations at the Department of History, University of Dar es Salaam, which stood at 54: 6: 15 for economic histories, political histories and other themes, respectively. Selected titles of students' dissertations at that time include BE Mwijaribu, "A Historical Study of Class Relations in Dar es Salaam: A Case Study of Buguruni" (1976/7), F Ndalo, "Industrial Production and Proletarianisation: A Case Study of Dar Brew as a Production Unit in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania" (1978/9) and CE Mganga, "Capitalist Production and the Process of Proletarianisation in Tanzania: The Case of Tanganyika Packers, Kawe, Dar es Salaam" (1979/80).⁵⁰

Post-modern Histories and the Resurgence of Oral Methodology

Unlike the previous decades whereby the production of historical knowledge assumed a particular dominant paradigm, the period from

⁵⁰These dissertations are available in the Resource Room, Department of History, University of Dar es Salaam. They exist in unpublished form.

1990s witnessed remarkable diversification in thematic, theoretical and methodological approaches.⁵¹ That transformation emanated from the wave of intellectual and ideological movement that took place in the world in the early 1990s, namely post-modernism. Thought to have begun in the late 1970s in the western world, post-modernism dismisses hegemonic discourses (e.g. structuralism, materialism, etc.) and promotes silenced and marginalised voices, including the powerless, the poor, slaves, women, immigrants, and minorities. It is based upon a relativistic theory of knowledge, that there is no single truth about the world; instead, every question has an infinite number of answers, each being equally valid as the other. Post-modern historiography pays attention to people whose names and experiences could not end up in historical record. A post-modern history, therefore, is a history of inclusion contrary to the previous modes of historiography which favoured elites, rulers, or members of other dominant groups.⁵²

The adoption of a post-modern philosophy has prompted a major boost in the use of oral sources in Mainland Tanzania. Apart from the increase in the number of publications, the new approach extended historical interest to new areas such as environment, women studies, disease and healing, etc. Suzan Geiger, for instance, introduced gender perspective in oral historiography when she published a book on the women's participation in Mainland Tanzania's nationalist movement, 1955 to 1965. Although the book was published in 1997, the research was been done way back between 1979 and 1984. Geiger uses the life histories of women to challenge the biases and silences existing in the nationalist histories of Africa, which typically privileged men. She is not pleased with the widespread view that the nationalist struggle in Mainland Tanzania was the handiwork of Julius K Nyerere, the founding President of Tanzania; a view that fails to properly and sufficiently acknowledge the

⁵¹For further details on thematic and methodological shifts in the production of historical knowledge in Tanzania, see Oswald Masebo, "New Thematic Directions in History at the University of Dar es Salaam, 1990s to 2017" in *Tanzania Zamani Journal: A Journal of Historical Research and Writing* IX, No. 2 (2017): 1 - 67.

⁵²The concept "postmodernism" has been variably used by scholars to suit different contexts and purposes. The version used in this paper was adopted from Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1979), translated by Geoff Bennington & Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

role of Bibi Titi Mohammed, a woman nationalist and the only colleague of Nyerere whose name was known throughout the country at independence.⁵³

Similar exclusionary tendencies against women were also observed among the Bantu speaking peoples of western Serengeti by Jan Bender Shetler in the 1990s. Shetler noted that women are conspicuously missing as authors or informants of ethnic history among Serengeti communities; this is not because they do not know anything about the past but because they were not in a position to learn or pass on these particular stories that evolved during the colonial period. While in the past women in these areas held positions of authority, such as rainmakers, prophets or elders, the colonial administration systematically denied them a voice in formal politics. In other cases, women left their natal homes to live in their husbands' family homesteads, thereby functioning as valuable intermediaries between clans and ethnic groups. But when the emphasis shifted to ethnic unity and exclusivity in the colonial era women became outsiders and strangers.⁵⁴

Shetler's major contribution to the oral historiography of Mainland Tanzania comes from her second book, also based on the western Serengeti people.⁵⁵ Using spatial analysis of oral traditions, Shetler reveals the sharp contrast between conservationist and local ways of seeing the landscape. Whereas the global conservationists view Serengeti National Park as entirely wild and in a pristine state since the dawn of time (without history or social context),⁵⁶ she argues that the indigenous ways of seeing the same landscape still exist in the collective memory of the local people who have never been included in global narratives about the park, except when burning grass, cutting trees or poaching with weapons that make animals suffer and die a lingering, senseless death.⁵⁷

⁵³Suzan Geiger, *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-1965* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 1997).

⁵⁴ Shetler, *Telling Our Own stories*, 5.

