

TRANSCENDING STATE AND DEVELOPMENT CRISIS IN UGANDA

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Wiebe, Paul and Dodge, Cole, eds., *Beyond Crisis: Development Issues in Uganda*, Kampala, Co-publishers: Makerere Institute of Social Research, Makerere University; and African Studies Association, Crossroads Press, 1987. xiii + 170 pp. \$15.00 paperback.

The central conundrum facing independent African countries is how to advance the twin goals of state formation and sustained economic development. State formation entails creating and nurturing political democracy and institutions that support national integration. Economic development entails improvements in the national capacity to produce for the benefit of the society. State formation and economic development tend to be mutually supporting. When structures and procedures of democratic governance are undermined, political legitimacy also gets compromised and dramatic disruptions in the production sectors often occur. In the end, the masses and their concerns are changed.

Uganda provides an example of a country with abundant human and physical resources but also where the state in the last two and a half decades became too internally compromised. It became unable to sustain economic development, national integration and political legitimacy. The country has experienced one of the worst forms of human brutality and waste. In the last one and a half decades, the condition of both social and economic infrastructures has regressed to pre-independence levels.

In *Beyond Crisis*, several leading Ugandan academics and others with long term Ugandan experience explain what went wrong with the post-colonial state in Uganda. In addition, they offer several

proposals on how to transcend the current crisis, alongside the program of recovery and reconstruction embarked on by the new government formed by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) in January 1986.

The fact that the essays making this anthology were produced under the auspices of the Makerere Institute of Social Research is a strong testimony of the intellectual commitment that many members of the academic community in Uganda share with other people of Uganda in working for social change. The responsibility of state formation and economic development in Africa, is too important to be left to politicians alone. Academicians have the responsibility to contribute ideas that advance positive social change. They also have the responsibility of offering their honest ideas to the government by advocating the truth. The purpose of this review article is to highlight the main arguments that the authors of the above book have presented in their attempt to explain the origins of the ongoing crisis in Uganda. I intend also to evaluate the proposals they have advanced on what is needed to transcend the crisis in Uganda, including their views on the reconstruction program of the NRM under President Yoweri Museveni.

By their very nature, most edited books suffer from a lack of overall coherence and unity. Usually, editors would try to overcome this handicap by organizing the essays contributed under broad themes. Unfortunately, this is not the case with this book. In all, the book contains twelve essays, including the introduction. The essays cover a wide range of development issues, ranging from problems of state formation, political change, institution building, to the economy. There are some important areas, such as education, agriculture, commerce and industry which were left out though. However, the book is an outstanding academic accomplishment in that it offers an in-depth analysis of contemporary Uganda which is far more serious and comprehensive than the usual one-dimensional caricature purveyed by the Western press. Its central argument is that, in Uganda, successive regimes after independence have undermined the institutional bases for political democracy, national integration, and economic development. The consequence has been a general crisis of political legitimacy, national disintegration, a scourge of human suffering, and an economic malaise. The crisis that has unfolded in Uganda is not unique to that country; one needs only to observe a near perfect repetition of the same processes now occurring in the neighboring countries.

The Roots of the Crisis in Uganda

The first five chapters by Wiebe and Dodge, Kabwegyere,

Kajubi, Pain and Mudoola are more concerned with explaining how the crisis in Uganda came about. In the introductory chapter, Wiebe and Dodge point out that, colonial rule did little to forge viable central institutions in Uganda. After independence in October 1962, successive regimes have overtly prevented the emergence of a stable political system. Leader after leader has used manipulation, excesses, and craft plotting which have undermined the underpinnings of democratic rule and economic development. The ensuing crisis has been characterized by political instability, terror, indiscriminate repression, torture, exile and the destruction of lives and property. In Uganda, the modern economic sector that was budding soon after independence has gone to ruins.¹

Wiebe and Dodge view the recent assumption of power by the NRM as a chance to "move beyond the crisis" (p.4). They argue that the NRM has shown an intention to promote pro-people democratic processes (through people's committees), to end sectarian politics, and to establish law and order. The NRM Government has also proposed developing an independent, integrated and self-sustaining national economy. Unfortunately, Wiebe and Dodge fail to evaluate the program. They naively expect the so-called ten-point program to be the basis for revitalizing Uganda's political and economic system.² Basically, there is nothing one can call a program in the ten points that the NRM has outlined. Democracy remains only an intention, in fact there is nothing in the NRM program or in its actions so far to show commitment to democracy. Wiebe and Dodge refer to a proposed "mixed economy", while indeed the NRM has been talking about what calls an independent, integrated and self-sustaining national economy. This promises to be nothing more than a self-defeating combination of radicalism and rhetoric. The authors should have attempted to provide some guidance in this critical area instead of merely acting as spectators.

