STATE AND SOCIETY IN KENYA: THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE NATIONALIST COALITIONS AND THE RISE OF PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITARIANISM 1963-78

Peter Anyang 'Nyong'o*

I. Introduction

Why should political leaders play such dominant roles in the political processes in Africa to the extent that their disappearance from the public scene creates such tremendous problems to society as a whole? Is it because African societies lack effective and hegemonic ruling classes or is it because the whole matrix of social conflict just lends itself to the domination by strong men?

We cannot answer these questions without going into the sociology of political leadership in Africa, the history behind the coming into power of such individuals and the interests of social forces which seek to benefit by their being in or out of power. We cannot also ignore the fact that the extent to which an individual plays a dominant role once he acquires a presidential position is also a function of his own personal qualities. It is like the old question regarding why king Richard the Second lost power in Shakespeare's Richard the Second: was it because, as king, he could not manage the political crises with which he was faced due to his lack of wisdom in dealing with them or due to earlier events and a changing environment which made it difficult for the institution of kingship to manage such crises? Or was it because Richard failed to realize, due either to his own personal weakness or the advice he received, that the location of power had shifted and he needed to reconcile with Bolingbroke much earlier? Did Bolingbroke succeed because he was more astute in mastering the political crisis and putting together a winning coalition? Is Richard the Second a play about how power is won by expertise and lost by stupidity or is it a play about how the changing fortunes of individual leaders are shaped more by the changing balance

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of social forces than by their own individual capacities?

In trying to answer these questions, we realize we are not simply dealing with the ambition and skills of individuals, but also the environment in which certain personal qualities triumph as expertise or lose as stupidity. In the case of Richard the Second's time, i.e. the sixteenth century, kingship was a central factor in feudal society which had a long history and whose existence depended on the relationships among various social forces in society. We will also note that feudal society was already in a state of significant flux by this time, hence certain assumptions that Richard might have about his real power (as handed down by tradition) might already have been undermined by these shifting relationships he might not have clearly understood.

We might therefore argue, quite justifiably, that leaders and great political actors are by and large personifications of the social forces they represent in society. Individuals, no doubt, have ambitions to be this or that in society. But they can only fulfil these ambitions if they recognise, use, cajole, or even manipulate these social forces as vehicles for the fulfillment of their ambitions in life. As individuals strive to satisfy their ambitions, so do social forces themselves – as concrete historical actors, organized or otherwise – also seek to further their interests through the careers of such individuals. This is the dialectic that must be clearly understood in trying to understand the problem of leadership and political succession in Africa. Strong presidents have not imposed themselves on society simply by individual cunning and expertise; social forces in society – and the conflicts among such forces – provide the context in which such presidents acquire and retain power and, in certain cases, even end up using this power against the very social forces that propelled them into power.

We might further argue that there have been two transfers of power in Africa since colonial times: one from the colonialists to the nationalists, and the second from the nationalists to authoritarian and even dictatorial presidents. One might argue that the latter is not really transfer but a usurpation, but that would assume that the nationalists actually resisted the rise of such strong presidencies, which was not always the case. Almost in every African country, we notice that there was a tendency for the nationalist political parties to conceed significant political power to the leader over the party, and subsequently over the state. Reasons given for this phenomenon have varied: on the one hand there are those who argue, like Ali Mazrui, that there was a tendency in African nationalism to workship freedom

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fighters as heroes (1). Coupled with this is the "monarchical tendency in African politics", where the leader wants to be treated as a chief or a monarch and the people also relish in seeing power exercised in a monarchical way (2). But that is to describe a phenomenon, not to explain it. On the other hand, there is the school of thought which contends that the rise of the strong presidents in post-colonial Africa is really the result of the fragmentation of the petty bourgeoisie, strugging among themselves for political power, and, not being able to produce any dominant tendency among them, are finally compelled to settle for the mediation of one man, the leader, who eventually grows into a strong president depending on the historical circumstances.

But the strong man can either be a dictator or an authoritarian president. Presidential authoritarianism is born when political power is so concentrated in the office of the president that no major decision is taken within the bureaucratic or political process without reference to this office, or when the legitimacy of bureaucratic decisions is derived from their claim of having the blessing or backing of the president. The presidency becomes the biggest bureau in terms of administration and policy-making; all other organs of government gradually begin to bend to it and politicians stand in awe to the power of the president. The weaker the incumbent feels, the more likely it is that he will try to exercise presidential powers personally and not entrust them to his bureaucrats.

In the case of Kenya, it will be the contention of this paper that it was largely as a result of the disintegration of the nationalist coalition that a strong authoritarian presidency emerged. To begin with, a section of the nationalist coalition favoured this rise, seeing in it an opportunity to have access to state apparatuses and thereby acquire avenues for capital accumulation and personal enrichment. In this manner, this section did develop as the core of the indigenous bourgeoisie, but by neglecting political organization in preference for direct control of state apparatuses, it jeopardised its control of the presidency as well. Subsequently, it even lost it, and realised only too late how, in the process of creating a strong executive president, they had undermined other popular organizations in society which were party to the coalition that brought this rising bourgeoisie to political power.

The events of the early sixties in Kenya, and the internal struggle in which the nationalist coalition was engaged, led this coalition to believe that it would solve its many political problems by instituting

a one-party state. Within this one-party state, little attempt was made by the dominant faction within this coalition to keep the party alive; if anything, the party was only reinvigorated when its <u>form</u> was functionally needed to achieve certain conjunctural objectives in the interest of the dominant faction. Not sure of dominating the political process outside the state apparatus where it could use law and coercion to its advantage, this dominant faction had a double relationship to the party: one of keeping it alive and using it <u>legally</u> when it suited its objectives; the other of letting it atrophy to deny any other organized faction of the bourgeoisie from using it <u>politically</u> to attain its objectives within the bounds of law. But by this process of political demobilization, the ruling bourgeoisie found it was rapidly losing the art of organization, and any other organized social force in society seemed a threat to its rule.