⁵⁵ Jan Bender Shetler, *Imagining Serengeti: A History of Landscape Memory in Tanzania from Earliest Times to the Present* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007).

⁵⁶ For this kind of analysis, see Benhard Grzimek, *Serengeti Shall not Die* (film-1959). Grzimek worked for Frankfurt Zoo in Germany

⁵⁷ Shetler, *Imagining Serengeti*.

Using spatial methodology and interdisciplinary work of environmental and social historians in Africa and elsewhere, Shetler was able to reconstruct a long sweeping history of western Serengeti peoples as they interacted with their environment over the past two millennia. The work allows us to see not only how these people physically changed their environment but also how landscape memory shaped their societies and how this memory changed over time with new contexts. We learn from this book that physical landscape can be preserved, changed, or destroyed based on the memories imbued in it by specific group of people. For example, although restrictions had kept the Serengeti elders out of the area for over thirty years, they could still identify many of the abandoned settlement sites, sacred places and the old springs which are now dry and barely visible because the people were no longer cleaning them and no one had brought offerings here for propitiating in decades. Standing on the higher places, they looked across the landscape and named the areas used to be settled by different clans, often associated with hills. They even pointed and told stories about the origin of the first Ikoma man and woman who pitched their camp under the Mukoma tree after arriving from Sonjo, now on the eastern border of the Serengeti National Park. Their ability to locate the sites in the wilderness came from hunting trips they made long ago with their fathers and grandfathers, who told the stories of the past as they walked over the land or camped in these spots.

Another example of successful use of oral methodology in Mainland Tanzania comes from Jamie Monson's study of how the TAZARA railway - the 1,060-mile-long railway line linking the landlocked Zambian copper belt with the Indian Ocean port city of Dar es Salaam, built with financial and technical support from China - changed lives and livelihoods in the southern highlands of Tanzania.⁵⁸ Using eyewitness accounts, Monson presents ideological contestations that surrounded the implementation of that project from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. The story of the TAZARA railway brings to light dimensions of the cold war era in Africa that go beyond the competition between socialist and capitalist ideologies. Monson argues that cold war politics were not necessarily important to

⁵⁸ Jamie Monson, *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

the rural communities located along the railway corridor; they also had their own concerns with the project, some of which were contradictory to the project itself. During its construction, for example, the railway sometimes threatened the social and physical landscapes of these communities, particularly in those areas where powerful ancestral spirits were associated with land features. Monson acknowledges many stories of spirits that endeavoured to stop the project by causing bridges to collapse or reversing the impact of excavation by restoring mountains to their original shapes. Even after the railway started working, there were still contestations in the workplaces, on station platforms, and in rural villages as railway workers, users, and managers struggled over the larger meaning and purpose of the TAZARA.⁵⁹

It is also interesting to learn how the same railway worked in several unintended ways, with some of the outcomes diverging from the visions of their master planners. From the time of its construction, for instance, the communities living alongside the railway were not just passive observers. The specific form of workers trained during the construction of the project, resulted in the creation of a small but significant cohort of experienced African railway specialists who continued to work for TAZARA until their retirements. Other local groups were engaged in the railway's development in their multiple roles as suppliers of provisions to the workers, as the local security force, and as the producers and traders of agricultural products. Upon its completion, the same railway became the backbone of a new spatial orientation for agrarian production and rural commerce. These activities could also involve tension and conflict, because the rural and urban users of TAZARA were located within divergent social structures and political processes.⁶⁰

The other example of a scholar who significantly employed oral sources during this period in Mainland Tanzania is James Giblin. Giblin used oral methodology in two different projects. The first project sought to understand how the politics of environmental control in Handeni district changed after the German colonial occupation during the late 19th

⁵⁹ Monson, *Africa's Freedom Railway*.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

century.⁶¹ According to Giblin, colonial rule transformed the patterns of trade, forms of production, local administration, and patronage system that existed in the area, thereby undermining environmental sustainability. The second project explored how the local people in Njombe region were denied the opportunity to participate in political and production activities that would positively transform their lives during colonial and early post-colonial periods. Giblin argues that people in Njombe were only superficially incorporated into colonial economies, as migrant labourers in colonial plantations, but they were practically excluded from markets, formal education, medical services, and other meaningful activities that would help them escape the trap of labour migration.⁶²

Conclusion

This discussion indicates that oral methodology has played a remarkable role in the writing of Tanzanian history over the past several decades. It also appears in the discussion that the use of oral methodology has mostly been influenced by ideological and intellectual trends prevailing at each particular time. When the British colonial administration was faced by the threat of detribalisation and nationalist consciousness in the 1940s and 1950s, they employed oral methodology to deploy “tribal” sentiments among natives. A few years later, after the African ruling classes had taken over in the early 1960s, oral methodology was used to cultivate the sense of national identity and belonging. Similar trend continued in the subsequent decades. The flexible nature of oral methodology is appreciable because it is capable of accommodating diverse situations, but at the same time it poses a special challenge for historians to maintain objectivity. Another point of note is variation in the type of oral sources used over different periods of time. The works written during the colonial period, for example, dealt with individual chiefdoms or “tribal” groups and, for that matter, the majority of their informants were chiefs or local headmen appointed by the colonial administration.