The paper by Kabwegyere entitled, *The Politics of State Destruction in Uganda Since 1962: Lessons for the Future*, is a revealing account of how state formation has been undermined by

¹ In 1970, seven Uganda shillings was \$1 equivalent. At the beginning of 1987, 15,000 Uganda shillings was equivalent to \$1 reflecting a runaway inflation and a collapse of the once stable modern economic sector.

² The new government of NRM has outlined a ten-point program, not nine, as Wiebe and Dodge indicated on page 8. See, Yoweri Museveni, *Selected Articles on the Uganda Resistance War* (Kampala: NRM Publication, Second Edition, 1986).

successive regimes in Uganda. Beginning with the Obote regime in 1962, successive governments gradually began to undermine the state and the economy by tampering with the civil service, the army, the judiciary, the constitution, the economy, internal boundaries, and then finally the people's sense of hope. President Milton Obote, in both his first and second rule, undermined the electoral process, compromised internal security, and altered internal boundaries in Uganda. As a result, he was overthrown, first in January 1971, and again in July 1985. Idi Amin, who became known for bizarre excesses took to interfering with internationally recognized boundaries with Tanzania and Kenya. In turn, he was overthrown in April 1979, following a war with Tanzania.

The civil service, instead of being an executive instrument for running the country was politicized and abused. There emerged a lack of adherence to rational bureaucratic criteria which became reflected in the manipulation of people and resources. The post-independence civil service became oppressive and anti-people like its colonial predecessor. It became highly politicized and came to be controlled by party functionaries. The state increased its control over the economy through the establishment of state marketing boards, and by controlling the producer cooperatives and unions. The army was also undermined with the use of arbitrary and bizarre tactics in cadet selections or recruitment and promotions. The army became the army of the Head of State (personal loyalty rather than loyalty to the state). In turn, it became a marauding beast bent on destroying (not protecting) the society. In 1966, in a bizarre manner, Obote purged the army and installed colonel Idi Amin, and further used the army to drive Kabaka Mutesa into exile, at the same time abrogating the constitution. Amin learnt the lesson and in turn overthrew Obote in 1971. Coups and counter-coups have since then become the order of events. Kabwegyere, however, argues that the recent NRM victory was a break in this cycle in that the people of Uganda succeeded in overthrowing the army.

The judiciary has also lost its credibility in Uganda. After independence, Heads of State and senior officials have acted as if they were above the law. The justices became politicized while arbitrary arrests, fictitious trials, and detentions without trial became widespread. Because the integrity of the judiciary and the rule of law were undermined, social and political order also disintegrated. The constitution too, was often manipulated, and contravened with impunity, and amendments were done for political and personal expediency. It all began in 1966, when Obote suspended, then abrogated the 1962 independence constitution. Since then, Uganda has not had a nationally approved constitution. At the beginning of his

essay, Kabwegyere argues that this crisis in Uganda has also to do with the country's colonial and post-colonial legacies.

In the next essay entitled, *The Historical Background to the Uganda Crisis, 1966-86*, Senteza-Kajubi argues that Uganda's problems of national integration originate precisely from conflicts going back to pre-colonial and colonial periods when diverse traditional social and political systems operated in Uganda. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Christian and Islamic religions were introduced from outside. Since then, the evolving politico-religious groups in Uganda have tended to be in perpetual conflict.

The colonization of Uganda by the British did not bring political order. The British played one ethnic group against the other and religious strife continued. The role of Buganda in the establishment of modern Uganda is given a high but also obscure profile by Kajubi. For example, he credits the Kabakas (Mutesa and Mwanga) as architects of modern Uganda (p. 26) even though the role they played was that of collaborating with foreign religious agents and Captain F. Lugard, the first British imperialist agent in Uganda. The fact that Buganda was given special, although false status by the British, and was used to subjugate other ethnic groups is rationalized by Kajubi on bogus grounds that Buganda had a highly centralized political system. Paradoxically, Kajubi sees the establishment of colonialism in Uganda as one and the same thing (positive) to the formation of modern Uganda.