It therefore adopted two strategies: one of coopting autonomous popular organizations to its patronage and leadership; the other of banning them altogether from the public sphere. Either way, the ruling and dominant faction found the executive power of the state most convenient and most useful. By using it directly or hiding behind that office while it threw its darts at such organizations, this bourgeoisie progressively found it could not act but by invoking the name of the president. In as much as it succeeded in its objectives, so did it also lose its own political muscle to the executive branch of the state, making it more and more difficult for it to have any hegemony in the political process. The final result was that the real political power of the bourgeoisie became directly associated, both by imagery and actual deeds, with the presidency. And as the incumbent in that office acted every day to arbitrate directly among feuding factions of the bourgeoisie, and as these factions appealed to him directly to mediate between them and the masses, the presidency rapidly gained autonomy of almost all bourgeois factions within the Kenyan society, benefitting, no doubt, by the growing inability of the bourgeoisie to organize themselves politically outside the state apparatus. Factions of the bourgeoisie, especially the dominant and ruling faction (dominant in so far as it had direct access to the presidency), could not see their political and economic fortunes outside the halo of presidential power. The lynchpin of politics to them became the "succession issue"; bourgeois politics therefore became the "politics of succession", and it was no wonder that their attempts at reviving mass politics was around this very issue. <u>Having abdicated from political organization by dismantling their nationalist coalition, they could only ensure their class rule by perpetuating the authoritarian presidency.</u>

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This paper argues that this authoritarian presidency, though viewed initially as a stabilizing factor for bourgeois rule, increasingly became a share to this rule, and finally stood as a wall between the bourgeoisie and the popular masses, almost foredooming any hopes of the former taking the initiative of organizing the latter on their own political terrain. The political implications of this state of affairs are far-reaching, one of them obviously being the brittleness of the political process, and the almost perpetual possibility that intra-bourgeois struggles may be settled by appealing to the politics of command, i.e. a coup d'état. Thus, whereas the authoritarian presidency may be said to have ensured reasonably stable periods of accumulation evidenced by high growth rates almost throughout the sixties and seventees, this has not necessarily been accompanied by a stable political process. Intra-bourgeois conflicts have, as a result of the brittleness of the authoritarian presidential system, been settled very violently; and although such violence have not led to a complete rupture of the system, there is no guarantee that they may not lead to such a rupture in the future if the system does not change. Without trying to predict the future, this paper will mainly seek to trace the historical evolution of this authoritarian presidency, analysing carefully the social context in which it has evolved, and hoping that the picture painted may help in arriving at comparative explanations of political processes in other African countries.

II. The Colonial Legacy

In Africa, as in Latin America and certain parts of Asia, the historical formation of the contemporary state is closely associated with the expansion of European capitalism which manifested itself in these three continents as colonialism. The colonization of Africa is the most recent and whose duration was perhaps the shortest. With regard to state formation, colonialism is still a contemporary phenomenon since the post-colonial state still bears a lot of semblance to its colonial predecessor.

First, the territories within which state power is exercised in Africa today were deliberately created by colonialism; this is a rather simple and obvious fact but its endurance in history makes it worth repeating. The sovereign state, in territorial and juridical terms, and in terms of international relations is a "hand-me-down" phenomenon.

Secondly, societies enclosed within such territories were quite often highly heterogeneous; to begin with, the only thing they shared in common was the political domination by the colonial state. But

this domination was not static; it created its own internal dynamism, contradictions, conflicts and processes of social transformation over time.

Hence, thirdly, as a result of this domination, such societies started sharing certain common attributes which, wittingly or unwittingly, contributed to the process of integrating them into "new nations". The manner in which they were initiated into processes of integration depended on many factors; the extent to which the societies were integrated into the world capitalist system or the economy of the colonizing power; types of political changes created by the colonizing power; types of economic changes created by the colonial economy, 'types of social and cultural institutions introduced by colonial education, religion, languages etc. to "civilize the native", make them more governable or more easily predisposed towards participating in the colonial political economy and so on.

After fifty or so years of colonial rule, Africans were no longer simply tribes and ethnic groups bound together within common colonial borders, they were also farmers, merchants, school teachers, clergymen, workers in towns, workers in plantations, workers in mines, soldiers in the army, policemen, prostitutes and so on. In other words, new roles, groups and social classes had emerged in society that transcended and cut accross pre-colonial social relations as outcomes of, and responses to, the colonial political economy. In the midst of all these changes, intense struggles emerged against colonialism and for national independence.

The history of post-colonial politics in Africa begins with this struggle for independence; it begins with African nationalism. At independence, the colonialists transferred political power to these nationalists in a process that was a mixture of struggle, compromise, concessions, blind faith and even outright gambling. The nationalists were a mixed bag of interests and social forces, often stereotyped, at times misunderstood, in many cases romanticised and, in the final analysis, still in need of carefull analysis if we are to understand what happened to them and the political power they were supposed to wield after independence.

The British government, in 1936, appointed a Commission under Lord Hailey to look into the conditions prevailing in the African colonial territories and recommend what needed to be done regarding their future and that of the Empire. Hailey's report is too volumenous to be summarized here (3), but suffice it to say that it underscored the

need for more investments in the colonies and a greater speed in preparing the more advanced ones for self- rule. Hailey was, after all, conducting his inquiry in the backdrop of Gandhi's activities in South Africa and then India, the impending world war and increasing pressure by Africans themselves in "some of the more advanced" British colonies for greater civil rights (4). There did not seem to be any contradiction, from Hailey's point of view, in preparing the Africans for self-rule as well as maintaining a strong imperial hold in their economies through increased capital investment. If that was the rational opinion of the British state, it was not necessarily shared by all colonial officials let alone colonial social forces such as the settlers in Kenya and the Rhodesias. Independence would therefore not come to the Africans on a silver plater; struggle was to be involved and the British state was not always rational regarding the decisions it made from one year to the other (5).

The Second World War speeded up things; the colonizers realized just how valuable their colonies were and how irrational the continuation of some of their policies could be. The Africans who served in the army, fighting as far away from home as Burma, could not understand why they had to defend freedom and independence of the Empire while at home they were slaves of the same creature (6). On getting back home after the war, they became ardent nationalists. What were generally called "grievances against the colonial system" became the currency with which middle class nationalists mobilized diverse sectors of society against colonialism. The nationalist movement became a coalition of diverse social forces among the colonized Africans under the political entrepreneurship of middle class militants and activists (7). Take, for example, the case of the Ivory Coast.

