

## AFRICA COLLOQUIUM

### SEMINAR

# Topic: From Dependency to Dignity: Jitegemea and the African Renaissance

This paper examines *Jitegemea*, the philosophy of self-reliance articulated by Rev. John Gatu in 1972, as a transformative framework for African liberation. Emerging in the wake of political independence, *Jitegemea* challenged the continued dependency of African churches on Western missionaries, insisting that authentic faith must be self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. Positioned alongside Julius Nyerere's *Ujamaa* and the Southern African ethic of *Ubuntu*, *Jitegemea* embodies Africa's broader intellectual tradition of independence, dignity, and communal solidarity. Guided by Liberation Theology, Postcolonial Theory, and African Communitarian Philosophy, this study evaluates *Jitegemea's* liberative potential across metaphysical, epistemological, ethical, and logical dimensions. It argues that while *Jitegemea* successfully advanced African identity and autonomy, its implementation revealed tensions between ideals and practice. Grassroots mobilization through *harambee* projects demonstrated the power of local agency, yet financial precarity and clergy welfare challenges exposed vulnerabilities in sustaining ecclesial independence. Comparative analysis highlights convergences with *Ujamaa's* socialist vision of collective ownership and *Ubuntu's* ethic of interconnectedness, situating *Jitegemea* within a holistic liberation discourse that spans theology, politics, economics, and culture. The findings affirm *Jitegemea's* symbolic power in reclaiming African agency and dignity, but also underscore the need for structural reforms—particularly sustainable financial systems and pastoral support—to ensure its long-term viability. Ultimately, *Jitegemea* represents one of Africa's most significant theological responses to postcolonial dependency. By reframing liberation as both spiritual and institutional, it continues to resonate as a global meta-norm for justice, sustainability, and governance. This paper concludes that the future of *Jitegemea* lies in reimagining self-reliance not as isolation, but as a dynamic partnership rooted in African values of autonomy, solidarity, and transformation.

**Key Words:** *Jitegemea*, *Ujamaa*, *Ubuntu*, self-reliance, self-supporting, self-propagating, liberation philosophy



### Speaker

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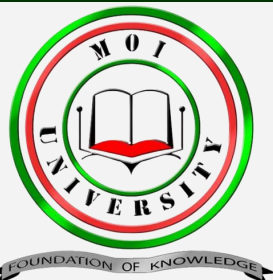
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