In the end Kajubi argues that national integration in Uganda can be achieved by 'reconciling and synthesizing' the cultural matrix (his reference to ethnic monarchies) with modern national institutions. But Kajubi does not tell us how the two ethos can co-exist or, what to do in the event of conflict which is more often the case. Indeed, the history of Uganda is a testimony to how the two are antithetical, in spite of attempts to romanticize such traditions. It appears that Kajubi would prefer national institutions in Uganda to be subservient to ethnic entities. According to him, the latter are pillars, while the former are mere beams (p. 39).

What is ironic is that while Kajubi has high regards for monarchies in Uganda, he scorns the small holder-farmers (whom he calls illiterate peasant holders). This is a clear display of the typical naive arrogance of monarchist elite in Uganda and Africa. They would prefer to keep the peasants impoverished by denying them incentives such as producer prices and improved technologies. Kajubi, like Gora Hyden, blames the small holder farmers for not becoming large farmers.

to act as a catalyst in encouraging development change.¹

The essay by Pain, entitled *Acholi and Nubians: Economic Forces and Military Employment*, shows that myths about ethnicity are falsely created, and that ethnicity is used to perpetuate ethnocentrism, violence, treachery and revenge, arrogance and greed. He argues that, economic imperatives rather than prejudicial selection and political machinations explain why historically there has been a large number of military recruitment of the Acholi and Nubians. Initially, economic deprivation or lack of secure economic bases forced these two ethnic groups into military activities, and into the army. The Nubians acted as co-colonizers with the British while the Acholi became very powerful in the first Obote regime. They both became associated with the myth of "martial races".

The Nubians felt discriminated against and persecuted during the first Obote regime. They supported the Amin regime and took to revenge and amassing of wealth. The Acholi suffered alot of persecution during this period. The Asians were victims, too, because the new group in power resented their domination of the economy which went back to the colonial period. The Acholi joined the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) under Obote, after 1979 in very large numbers. This army also took to revenge and was as notorious in carnage as its predecessors under Idi Amin. Economic underdevelopment and uneven development have, however, been the root causes of the ethnic animosity and occupational differences in Uganda. The lesson that emerges from Pain's paper is that, ethnic imbalances are a serious national problem and require economic solutions such as regional development, not the usual punitive political or military solutions. The latter creates more conflict, including massacres, and perpetuates the original baseless myths.

The fifth chapter is an essay by Dan Mudoola, entitled *The Problems of Institution Building: The Uganda Case*. His essay restates the basic argument shared by earlier essays that Uganda has failed to establish the basis for national integration and political legitimacy. Mudoola argues that instability in Uganda is attributed to an absence of political institutions that are capable of resolving conflicts. He employs a theoretical framework developed by S.P. Huntington, concerning the

¹ The view of African peasants being inefficient and uncaptured has been orchestrated by scholars such as Goran Hyden (1983; 1986) and H. Bernstein (1979). It has, however, been refuted by Nelson Kasfir (1986) and empirical studies on peasants by G. Alibaruho (1974) and F. Ellis (1980).

maintenance of political order. According to Huntington, political institutions are necessary for domesticating political demands.¹

Mudoola argues that Uganda only enjoyed a temporary period of political order during 1962-1966 when there was a constitution that was respected and practiced. However, a rupture in the Obote-Mutesa alliance occurred, due to power struggle and intra-ethnic discord, and led to political instability.

Mudoola attributes the decay of political institutions in Uganda to several factors. The first one is a colonial and post-colonial legacy in which central political institutions in Uganda have been held subservient to the highly polarized local autonomies. According to him, the system of indirect rule in colonial Uganda and the semi-federal status given to ethnic kingdom areas by the independence constitution in 1962 prevented the establishment of central political institutions.² A second factor is that, Uganda has developed a highly fragmented political elite who continue to operate largely along traditional social and political alliances (monarchists, liberals, and republicans). They employ their wits more as tactical weapons in protecting narrow interests. Thirdly, there has been wide imbalances in resource allocation along regional, ethnic, religious and class lines, which have had negative consequences for the development of central political institutions in Uganda. One consequence of such imbalances has been the growth of myths or certain ethnic groups as endowed with special attributes, or what Mudoola calls 'doctrines of ethno-functionalism'.

While Mudoola develops an illuminating analysis of institutional decay in Uganda, his proposal for dealing with the current crisis is outright faulty. Mudoola contends that national integration cannot be

¹ S.P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). The advocacy for counterrevolutionary positions that followed Huntington's work was quickly applied to Africa as a new political "wisdom" since the 1970s. See for example, Nelson Kasfir, *The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation and Ethnicity in African Politics, with a case study of Uganda*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); Henry Bienen, *Kenya: The Politics of Participation and Control* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).