The Ivory Coast was a French colony. As part of the quasi-federated colonies of French West Africa (FWA), she was not very significant either economically or strategically. The center of action was Senegal and her capital city Dakar, which was also the administrative center of FWA. The Ivory Coast therefore developed, for most of the colonial period, as a backyard of Senegal. Within the French colonial economy, she was assigned to be the producer of coffee and cocoa, and the supplier of wood. A few French colons migrated there to introduce commercial coffee and cocoa growing. In search of labour, they compelled the colonial state to pass laws requiring every ivorian to render forced labour both to them and to the state. They could not, however, successfully prevent enterprising Ivorians from growing the two commercial crops as their supply was not enough to satisfy the demands of the coffee/cocoa merchants − also from the

metropole. In the post-war period, the shortage of labour and the increased demand for coffee and cocoa hightened the struggle over the labour question.

Moreover, during the war, native Ivorians had contributed to the defence of France on an equal footing with their french compatriots. Coming back from the war, they could not reconcile the inequality they faced vis-à-vis the colons, nor could the colonial state continue to successfully rationalize this inequality. The war had also changed the politics of metropolitan France herself; the role played by the socialists and the communists, giving support to the nationalist sentiments of the Africans who were members of the French Parliament, made France to begin to reconsider her colonial policies. The pressure by native Ivorians for the abolition of forced labour gathered momentum with supportive voices from the metropole but amidst very reculcitant forces among the colons. With regard to the rationality and long term interests of the metropolitan state, the colons could not expect to be defended for much longer. In any case, they were insignificant in both numbers and their contribution to the export economy of the colony. Once labour was free to the native planter bourgeoisie and all the peasantry, the export economy would flourish with little expense to the colonial state.

The planter bourgeoisie, moreover, had already demonstrated its ability to organize the flow of labour from the Upper Volta to the Ivory Coast, making it available to a wide array of the peasantry under diverse arrnagements patronized by the Syndicat Agricole Africain (SAA) dominated by the planter bourgeoisie (8). The nationalist coalition, during the transition of the Ivory Coast from a colony to an independent state, was organized around this labour issue, and although other elements of the middle class did join the Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI), the hegemony of the SAA could not be easily challenged. In reality, the transfer of political power was not so much to the PDCI but to the SAA, and as the Ivorian economy changed rapidly during the post-colonial period, this SAA domination of the PDCI became an incumbrance to the ruling party's ability in transforming itself from being a party of the 'planter bourgeoisie' to a wider coalition taking into account the more diverse popular forces within the modern Ivorian society.

Moreover, unlike Kenya and Senegal, both the middle and the working classes were not very big in the Ivory Coast; the Ivory Coast was, at the time of independence, a society of peasant coffee and cocoa farmers and their immigrant workers from the north. There were really

no significant popular organizations to mobilize people politically; the SAA was the first and the most dynamic. Regional and ethnic political parties that came later were scattered and ineffective; moreover, they could not deliver to the peasantry what the SAA had delivered to them: labour. The peasantry accepted the patronage of the SAA, and the SAA institutionalized and bureaucratized this patronage both in the PDCI and the independent post-colonial state with rapidity and skill under the presidency of Houphouet Boigny. As the economy grew and society changed in post-colonial times, new social classes emerged which the PDCI found difficult to accomodate without loosening the grip the SAA old quartz had in the party. The latter have, in turn, increasingly become uneasy about opening up the party to new entrants outside their patronage, and have sought to protect their tight control of the political process by hiding behind a strong authoritarian presidency.

In the case of the Ivory Coast a single bourgeoisie with the ownerwhelming support of the peasantry was dominant right from beginning, whereas in Kenya the nationalist movement was an amalgamation of very diverse social forces stratified along regional, nationality, class and trade lines. Colonial capitalism was much more developed in Kenya than in the Ivory Coast. Founded as a settler colony during the first decade of the century, Kenya received immigrant populations from both Asia and Europe. The European settlers dominated commercial agriculture through the control of the colonial state which assured them cheap access to both land and labour. Asian immigrants, in spite of very concerted efforts to enter plantation agriculture, were successfully kept out by the settlers, confining themselves largely to commerce and trade. Through the educational system, which was very limited in scope, Africans were provided with just enough skills to serve in the colonial society as low level civil servants, policemen and askaris, primary school teachers, health assistants and sanitation workers, factory workers etc. Beginning with the forties, some Africans started entering professional fields such as law and medicine; there was only one African practising barrister in Nairobi during the Mau Mau rebellion, and that was in the early fifties. Otherwise, the majority of the African population were subsistent peasant farmers only marginally integrated into the colonial market economy.

It must be emphasized, however, that in at least three regions of Kenya, the impact of the colonial economy was much more profound than in the rest of the country. These regions are now known as Nyanza, Western and Central Provinces. It was in the Central Province

where the greatest land alienation had occurred, with Agikuyu peasants being turned into either landless peasants or semi-proletarianised peasants called squatters as white settlers took this land for commercial farming.

The landless peasants sought to become wage workers in the farms or migrated to the urban centers "looking for work". Not all peasants lost their lands to the settlers even in the Central Province: in areas which white settlers considered unsuitable, the peasants continued to own their patches of the earth. There were also chiefs and their families who were deliberately favoured by the colonialists and who continued to own, and even accumulate, land assets. By 1930, the land question was so serious in Kikuyu country that the colonial government was compelled to appoint a special Commission, the Carter Land Commission, to look into it. What comes out of the Commission report is not simply the Kikuyu grievances against land alienation to the settlers, but also the already deep class divisions among the Kikuyu peasantry with regard to land ownership.

Both Nyanza and Western provinces were used in the colonial economy mainly as labour reserves. Here no land alienation had taken place for white settlement. Nonetheless, missionary activities in terms of opening schools and hospitals had been early and considerably wide spread. Population density was also considerably high and, subjected to the need to pay colonial taxes in money, and not having developed commercial agriculture, the people of Nyanza and Western region started moving to the towns as well as to the settler plantations in Central Province and the Rift Valley "looking for work". A culture of an urbanized and migrant labour force from these two areas was later to play a very important role in the trade union movement as well as the nationalist movement. During the Mau Mau emergency, the colonial government deliberately exploited this factor to fill civil service positions vacated by the detained or dismissed Kikuyu with people from these two provinces – a deliberate attempt to "divide and rule".