⁶¹See James L Giblin, *The Politics of Environmental Control in Northeastern Tanzania, 1840-1940* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992).

⁶²James L Giblin, *A History of the Excluded: Making Family a Refuge from State in Twentieth-Century Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2005).

The works produced in the 1960s sought to avoid “tribal” approach, but they were still heavily inclined towards ethnic identities. Some critics have actually challenged the nationalistic rationale of these works, because most of them took ethnicity as a point of departure. The major difference was that the works produced in the 1960s were broader in temporal and spatial dimension and they brought diverse clans or chiefdoms spread over vast territories under a common historical analysis. This kind of diversity prompted the use of a wide range of oral sources and, owing to the nature of research problems at that time, greater emphasis was put on oral traditions. By the late 1990s, and indeed in the 2000s, oral historians of Mainland Tanzania had significantly minimised “tribal” approach and adopted diverse thematic analyses. Again, because of the recent nature of their research topics, they relied mainly on eyewitness accounts and personal reminiscences. Generally speaking, despite the shortcomings of the oral methodology, it is still relevant as an alternative method in addressing historical problems in many parts of Mainland Tanzania.

References

- Abrams, Lynn. *Oral History Theory*. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- Amin, Shahid. *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Beez, Jigal. “Gilbert Clement Kamana Gwassa 1939-1982: A Tribute to the Founder of Tanzania Maji Maji Research,” in *Habari Infobrief des Tanzania Network*, No. 4 (2008): 64-67.
- Bennett, Norman Robert. *Mirambo of Tanzania, ca. 1840-1884*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975.
- Bin Hemedi l’Ajjemy, Abdallah. *Habari za Wakilindi (1860s)*. Translated and published by JWT Allen and William Kimweri bin Mbago. Nairobi: EALB, 1962.
- Carr, Edward H. *What is History?* London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1961.
- Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*, edited by Paul Armstrong. New York: WW Norton & Company, 2006.
- Cory, Hans. *Historia ya Wilaya ya Bukoba*. Mwanza, n.d.

- Cory, Hans. "Land Tenure in Bukuria." *Tanganyika Notes and Records* 23 (1947).
- Cory, Hans & MM Hartnoll, *Customary Law of the Haya Tribe*. London: International African Institute, 1945.
- Cory, Hans. *Sheria za Kawaida za Wanyamwezi*. Dar-es-Salaam: East African Institute of Social Research/Eagle Press, 1955.
- Cory, Hans. *The Indigenous Political System of the Sukuma and Proposal for Political Reform*. Dar es Salaam: East African Institute of Social Research/Eagle Press, 1954.
- Cory, Hans. *The Ntemi: The Traditional Rites in connection with the Burial, Election, Enthronement and Magic Powers of a Sukuma Chief*. London: International African Institute, 1951.
- Cory, Hans. "The Sambia Initiation Rites for Boys." *Tanganyika Notes and Records* 58-59. March-September 1962.
- Doortmont, Michael R. "Recapturing the Past: Samuel Johnson and the History of the Yoruba." PhD Dissertation, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 1994.
- Dundas, Charles. *Kilimanjaro and its Peoples*. London: HF & G Whitherby, 1924.
- Feierman, Steven. *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990.
- Feierman, Steven. *The Shambaa Kingdom: A History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974.
- Geiger, Suzan. *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-1965*. Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 1997.
- Grzimek, Benhard. *Serengeti Shall not Die* (film-1959).
- Gulliver, Pamela H. "Political Evolution in the Ngoni Chiefdoms, 1850-1905." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 37, no.1 (1974).
- Gwassa, Gilbert CK. *The Outbreak and Development of the Maji Maji War 1905-1907*. Köln: Rudiger Koppe Verlag, 2005.
- Heusch, Luc de. *The Drunken King or The Origin of the State*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.
- Kabeya, JB. *Mtemi Mirambo, Mtawala Shujaa wa Kinyamwezi*. Nairobi: EAPH, 1966.