² The consequences of disparate ethnic autonomies in Uganda has been that central political institutions, as there were in the making at independence such as - parliament, the civil service, the army and so on - were simply regarded as fora for power bargaining; means to be used in the accumulation of the resources necessary for strengthening local power bases or as instruments for the allocation of rewards to supporters and the denial of rewards to opponents.

realized in Uganda if the Baganda are left out of the equation and he is very correct in that. But, when he goes on to envision what he calls 'Baganda Prussia', he introduces an extremely dangerous solution. What he means is that Buganda - what he refers to as 'heartland group' should impose its rule and values on the rest - what he refers to as 'marginalized groups' (p. 63). This idea of super-race, and super-ethnic group belongs more to Nazi Germans and Afrikaners in South Africa than to multicultural and multiracial societies that are now emerging in the late twentieth century.

Mudoola's proposal is drawn from Huntington's political theory. The problem with Huntington's theory of political order and institutions, is that it is a theory of containment, developed to deal with revolutions in the Third World countries, such as Vietnam in the 1960s. It legitimizes the limiting of local democratic participation and the imposition of oppressive institutions or traditions from outside developing countries.¹ Huntington's theory is very skeptical of the ability of people to develop or nurture institutions from within. Uganda no doubt can develop viable national institutions without resurrecting anachronistic traditional systems of the past or imposing them from outside or from within.

What the above five essays share is a consensus that after independence, successive regimes in Uganda subverted the process of state formation and economic development by tampering with the national constitution and institutional structures. Of course, external forces played a significant role, too. For example, after Obote had declared his 'move to the left' doctrine, Western countries became increasingly hostile to his regime. One cannot lose sight of the role of Tanzania in facilitating the overthrow of Idi Amin as well as influencing the subsequent succession.² The authors here clearly affirm what is becoming evident today, that the woes of African countries in the post-independence period, including their political and economic regression, fall squarely on the African leadership, whether they have acted as stooges of the superpowers or their own masters.³ The implication is that African countries must re-examine themselves, their leadership, and

¹ S.P. Huntington, *op. cit.*

² P. Godfrey Okoth, "The OAU and the Uganda-Tanzanian War," *Journal of African Studies*. (Forthcoming, Fall 1987).

³ Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria* (London: Heinemann, 1983).

institutions before looking outside for scapegoats for the political and economic crisis.

The authors of these five essays, however, fail to offer tangible proposals for the political reconstruction of Uganda. Infact they have even shied away from examining the current agenda for political and institutional recovery under the NRM. They have merely limited themselves to applauding and expressing hope for what they call 'pro-people' (Wiebe and Dodge), 'new sense of hope' (Kabwegyere), 'right programme' (Kajubi), 'new myth' (Pain), and 'new political ethos' (Mudoola). None of them attempt to find out what is worthwhile in the NRM program. They fail to analyze it so as to provide prostheses on what is required for and how to go about implementing reconstruction in Uganda. The book offers more of lessons from the past than precepts and directions for the future. About half of the essays are also marred by an undercurrent of ethnic chauvinism unconformably though forcefully injected into what would otherwise have been excellent analyses. There is no doubt that Uganda's primary need is to re-design a new unifying constitution and to implement a democratic government without delay. Equally important, it needs to re-build a shattered, disoriented and demoralized civil service, transforming that vital instrument for any meaningful administration from one based on all conceivable forms of graft and decay, to one based on merit, restoration of the rule of law, and de-militarization of the government system.

Extent of the Crisis in Uganda

The rest of the book consists of seven chapters which deal with how the crisis in Uganda affected social services, agricultural producers, family and lifestyles, and indeed the overall economy. These essays offer more tangible proposals on how to reconstruct the economy and social services in Uganda. Chapter six by Opio-Odongo is entitled, *Agricultural Cooperative Movement and the Emasculation of Producer Members in Uganda*. Odongo examines the problems of producer cooperative movements in Uganda since the turn of this century. He points out that the agricultural cooperative movement in Uganda evolved as an attempt by African small farmers to free themselves from the alien oligopolist control over the purchasing, processing and marketing of their crops. This control was exercised by local landlords, but much more so by Indians and Europeans involved in the export trade.