Most societies in the Rift Valley, the Coast and Eastern Province remained relatively undisturbed by the colonial economy either by land alienation or labour migration. This is not to say that they were totally left out of the economy; they were not. They were only more marginally integrated, with their precapitalist social relations of production remaining much more intact. In certain parts of the Rift Valley, the so-called "closed districts", communication with the outside world was even deliberately restricted.

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In short, it would be correct to say that there was a very uneven development of colonial capitalism in Kenya, with three regions being more integrated into the economy while the rest were relatively marginalized. This had a significant impact on the nature and geography of class formation: Central Province peasants were proletarianised as a result of land alienation; Western and Nyanza peasants were proletarianized as a result of labour migration but the peasant economy remaining largely that of petty commodity production; relatively small middle and working classes emerging in the other regions as a result of education, colonial employment opportunities and pockets of labour migration. This, indeed, is a very general picture, but one that gives the essence of the reality.

If the Carter Land Commission had recognized a growing land problem in the Kikuyu countryside and called upon the colonial government to do something urgently about it, the Second World Ward complicated matters further by bringing demobilized soldiers to the scene who now understood the iniquities of colonialism and settlerdom even much better. This was at a time when historians report a rapid growth of rural population in Kenya - especially in Central Province - and an influx of more people into Nairobi. Nationalists also report in their biographies that they had heard about what was happening in India, and how the Chinese had been fighting imperialism. Both the land and the colonial issues became a problem to the colonial regime as middle class agitation around them started in earnest soon after the War.

Settler reaction was to ban African political activity altogether. The colonial office, however, knew better; efforts were made to co-opt middle class Africans into the colonial government and to prepare them slowly for eventual self-rule. A conscious effort was therefore made to study the situation and recommend gradualist programmes which would diffuse "violent and irresponsible nationalism", and create an environment in which the natives would finally be admitted into the civilized community of self-governing societies.

But since history is not like a computer programme, events between 1945 and 1950 forced the british government to speed up its solution to what Tom Mboya later called "the Kenya Question" (10). First, the emergence of African nationalism in the form of an organized political party led by people who were not directly patronized by the colonial regime did not nearly cohere with the latter's "political husbandry" of African demands. The Kenya African Union (KAU), formed in 1947, started making such radical demands

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regarding political representation and the land issue that white settlers were significantly agitated in return. But while KAU sought to pursue its goals legally and constitutionally, the Kenya Land Freedom Army – or what became known as the Mau Mau – was much more militant and radical in its approach (11). Organized as a secret society whose members were under oath to observe codes of loyalty and solidarity, the Mau Mau was convinced that the land issue could not be settled around conference tables arguing with those who had stolen it from them: the settlers.

Nor did the Mau Mau have faith in the KAU as an organization which could pursue the land issue to its logical conclusion; Kenyatta himself was on record, as early as 1923, as having said that land could only be transferred from one individual to the other through the normal mechanisms of market forces. That was also the attitude of a good number of the African landed bourgeoisie in the Kikuyu countryside, those who were to form the bulk of loyalists in support of the colonial regime against the Mau Mau insurgents. Thus, when Mau Mau broke out in full swing in 1951, the issue was no longer simply politically husbanding Africans for eventual self-rule, but providing a political solution to the agrarian question in Kenya. Thus, although the British government imposed a military regime in Kenya from 1952 to 1956, and although the Mau Mau was, for all intents and purposes, militarily defeated by 1953, the real solution to the Mau Mau problem came when, between 1953 and 1957, the British government launched programmes of the "neo-colonization" of Kenya which sought to diffuse the land issue in a much wider political context (12). The wider political context assumed transition to self-rule as a given, but it was self-rule that was to take place within very carefully worked out perimeters required to guarantee long term British interests.

The East African Royal Commission (1953-55) outlined the basic political, social and economic programme that needed to be undertaken during the transition to independence. It recommended, among other things, more foreign capital investment in East Africa deliberately encouraged by the colonial state whose aim should be to create a stable and growing market for manufactured goods from the west. The logic of the growth of such a market was to be found in the recommendations of the Swynnerton Plan (1954) which tightly argued for projects to intensify agricultural production among the African peasant households, advancing the thesis that capitalist agriculture based on individual land- tenure system had to be encouraged if men with the kinds of attitudes that were valued in the western

civilization were to emerge in all sectors of Kenyan society. No doubt peasants with higher incomes from marketted produce would provide the kind of market that the Royal Commission had spoken of. The Beacher Report (1954) outlined measures to liberalize the education system so as to give Africans more opportunities for higher education. An educated elite, it was argued, would provide an essential part of the responsible middle class to which political power was eventually to be transferred. Finally, in 1957, following constitutional reforms already initiated by the Colonial Secretary, Olivier Lyttleton, in 1954, and concretized in the Coutts Report of 1956, eight Africans were elected to the Legislative Council on a limited franchise heavily based on property qualifications. But the election of these men legitimized whitehall's strategy of leading Africans to self-rule through step-by-step reforms carefully orchastrated by the Colonial Office.

During these critical years, i.e. 1953 to 1960, two things happened which were to have long term effects in the politics of post-colonial Kenya. One was the intensification of uneven development between regions and among Kenyan nationalities as a result of the programmes referred to above. The other was the deliberate fractionalisation of the political process which led to an in-built weakness within the nationalist movement. Eventually, the Kenyan bourgeoisie was to emerge as a very fractionalized bourgeoisie, unable to forge a national political movement which it effectively dominated as a result of a shared community of interest as we saw earlier in the case of the Ivory Coast.