- Karugire, Samwiri R. *A History of the Kingdom of Nkore in Western Uganda to 1896*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971.
- Katoke, Israel K. *The Making of the Karagwe Kingdom*. Nairobi: EAPH, 1970.
- Kimambo, Isaria N. *A Political History of the Pare of Tanzania c. 1500-1900*. Nairobi: EAPH, 1969.
- Law, RCC. "Early Yoruba Historiography." *History in Africa* 3 (1976): 69 – 84.
- Lyotard, Jean-Francois. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge (1979)*. Translated by Geoff Bennington & Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.
- Masebo, Oswald, "New Thematic Directions in History at the University of Dar es Salaam, 1990s to 2017." *Tanzania Zamani: A Journal of Historical Research and Writing* 9, No. 2 (2017): 1 - 67.
- Mnyampala, Mathias E. *The Gogo: History, Customs, and Traditions*, edited by Gregory H Maddox. New York: ME Sharpe, 1995.
- Monson, Jamie. *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.
- Murdock, GP. *Africa: Its Peoples and Their Culture History*. New York: 1959.
- Muriuki, Godfrey. *A History of the Kikuyu, 1500-1900*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1974.
- Musso, Michael. *Mkwawa na Kabila Lake*. Dar es Salaam: EAPH, 1968.
- Nabokov, Peter. *A Forest of Time: American Indian Ways of History*. Cambridge: CUP, 2002.
- Ogot, BA. *History of Southern Luo: Vol. 1 Migration and Settlement 1500-1900*. Nairobi: EAPH, 1967.
- Ogot, BA. "The Construction of Luo Identity and History." *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History*, edited by Luise White, et. al. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001.
- Oliver, R & JD Fage. *A Short History of Africa*. London: Penguin, 1962.
- Onyiego, Albertus K. "Ethnic Consciousness and Political Change in Rorya District, Tanzania, 1800 to the Present." PhD Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam, 2019.

- Onyiego, Albertus K. "Luo Expansion and its Implications on Suba Communities in Rorya District, 1850–2000." Master's diss., University of Dar es Salaam, 2008.
- Price, Richard. *First Time: The Historical Vision of an Afro-American People*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Redmond, Patrick M. "A Political History of the Songea Ngoni from the mid-nineteenth century to the rise of the Tanganyika African National Union. University of London: PhD Thesis, 1972.
- Rwamugira, Francis X. *Amakuru ga Kiziba na Abakama Bamu* (1949), edited, translated and published by Kamanzi, Galasius B. & Peter R. Schmidt as *The History of Kiziba and Its Kings* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota, 2020).
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism: 25th Anniversary Edition with a New Preface by the Author*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.
- Schmidt, Peter R. *Historical Archaeology: A Structural Approach in an African Culture*. London: Greenwood Press, 1978.
- Seligman, CG. *Races of Africa*. 3rd Edn. London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1957.
- Semakula, Kiwanuka MSM. *A History of Buganda from the Foundation of the Kingdom to 1900*. London: Longman, 1971.
- Shetler, Jan B. *Imagining Serengeti: A History of Landscape Memory in Tanzania from Earliest Times to the Present*. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007.
- Shetler, Jan B. *Telling Our Own Stories: Local Histories from South Mara, Tanzania*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Shorter, Aylward. *Chiefship in Western Tanzania: Political History of the Kimbu*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1972.
- Shorter, AEM. "Nyungu-ya-Mawe, Leadership in 19th Century Tanzania." HAT Paper No. 7, 1969.
- Shorter, AEM. "Ukimbu and the Kimbu Chiefdoms of Southern Unyamwezi." PhD Thesis, Oxford University, 1968.
- Stahl, Kathleen M. *History of the Chagga People of Kilimanjaro*. London: Mouton & Co., 1964.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. *Along the Archival Grain: Colonial Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. Princeton: Princeton, University Press, 2010.

- Thompson, Paul. *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*. 3rd Edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Vansina, Jan. *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyinginya Kingdom*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.
- Vansina, Jan. *Kingdoms of the Savannah*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966.
- Vansina, Jan. *Oral Tradition as History: A Study in Historical Methodology*, translated by H.M. Wright; with a new introduction by Selma Leydesdorff & Elizabeth Tonkin. New Jersey: Routledge, 2006.
- Vansina, Jan. *Oral Tradition as History*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961 & 1985.
- Vansina, Jan. *Paths in the Rainforests: Towards a History of Political Traditions in Equatorial Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990.
- Vansina, Jan. *The Children of Woot: A History of the Kuba Peoples*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978.
- Vansina, Jan. *The Tio Kingdom of the Middle Congo, 1880–1892*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973.
- Vansina, Jan. *Antecedents to Modern Rwanda: The Nyinginya Kingdom*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.