Odongo argues that, while initially the cooperative movement succeeded in liberating the farmers from alien oligopoly (between 1946-

51), it was later emasculated (1950-to present time). The movement has suffered from: vested interest groups - mainly state control, and the leadership within; reliance on mechanistic, rather than organic approaches of solidarity building - which creates only a facade behind which clan, village and religious cleavages are fought out; and application of inappropriate organizational methods and techniques. He proposes that, a) the government should gradually disengage from the cooperative movement to end its paternalism, b) local organizational methods and approaches should be encouraged in place of imposing Western models of cooperative formation with which the people cannot identify, c) attempts should be made to provide cooperative training and education to the local people, and the government should end all monopolies, including those of cooperatives by allowing competition with private buyers. These are remarkable proposals which the NRM Government should consider if not implement because they are genuinely pro-people.

Two more chapters deal with recent changes in the status of women and family institution in Uganda. One is an essay by H. Tadia, entitled *Changes and Continuities in the Position of Women in Uganda*. The other is by Wanja Harmsworth, entitled, *The Uganda Family in Transition*. Tadia attempts to demonstrate that, although women make a large contribution at the household and national levels, their efforts are undervalued and therefore given minimal reward. The subordination of women is embedded in the existing division of labor along gender lines, and perpetuated by a host of social myths and ideologies. The inequality suffered by women is inherent in both the subsistence and cash economies.

Tadia further argues that the perception of women, and their status has shifted over time from a high when women were held with esteem and respect as 'mothers' ensuring the vitality as well as both material and moral regeneration of society to a point of deterioration where women are regarded as no more than inconsequential elements of society. At the present time, the criterion is that of how pleasing and acceptable a woman is to men. Tadia concludes that under these circumstances, attempts by women to organize and defend their interests have been unsuccessful.

Wanja Harmsworth examines the implications of changes in the traditional family institution in Uganda. There have been changes which include: single parenthood, increased widowhood, prostitution, orphanage, and family breakdown. These changes are associated with changes in urbanization and new divisions of labor. They are also due to economic pressures exacerbated by recent civil strife and the on-going

political and economic crisis in Uganda. The changes have undermined the fabric and corporateness of the family, including its role as a social safety valve. Harmsworth argues that while on one hand social changes have opened up certain opportunities for women, on the other their position has worsened vis-a-vis men. Both Tadhra and Harmsworth call for new economic roles and family relations to be devised which affirm the full rights of women.

Chapters nine and ten deal with changes in the provision of health services, with a focus on strategies for improving health care delivery within the current reconstruction program of the NRM. Chapter nine is an essay by Cole Dodge, entitled, *Rehabilitation or Redefining of Health Services*. Dodge points out that health care delivery has deteriorated tremendously in the last decade due to civil strife. During that period, the medical personnel fled the country, health infrastructure crumbled while the governments became unable to pay civil servants so as to be able to retain the few who remained in the face of all adversity. Dodge argues that during the second Obote regime, too much emphasis was placed on reviving the economic productivity of agriculture and industry while social services, such as health, were neglected. Recent programs have also tended to emphasize rehabilitation of the old health infrastructure while neglecting primary health care, including immunization. According to Dodge, health service delivery system in Uganda remains unintegrated. Defense spending takes a disproportionately large share of national expenditure and resources.

Dodge's proposals are for revitalizing health care through strategies that take in to consideration the key factors determining the health environment in Uganda. These include female literacy, primary care (versus specialized training), and adequate food nutrients. New strategies should also incorporate evaluation and monitoring, and should reflect epidemiological reality in Uganda. Health care service should be redefined to consider initiating fees for services, and block grants for hardship areas such as Karamoja. As Dodge argues, it is wrong to impose economic policies without combining them with adequate financial support for essential services. But I also think it is equally wrong to shift the bias to social services, as Dodge and others in this book seem to believe. This is a time when African countries are trying to revitalize long impaired productive systems. The 'hard option' for increasing production is one which Uganda cannot escape.

The essay by J.M. Namboze and E.S. Hillman is entitled *Kasangati Health Centre: Past and Future*. In that essay, they propose the promotion of community-based health centers to be used for

teaching, research, and service delivery. Kasangati is one such center which was once very successful in the 1960s, but came to ruins during the period of civil strife. Surveys show that overall community health indicators, including mortality, have reverted to 1964 levels. Since 1983, an effort to rehabilitate Kasangati has been in the making, and is expected to be continued as part of the NRM's people-based community development strategy.