For example, the intensification of commodity production led mainly to the entrenchment of the loyalists as a kulak and middle peasantry in the Central Province during the Mau Mau emergency. Those who were detained during the Mau Mau, or who were collectivized into hamlets, were to be set free at the end of the fifties only to find that the process of land consolidation was complete in their area. The land question became an important political issue for the nationalist movement, but it was a question that divided the Kikuyu peasantry neatly into class lines: the loyalists on the one side and the landless former Mau Mau fighters on the other. But the land issue was not that important in the rest of Kenya except the Rift Valley. Here the threat of Kikuyu immigration led to a defensive politics on the part of the Kalenjin middle class. The white settlers, in particular, played on this issue in their attempts to divide the nationalist movement and render it less effective. The task the settlers set for themselves was not very difficult; material and cultural

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conditions already existed that concretely differentiated the various regions of Kenya.

To further entrench this differentiation, the Coutts Report recommended the lifting of the ban on political activities by the Africans but confining such organizations to the district level. In the colonial administrative context, district boundaries neatly coincided with ethnic or nationality boundaries. Thus, in Central Nyanza District, the residents were overwhelmingly Luo; in North Nyanza, they were predominantly Luhyia, and so on. The first political parties to be formed in the post-Emergency period were therefore district organizations. Subsequently, it was the leaders of these district organizations who sought and won the 1957 elections, emerging as the first representatives of the African people. They were, in reality, political bosses of district party machines who, even in their attempts to form national political parties – such as the Kenya African National Union (KANU) and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) – saw themselves not as dissolving their own organizations but as entering into national coalitions. Within the two nationalist parties, there was not to be found, as was the case in the Ivory Coast, a dominant organization of the rising bourgeoisie which could hegemonically control the destiny of the nationalist movement.

It was perhaps not surprising, faced with this fractionalization and the lack of a center around which things could cohere, that Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, a nationalist Stalwart from Central Nyanza and former official of the proscribed KAU, called for the release of Jomo Kenyatta in a speech he gave in the Legislative Council in 1958 (13). Odinga called Kenyatta, and all those behind bars allegedly for their Mau Mau activities, as "the natural leaders of the African people". The white settlers were, of course, up in arms against Odinga. Similarly the representatives of the rising Agikuyu bourgeoisie who had stood beside the colonial government as loyalists during the emergency were also visibly shaken by this statement and quick to denounce it as irresponsible and dangerous. The real leaders, argued Julius Gikonyo Kiano in the same Legislative chambers, were those like him, the products of Lyttleton and not of peasant rebellions in his native Central Province.

But Kenyatta had always, in his political career, achieved positions of leadership not so much because of his personal efforts to get to the top, but more as a result of the qualities contending social forces saw in him as an appropriate leader, a compromiser (14). As such, he systematically cultivated the ability to compromise, to appear good to

all sides and only to take sides when it was quite clear which way the wind was blowing. This had happened in the days of the Kikuyu Central Association in the twenties, it had happened with KAU and it was now to repeat itself once Kenyatta was released and became the President of the Kenya African National Union (KANU). Beginning from a position of weakness as a more-or-less compromise candidate for the presidency of the ruling party and then the state, Kenyatta used the fractionalization of the bourgeoisie to build a strong presidency. In that process, he presided over the disintegration of the nationalist coalition, seemingly in the interest of consolidating political power in the hands of a section of this coalition but, in the long run, undermining the hegemony of the bourgeoisie as a whole.

That, however, is only one plausible explanation of what happened. The other equally plausible explanation is that, soon after independence, with the tremendous mobilization of popular forces that accompanied the campaign for independence, and given the rather loose character of the nationalist parties, the grand bourgeoisies – of the western imperialist countries, particularly the USA and Great Britain – feared that certain populist and radical tendencies could dominate the parties and gain political power. This fear was also shared by the white settlers. The first US ambassador to Kenya, Mr. W. Attwood, brought out this feeling very clearly in his book, The Reds and the Blacks. To avoid the possibility of the radical populists turning the political muscle of the mobilized masses into the raw material for revolution, it would be necessary either to make it impossible for them to gain control of the ruling political party, or to strengthen the executive arm of government altogether, rendering the party insignificant in the real exercice of political power. In reality, Attwood pursued both options, but Kenyatta himself preferred the latter option since he had never, at any time, been in a position to control the party he presided over; if anything, Tom Mboya and Odinga Odinga were the real party barons. The weaker elements within the nationalist coalition, especially some of those who came from Kikuyu land, found a strong presidency and a weak political party in their favour. But this was to be so only in the short run.

Politics in capitalist society is not really about the accumulation of wealth; it is more about ensuring that conditions under which capital accumulation takes place are maintained and reproduced; this is what the bourgeoisie is objectively driven to strive for. There must be a reproduction of the whole society, not just of the capitalist and those he exploits. Moreover,, the capital-labour relation is objectively an antagonistic relationship: capital being built through unpaid

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labour and labour' always struggling against this iniquity and yet compelled to survive only within the capital/labour relationship. Capitalists, among themselves, also compete both for labour and for the market, yet they must agree on certain minimum rules and regulations, external to each one of them, which keep this competition within the bounds of order. The agreement is not a historical contract, traceable to a date and time as may seem from the writings of the "social contract theorists" such as Thomas hobbes, John Locke and J.J. Rousseau, but a historical process through which the bourgeoisie go in establishing their political hegemony in society to the extent that everybody begins to live as if capitalist relations of production are a normal thing. But this "attitude of mind" cannot be taken for granted; it must be created and then reinforced daily by state control, through law, culture and ideology, all of which presuppose a conscious political organization of society by the bourgeoisie.

Thomas Hobbes, for example, visualized a society in which self-seeking men were threatened with perpetual chaos and they were hence compelled, out of God-given reason, to accept authority over them so as to guarantee their own survival. But Hobbes was careful to remind his readers that this was only possible because no man was strong enough (physically, since man was still pre-social) to subjugate the others in the service of his own will. The state, or public power, from the point of view of Hobbes, was necessarily a benevolent dictator.

But Hobbes was writing at a time when the feudal social order was crumbling in his native England and capitalist society was beginning to emerge. It was not quite clear where the locus of social power resided in society, and there was a tendency for political power to be very fluid. Hobbes was essentially appealing for order in the interest of everybody against chaos which would be the ruination of all. He was appealing to the rising bourgeoisie to individually concentrate on capital accumulation and leave the exercise of political power in the hands of the benevolent dictator - the state. To ensure capitalist development, Hobbes argued for the absolute autonomy of the state.

