



MAOISM IN TANZANIA

MATERIAL CONNECTIONS AND SHARED IMAGINARIES

By Priya Lal



Information about the chapter

- Author: Priya Lal

- research: politics of national development in decolonization-era and postcolonial Africa

- Print publication year: 2014

- Book: „Maos Little Red Book“ – A Global History

- about the material and ideological connection of Tanzania and China in 1964-1975



Historical Classification

- Background: The United Republic of Tanzania was born in 1964
--> after years of being a british colony
- TANU (leading politcal party in Tanzania) members felt pressured by the cold war
- The policy of „**ujamaa**“ as the base for the proposed program of african socialism
- 1967 Arusha manifesto
- China→ Mao´s Cultural Revolution 1966-1976



Shared imaginaries

- Tanzania copied Chinese developemental model symbolically and ideologically
 - Key themes of maoism: self-reliance, mass politics and peasant primacy
 - against urban–rural discrepancies, class tensions, and general hardship for the average citizen that a straightforward policy of industrialization would produce
 - Cultural and political ressources: Maos red book, Quotations across radio airwaves, propaganda films, children wearing badges featuring Mao's images
 - Own „Long March“ and „Cultural Revolution“ of Nyerere



Material connections

- 45.5 milion \$ dollers alone in 1964 in aid to Tanzania
- Ten-year friendship treaty 1965 -> deepest among all chinese-african relationships
- Donations: books, broadcasting equipment, doctors & teachers, investment in a textile factory, cooperative ventures -> A common shipping line and regional railway
- visits between Tanzania and China deepened these material and ideological connections
- Clothing choices of Nyerere expressed ideological affinity to Maoist model
- Military aid

Main arguments of the author

- Huge influence of Chinese socialism on the political imaginary of Tanzania proved unmistakable
- close material Tanzania–China relationship from 1960s-1970s activated and deepened conceptual, discursive, and symbolic impact of Maoism
- relationship was more than one of mere financial dependence

Main arguments of the author

- Asymatrcial connection between China and Tanzania
- Both Maoism and ujamaa were utopian formulations, had similar contradictions

My opinion about the text

- author's argument adequately supported by evidence
 - proven by using speeches, contracts and documented visits, archival sources
- Not really challenging other views from other authors
- Argument in a clear and consistent way?
- The timeline sometimes confusing
- criticism: go more into the brutal and horrific side of Maoism

Questions?