However, the model of community-based health center which Namboze and Hillman present, has several limitations. Although labeled community-based health center, there is very little community participation in it. Indeed, the role of local initiative is wholly ignored. The community participation of the type envisaged by Namboze and Hillman is at best a passive one. The model does not allow for community involvement in planning, decision making, and implementation of health services except as recipients of health services or as objects for research. Their model is therefore very elitist - focusing more on research and teaching for University students, and is also capital-intensive.

The last two chapters of the book are on the economy. They examine the devastating effects of two and a half decades of political crisis in Uganda on people's economic roles, their living standards, and incomes. Vali Jamal's paper entitled, *Uganda Economic Crisis: Dimensions and Cure* forms chapter eleven. Jamal examines the impact of a decade of upheavals on living standards and economic relationships in Uganda. In terms of economic performance (GDP - aggregate and per capita), infrastructure, wage labor, incomes, and development of the modern sector, including the export sector, Uganda lost the entire decade of the 1970s.¹ The overall economy reverted back to conditions existing prior to 1964.

Jamal states that food production did not decline during that period, that the subsistence sector remained immune to economic and political upheavals. This is very misleading because there was no real increase in food crop production. The critical question is whether productivity declined or increased. Real productivity per hectare for both food crops and export crops declined by 8.4 percent between 1965 and 1982 in Uganda. Cereal imports and food aid in Uganda have

¹ The regressive development has not been altered in the first half of the 1980s either as reflected in the country's GNP per capita of \$230 in 1985. See World Bank, *World Development Report 1986* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

grown threefold since 1974.¹ People also resorted to eating less desirable food types because popular varieties like *matoke* became either unavailable or unaffordable. It is true that, the export crops were hardest hit. Uganda is the only country in eastern Africa where the percentage of arable land under export crops declined during this period. Changes in agricultural production in Uganda, including the subsistence sector, therefore reflect the disruptive effects of the civil unrest there and notions of immunity are misleading.

The collapse of the modern sector in Uganda has been reflected in the destruction of formal wage labor, urban services, export sector terms of trade and earnings. Jamal shows that the only sector which has grown is the public sector, which has merely served to drain the economy further with huge wage bills. There has occurred a corresponding expansion of the informal (parallel) economy called *magendo*, and occurrence of shortages and run-away inflation. At the root of this economic malaise has been of course the civil unrest in Uganda but also a series of mangled pricing policies and overvalued exchange rates. Shortages and commodity withholding from the market have resulted, further causing unprecedented local price hikes. The economic crisis has also caused destruction of farmers' terms of trade and hiked taxation at a rate of 75 percent in the 1970s.

Beginning in 1981, Obote's second regime tried to revive the economy through devaluation to encourage export production. But because the subsistence sector of the economy was not taken into account, major distortions were created, giving very high producer prices to farmers, while cutting on fixed-income earners. Wage laborers became further impoverished in the urban areas. Producer price increases on the other hand, did not bring greater output of export commodities because other critical factors - security, world commodity prices, lack of agricultural inputs and tools and payment delays to farmers did not improve. Disposable income and the buying power of the workers declined further. Instead, the country has been caught in a systemic spiral of devaluation- inflation- high prices- devaluation. Jamal's proposal is one of reviving the modern sector through uplifting of urban fixed-incomes while promoting export production by improving producer prices. Both of these would increase productivity of the economy.

It is regrettable that the quality of Jamal's analytical paper

¹ Henry Rembel, "The Food Situation in the Horn of Africa," *Working Paper No. 420*, Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi (Jan. 1985).

inversely diminished by his rather biased views concerning the relationship between the Asians and Africans in Uganda. The expulsion of Ugandan Asians was an extremely deplorable act. This, however, had to do with inadmissible economic inequalities existing since the turn of the century. Rather than dealing with this real problem, Jamal resorts to simplistic excuses that Asian domination of the Ugandan economy came about because of their sustained immigration to Uganda (p. 126). When economic inequalities are left to increase, they also create resentment and lead to victimization. This applies to Asians as any other ethnic group in Uganda. Jamal also shows scorn for Ugandan Africans by calling them these "tribes". The Asian problem in East Africa is one of resentment to their economic domination, and open scorn for Africans.

The last paper is by Firimooni Banugire, entitled, *The Impact of Economic Crisis on Fixed-Income Earners*. Banugire portrays the economic decline in Uganda in three successive stages: a recessionary stage, a structural decline stage, and the regressive or *magendo* stage. The economy entered a stage of recession in 1970, beginning with a decline in rates of growth. The GNP per capita fell by 1.1 percent per annum during the 1970s. By the early 1980s, continued recession created structural dislocations in production, consumption and trade. This led to an increased share in the economy of the non-monetary output (GDP), the subsistence and public sectors. Correspondingly, there occurred declines in urban growth and gross national investment. Since 1980, the economy has been plagued by high inflation, capital and manpower flight, and the growth of *magendo*. This is what Banugire calls the regressive stage.