By the time John Locke appeared on the scene, capitalist society was already much more developed in England. Private property was no longer purely an individual thing; its defence had already created social bonds among its owners. Social power, argued Locked, lay in property, and it is the propertied classes that really mattered in society. Having fought the aristocracy from holding political power on the basis of their birth-rights, the bourgeoisie were now to rule

society politically on the basis of their property rights. The non propertied classes were not going to take this lying down. Revolutions, and threats of revolutions, throughout the nineteenth century and during this century as well, taught the bourgeoisie that a political order had to be created in which, while they held their property rights to accumulate capital, they had to concede to some of the pressing demands of the subultern classes to prevent society from being blown to pieces by frustrated and oppressed social forces. This is how bourgeois democracy was won: out of intense struggle, it led to the birth of the modern bourgeois state as the <u>comittee</u> for managing the common affairs of the <u>whole</u> of the bourgeoisie.

When we talk of the state in capitalist society, therefore, we talk of it in two senses: first, as <u>a</u> <u>social</u> <u>relationship</u> – a political medium through which a system of <u>social</u> domination is articulated; and second, as concretely manifested in an independent group of institutions that form the apparatus in which the power and resources of political domination are concentrated.

Very often, it is easier for us to understand what is meant by state apparatuses and how, in capitalist society, power is exercised within these apparatuses to guard and defend capitalist society as a whole. But when we talk of the state as a system of social relations, we become fussy in our minds, the problem all of a sudden becomes too abstract. Yet we must unravel the riddle: apparatuses are concrete objects created by men under very specific historical conditions to serve certain purposes. In order to understand what they really are, it is necessary to know the reasons for which they exist, the purposes which they serve. Thus state apparatuses in capitalist society are the institutional framework within which <u>organized</u> <u>political</u> <u>power</u> is exercised. Power is organized politically to reproduce capitalist relations of production and to ensure that conditions exist which will guarantee this reproduction. As such, the state is a <u>guarantor</u> of capitalist relations of production.

A guarantor is needed, as we have seen above, because the relation in itself carries conflict; capital may destroy labour through over-exploitation to increase accumulation if left to its own micro-rationality. Labour, too, may destroy capital if not kept in check by laws and regulations external to every capital/labour relation and enforced by a whole array of cultural, ideological, political and even coercive institutions that are historically evolved as classes struggle under capitalism. Furthermore, the state may historically be a force to produce these relations where they did not previously exist

(i.e. through extra-economic coercion), especially in colonial and neo-colonial conditions.

This, then, brings us to the Kenyan situation, where the evolution of capitalist relations of production was carefully husbanded by the colonial state. The use of extra-economic force to promote capitalist development meant that the colonial state apparatuses were endowed with immense coercive power. Labour was, no doubt, over-exploited and extensively oppressed, to the extent that it was difficult to guarantee peaceful conditions for capital accumulation. It would be quite fair to argue that the settler/squatter relationship in the Kikuyu countryside was a much more inherently violent form of capitalist development in agriculture than the peasant contract farming that succeeded it in post-colonial times.

In the 1950s, the whole purpose behind the various "reform commissions" that were referred to earlier was to produce conditions under which a much more "normal" process of capitalist development would take place. As such, there had to be a system of organized political power that could guarantee such development.

In the post Mau Mau era, Britain faced this problem of consciously creating a political system which would guarantee a "normal" process of capitalist development as Swynnerten called it. It was not in the interest of British imperialism to keep on financing repression in Kenya simply to keep the white settlers happy; Britain was much more interested in securing Kenya as an avenue for capital accumulation and not a fortress of war.

The careful way in which Britain went about preparing Kenya for independence was to give an opportunity for all social forces to contend for power on a democratic platform. To begin with, there was an obvious bias towards protecting settler interests, but this was subsequently couched in terms of "protecting minority interests" and carefully fused with the strategies of the nationalists representing minority nationalities. Further, the constitution that was agreed upon as a result of the Lancaster House conferences was basically a democratic constitution, ensuring that a bourgeois democratic political system would be established in Kenya and leaving the responsibility to sustain this system to the emerging African bourgeoisie.

But this bourgeoisie, as we have rightly observed, was still emerging; it was not yet fully born. And in its painful birth pangs, it found itself thrust, by the violent tides of history, into the reins

of power in the post-colonial state. It inherited the apparatuses developed by the colonial state under settler hegemony; it need not have preserved these apparatuses as they were; indeed, they were modified, some even abolished. But it also created apparatuses of its own, in keeping with the kinds of social conflicts that needed to be regulated and the level of development of social forces. The development – or emergence – of the authoritarian president must be seen in this context. It did not exist from the word go, but it developed as an apparatus of state power reflecting the manner in which political power was evolving and being organized in society.

III. Competition, United front, Disintegration: 1963-66

It has been popularly believed that the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) and the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the two major political parties that fought the uhuru elections in 1963, were ideologically different political parties (15). Although they did, in actual fact, differ on certain policy issues regarding land and the structure of government, for example, they were not in any way polarized ideologically. If anything, within each party, there were diverse ideological tendancies which banded together mainly as a result of wanting to stay within a winning or a defensive coalition. The genesis of the formation of the two parties shows quite clearly that they were the outcome of intra-bourgeois struggles for gaining political power through coalition building.

KANU was the first to be formed in early 1960 at a conference held in Limuru, a few miles outside Nairobi. The first list of office bearers revealed an attempt to include representatives of all regions and social forces within the African nationalist movement. But the politicians who gathered in Limuru went there as petty bourgeois organizer of their own followers, be they unions, nationalities or urbanities. They could only feel part of the new party if they felt there was something in it for them. At that point in time, KANU seems to have put premium on putting together a winning coalition, and there is no record anywhere which shows that the Limuru meeting was called to discuss the kinds of policies which would bind these people together in a party; what they were party to were not policies but a strategy to win independence. As Tom Mboya later put it in his autobiography, they tried as much as possible to simplify things and limit ideological debates so as to maximize the unity needed for winning independence.

It is no wonder therefore that KADU was formed as a reaction to

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the formation of KANU by men who felt that they were being manipulated out of power by those who held important positions within KANU. KADU, like KANU, was formed for purely strategic reasons; policies and ideological postures followed later. Many in KADU's leadership felt that the Secretary General of KANU, Tom Mboya, was too much of a manipulator; they could not trust their political future in his hands (16). Moreover, since they came largely from the less advanced parts of Kenya, the fear of domination by representatives of the larger nationalities suddenly seemed a possible reality in the post-independence era. But the argument that KADU was formed simply and purely by the "minor tribes" coming from the "backward parts of Kenya" does not really hold water; it cannot explain why Masinde Muliro, representing the Abalunyia people, chose to join KADU. The Abaluhyia were neither a backward nationality nor could they count themselves minor. Ronald Ngala, coming from among the Majikenda at the Coast, grew up in an area first to be penetrated by the missionaries; by the Kenyan development "standards" of early 1960s, the Rabai area where Ngala's home was to be found was obviously pretty well integrated into the rest of Kenya. KADU, in reality, was a defensive coalition of regional party bosses who felt threatened by KANU and had to take a defensive posture as a bargaining point in sharing political power after independence. In that process of creating a defensive mechanism, the KADU politicians soon found allies among the white settlers who proceeded to provide the party with funds, ideology and policies.

Land had always been a thorny issue in Kenyan politics; the land issue was behind the Devonshire White Paper of 1923; the Carter Land Commission elaborated on it in the thirties; Mau Mau broke out on the issue of land; and many of those who were now in the forefront of the nationalist movement represented constituencies in which land questions dominated the political agents. As the two political parties started to mobilize the masses looking for votes to gain a majority and form a government, they had to define their policy on land. On both scores, the policy was vague except on the issue of land purchases and transfer and who was to oversee such action. KADU favoured first and foremost a quasi-federal system of government in which the central government would "devolve" certain powers to the regions.

One such power was related to land transactions: regional authorities retained powers to authorize such transactions within their borders. At the same time, a Central Land Board was created in which national land policy would be co-ordinated. In this board, representation was by region, again giving primacy to regional

influence and control of land issues. KANU, however, opposed this arrangement, and wanted land to be released to market forces within the nation as a whole. There was, of course, a populist streak in KANU land policy which promised to ascertain that the landless were given land "in an orderly fashion". The independence settlement, to which all parties were agreed, stipulated that landlesness would be solved through the settlement scheme approach. This approach ensured that the independent state would receive foreign loans with which to buy unproductive white farms; these farms would then be parcelled out to small holders who would then pay back the loan over a long period of time.

But on both sides there were those who represented very poor constituencies, very land hungry constituencies, who felt that neither the KADU approach nor the settlement scheme approach would satisfy their supporters. There were also those who, for ideological reasons, believed that a land policy based on the regulation by market forces was unjust to the poor and landless; that government had to take a much more radical posture after independence in acquiring land and distributing it free to the landless. But such divisions did not emerge until after independence when the nationalists were actually faced with the question of what to do with power that was already acquired.

Thus it may be argued that, before the General Elections of 1963, both KANU and KADU tailored their policies mainly to maximize support from the electorate. More than that, the articulation of clear policy lines was secondary to the near- demagogic appeal to the masses to support the coalition that could either govern them best or best defend their interests after independence. Personalities became an important factor; heroism in fighting the colonialists was usually an added advantage. In this regard KANU, identifying itself with the most heroic struggles against the colonialists, won the hearts of the most urbanized and proletarianised sections of the Kenyan society. It so happened that these sections also historically coincided with the two dominant nationalities in Kenya: the Kikuyu and Luo. But it was also a fact that KANU did better in urban areas than did KADU.

But the real political machines that mobilized the votes for the KANU coalition was not KANU, the party, but the organizations within KANU, the coalition. The same could also be said of KADU. Thus Kenya became independent, not with a dominant ruling party at the top, but with a winning coalition of nationalist organizations forming a government. Kenya became independent, not with a ruling party that was a victor because its policies won it popular support,

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but with a party that had gathered superior organizational capability and put together a winning coalition. KANU won the competition to form the independence government; after independence, it was faced with the difficult task of transforming a strategic coalition into a ruling party, a challenge that was to force onto the agenda the problem of what the members of the coalition were really "party to".

It was at this point that it became very clear to KANU that it was not really a party, that factions within it remained factions, each struggling to dominate the others through influence and organization. Resources to successfully undertake such projects of influence and organization became important; to acquire such resources, including popular following, ideology was also invoked. It is in this process that there started to coalesce, within KANU, two competing tendencies which were levelled as progressive and reactionary, nationalist and anti- nationalist at a later period in time. But, to begin with, in struggling for dominance within the party, the two tendencies decided to court KADU (and the more minor African People's Party led by Paul Ngei) back to KANU, each tendency pinning its faith on getting more supporters crossing over from KADU. Once KADU was dissolved, then the factional fights broke out in the open; one was identified with the leadership of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, then Vice President; the other was identified with the leadership of Tom Boya, then Secretary General of KANU and Minister for Economic Planning and Development. Odinga's faction was labelled as nationalist and progressive (even communist); Mboya's faction was identified as pro-west, conservative and even reactionary.

Odinga Odinga insists, in his autobiography <u>Not Yet Uhuru,</u> that these divisions were indeed ideological. He even goes further to argue that these ideological and policy rifts became more and more pronounced after KANU and KADU had been joined to enhance national unity because there were those within KANU who saw this unity more as a camouflage for consolidating right-wing and anti-democratic forces. Collin Leys argues, in his book <u>Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism,</u> that the point of separation between KANU (A) and KADU (B) – one progressive and one reactionary – was ideological: one right-wing, led by Mboya and Kenyatta, and the other left-wing led by Odinga and Bildad Kaggia. Apart from the land issue over which they differed radically, they also differed on their attitudes towards the state, the working class movement, and foreign policy. Was the state to be used by the nationalists now in power to create a capitalist class and various classes of property among the Africans or

was the state itself to be the capitalist, preventing the accumulation of capital in private hands but encouraging it in the public sphere? Leys suggest that the pro-west, conservative Mboya-led group was much more for a free-market society in which the state superintended over laissez faire capital accumulation while the progressive and nationalist Odinga-led group was much more circumspect regarding the merits of capitalism in a developing country like Kenya.