Banugire provides a useful analysis of trends in the labor markets. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the growth of employment which had started in 1960 stagnated. Over-employment grew in the public sector while highly qualified Ugandans left the country. In the 1970s, terms of trade and real incomes of peasant farmers deteriorated, wage employment declined, and wages stagnated. In 1982, Obote introduced some wage adjustments, but these were soon followed by higher inflation. During the 1970s and the early 1980s, the trade union movement in Uganda virtually collapsed. It was replaced by state mandated wage policies. Workers resorted to black marketeering activities giving rise and impetus to *magendo* sharing. Today, civil servants collect private tributes from users of public services that they manage, and have taken to other forms of employment related poaching and marking-time. According to Banugire, the state in Uganda must re-examine its objectives in dealing with markets, the informal sector,

wage policy, and trade unions.

The State, Ethnicity and Development in Uganda

In the foregoing analysis, I have tried to show that the authors of this book have done a commendable job in documenting the complex but varied threads of which the equally confounding tapestry of Ugandan history has been woven. The mosaic is a child of its particular historical dialectics. The concatenation of ethnic, religious, institutional and ideological factors as well as forces are responsible for the composition of the present mix. Leadership cannot be left out. They have described the roots of the current crisis in Uganda and made some concrete proposals. What is lacking in the book, however, is an underlying theory, or an interpretative framework to explain and illuminate the myriad accounts of ethnic and religious rivalry as well as the conspiratorial and sectarian politics which have characterized state formation and economic development in Uganda. More precisely, the authors have failed to illuminate the broader setting of the world capitalist system, including imperialism, internal class formation and class struggle in Uganda, within which such in-fighting occurs. The book stands in a vast theoretical vacuum.

There is need for an interpretative framework to bridge the gap provided by the rich texture of the descriptive work provided by the book and the more schematic, theoretical work associated with Mahmood Mamdani, Dan Nabudere, John Saul, and Roger Murray in Uganda which are missing in this anthology.¹ One such interpretative framework would be the political economy of state formation and economic development which would render understandable the contradictions inherent in dependent social formation, as obtains in Uganda, where there has occurred accession to state power of unformed classes. It would also answer such questions as I raised earlier, 'what the intellectual elite in Uganda, as in many other countries in Africa champion ethnicity so much'. It is also this lack of a clear conceptual framework that handicaps the authors in making a clear statement on what economic strategy Uganda ought to follow now.

In Uganda and elsewhere in Africa the politics of ethnicity are

¹ See, M. Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976); D. Wadada Nabudere, *Imperialism and Revolution in Uganda* (London: Onyx Press, 1980); John Saul, "The Unsteady State: Uganda, Obote and General Amin," *Review of African Political Economy* (no. 5, 1976) pp. 12-38.

state destruction requires grounding in inter-class and intra-class analysis - to unravel the dialectic which exists between class and ethnicity, and even religion. Numerous studies have appeared on the nature of petty-bourgeois politics in Africa.¹ The petty-bourgeoisie in Africa has been defined variously, but it is essentially a peculiar ruling class that is not in command of the economy or the state. It is dependent on the metropolitan bourgeoisie and assumes a subordinate and collaborative client role vis-a-vis the latter. The state plays a relatively autonomous role in mediating between the competing interests of the three fractions of the propertied classes (the bureaucrats and intellectuals, commercial, and the metropolitan) while at the same time acting on behalf of them all.

However, in the context of scarce resources, intense competition emerges among the petty bourgeoisie vying for positions in the transmission line or the state power hierarchy. This intra-class competition activates a diversity of factions, and employs ploys such as ethnic, religious, and regional alliances. These petty-bourgeois politicians may at best have no more than a palliative benefit to the poor. Intellectual elite who champion these ethnic and religious identities offer nothing about transforming the society, either on the left or on the right.

In Africa, ethnic and religious-based petty-bourgeois politics mostly develop into patron-client cleavages and personal rule, what is also called neopatrimonialism.² Neopatrimonialism is highly destructive of both the state and economy. It tends to corrode bureaucratic (institutionalized) norms and practices and introduces massive resource waste and indiscipline into the public and private sectors. Understanding the nature of petty-bourgeois politics in Uganda in terms of intra-class competition therefore explains the source of political instability and economic decline in Uganda.

The strategy of development in Uganda must then take into consideration this reality of ethnic and religious politics and seek to supercede it. There are two options: Uganda may pursue a socialist approach, or a capitalist- market oriented approach. Usually, class

¹ F. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1963); M. Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976); Ngugi wa Thiongo, *Petals of Blood* (Nairobi: Heinemann, 1977); Issa G. Shivji, *Class Struggle in Tanzania* (London: Heinemann, 1976).

² Richard Sandbrook, "The State and Economic Stagnation in Tropical Africa," *World Development*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1986, pp. 319-332.

analysis of African social formations leads to a suggestion of social strategies of development. However, the political and economic constraints to socialism in Uganda and elsewhere in Africa are even more exigent than those that face capitalist/market oriented approach.

In Uganda, there exists both highly fragmented elite, and peasantry. There are also monarchist and other traditional alliances. The formation of wage labor in the modern sector as shown earlier in Jamal and Banugire has stagnated, and the ruling elite is locked in sectarian in-fighting. The productive forces of the Ugandan economy furthermore are highly undeveloped. In other words, Uganda has both unformed classes and material conditions which are not yet ripe for socialist transformation. It is the wrong setting for establishing collectivization, workers committees, or what the NRM may call 'peoples committees'. Such collective strategies have failed and proved unpopular in Tanzania, Mozambique and now Ethiopia.

On the other hand, there is a strong possibility of state-led capitalism in Uganda. It is now widely acknowledged that state-led capitalism has been a crucial element in the success of Japan and the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs). There, we have observed the central role of a strong interventionist state in establishing national integration and economic development. In Africa, there is also the indication that, gradually, an indigenous bourgeoisie is emerging supported by the state, and is increasingly able to direct the national productive processes, and establish more or less stable political regimes.¹ In such cases, the state moves from a mediating role (between the fractions of indigenous and metropolitan bourgeoisie) to becoming an instrument for increasing the capital of the national bourgeoisie. This in turn encourages integration of various sections of the elite, and their cohesion supports political stability and increases national productivity and social welfare.

¹ Such is the case with Ivory Coast and Kenya. See Nicola Swainson, *The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Colin Leys, "What Does Dependency Explain?" *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 17 (Jan/April 1980); pp. 108-113. Others have, however, refuted the thesis of an emerging national bourgeoisie in Kenya. See Rafael Kaplinsky, "Capitalist Accumulation in the Periphery: The Kenyan Case Re Examined," *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 17, (Jan/Apr. 1980) pp. 83-105; H. Campbell, "The So-Called National Bourgeoisie in Kenya," *Ufahamu*, Vol. IX, No. 2, 1979, pp. 86-118.

States that opt for market-oriented approaches should seek to provide the political conditions that favor capitalist development in the following ways: first, a developmental state must seek to foster a general socio-political and legal framework conducive to market relations. Second, it must create and maintain a range of economic conditions as well, for instance, services that directly facilitate production, and public services. Third, the state must also intervene directly through subsidy or investment in industries that appear to be essential to the expansion of complementary industries, but are too risky to attract private investors without such public participation. Lastly, that developmental state must regulate foreign economic relations to maximize the local benefits. In Africa, the local business class is exceptionally weak. Capitalist expansion, therefore, requires the state to create and maintain the direct and indirect legal, political, and economic conditions for productive investment, and to nurture the national business class.

There is also the necessity to establish a legitimate basis for governing. The requirements of limitations of governmental powers, the protection of civil liberties, the principles of representativeness, and responsible government seem to require genuine democracy in the developing countries of Africa. A government that evades or abolishes these safeguards loses political legitimacy, and plunges its country into political decay and economic collapse as we have seen in Uganda.

Conclusion

In *Beyond Crisis*, the authors have demonstrated vividly the roots and extent of the crises of national integration, political legitimacy, and economic development that have unfolded in Uganda in the last two and half decades. Ethnic, religious, and ideological diversity have been used as weapons by various regimes for short-term political goals or self-aggrandizement, thereby undermining both national integration and long-term economic development. In this review, it is argued that Uganda's reconstruction requires the establishment of political democracy, a unifying constitution, and a realistic market-oriented economic strategy. The program of recovery embarked on by the NRM Government since January 1986 does not in practice, nor in the so-called ten point program, reflect a definite political or economic strategy for Uganda. The NRM Government has yet to come up with a definite, practical and detailed program.