But while these ideological differences existed in rhetoric, and while they found more concrete expression in the Trade Union movement where Mboya's leadership was first to be openly challenged, they served more as "mobilizing agents" for the opposed factions rather than explanatory variables for any real ideological differences. There was, of course, a much more apparent fact which Attwood admits in his book The Reds and the Blacks. This was the fact that there was a significant presence of the Cold War in these factional struggles. The United States of America feared the radical rhetoric of the Odinga group and the undeniable patronage it had received from the Eastern block countries; Attwood's partisanship for the Mboya group grew by the day as he tried to undermine the progressives in government and within the party. The progressives, too, were suspicious of Mboya's closeness with the West and interpreted it as a saleout to western imperialism so soon after independence; whether this was true or not, it served to whip up nationalistic sentiments against Mboya in the Trade Union movement. Goldsworthy, in a recent biography of Mboya entitled Tom Mboya: the Man Kenya Wanted to Forget, insists that Mboya was never, at any time apologetic about his western connections and friendships; if anything, he was proud of them. But he was, at the same time, not a tool of the west either; he used his connections to further his political ambitions and the aims of the nationalist movement. He had a clear ideological line, that of a social democrat, and he believed in a capitalist development in Kenya in which the state would play a leading role in accumulation, manned by competent civil servants. He could not, however, tolerate "socialist adventurists" who did not know what they were talking about; men who wanted to build socialism by redistributing the poverty of the country.

It must also be realized that, in the mid sixties, there was a more or less blanket popular sentiment in independent Africa that the independent regimes had to define themselves to the populace the type of society they were aiming to build. By the very nature of the nationalist movements, this was to be expected: nationalism had moved the masses to independence, beyond that, people were not clear what

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was to happen. A call for some blue print, some guideline regarding what was to be done was necessary. Nkrumah had already given the lead by speaking of socialism, so had Julius Nyerere. Kenya could not escape the ideological pressure to define itself vis-à-vis socialism. Socialist rhetoric was already present in the language of the nationalists themselves, and now each faction wanted to use it as a mobilizing tool, as something which put it much closer to the impulse of the masses.

In early 1965, Mboya took the initiative and introduced in Parliament a document which was to serve as KANU's policy on socialism; this was Sessional Paper N°10 on African Socialism and it application to planning in Kenya. The document had very little to do with socialism as such. Its objective was to score a political point, i.e. to take the initiative away from the radical group and make the discussion of socialism coterminous with discussing on-going government policy within the framework and goals set by the government and not within the framework and goals of some ideal aspirations. Once Parliament had passed the Sessional Paper as the Kenyan policy on socialism, criticism of it would easily be dismissed as indulging in "foreign ideology".

The political battles that Mboya was winning against the radicals pleased Ambassador Attwood but they no doubt worried the men around Kenyatta, especially Mbiyu Koinange, Charles Njonjo and Njoroge Mungai. There is no doubt that, at this point in time, there were more currents in the political arena other than just the apparently ideological rivalries. Attwood reports a scene where he had gone to see Kenyatta and they both talked about Odinga and Mboya. While they both relished in the fact that the radicals were rapidly losing ground, and Odinga could eventually be forced to resign his post as Vice President, Kenyatta expressed his concern over american financial support of Mboya. "I want you to see to it that the flow of these funds is stopped", Attwood reports Kenyatta to have told him. Obviously the old man was worried about the organizational acumen of young Mboya, and knowing that he had depended on both Mboya and Odinga to get where he was, he would be still a prisoner of one when the other was vanquished.

IV. The Formation of the Kenya People's Union

The Wananchi Declaration, the Programme of the KPU published in 1966, explained the birth of the party as having come about as a result of policy differences within KANU. These were itemized as

follows; grip of foreigners on the economy which KANU continued to tolerate but "the true nationalists" opposed; social stratification which was emerging, with some of the KANU leaders beginning to enjoy pomp, splendour and wealth formerly reserved for the colonial masters and not caring to improve the lot of the man in the street and on the shamba; the land issue which KANU systematically explained in terms of market mechanism and rational development while problems of equity regarding ownership were neglected; and party democracy which was ignored in preference for settling factional competition and ideological differences through intrigues and "stagemanaged elections".

Although the KPU tried to explain its ideological differences with KANU in terms of socialism, this was not where the big divide lay. KPU was obviously a much more populist party, and a party which was forced, by the very fact that it had gone into opposition against KANU, to define its policies more systematically and to appeal to the popular masses more directly than KANU. KANU, in government, was saddled with the responsibility of governing, of justifying the social differences that were emerging in society. KPU, in opposition, could exploit the social contradictions to its advantage, and in this the masses were its laboratory. The politics of mobilisation and populist rhetoric favoured the KPU in expanding its constituency; KANU, now forced by the KPU's existence to be more explicit in its policies, found mobilizational politics a menace to its rule. Moreover, the ruling party remained unorganized from within, and this was no accident; the expulsion of the radical elements, or their being forced to resign and form an opposition party did not eliminate the remaining factional rivalries with KANU, least of all that between the president's men and the Secretary General of the party.

V. Strengthening the Presidency: The Conservative Mood, 1963-72

The kenyan economy registered a very high rate of growth during the first decade of independence. Real average per capita incomes increased by about 36.8 % between 1964 and 1978. Most of this growth was accounted for by the agricultural sector in which large scale unproductive white-owned farms were broken into more productive small-holding farms and given to African peasants through settlement programmes organized as part of the independence package. The best known of these was the Million Acre Settlement Scheme introduced in 1961 and completed in 1971. This and other minor settlement schemes settled over 34,000 families on 430,000 hectares. The average size of settlement was considerably larger than the average small-holding in the rest of Kenya, even on the high density

settlement schemes. Thus, given the objective conditions, there was no reason why the opening of the frontier of private property in land to poor and landless peasants should not have cemented an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry. For, while peasant settlement was expanding, the concentration of land assets in the hands of the nationalist bourgeoisie was also going on. The KPU thought that this created an obvious contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry. What the party did not appreciate was that the land being acquired by both the bourgeoisie and the peasantry was that land originally alienated to the white settlers. The KPU therefore changed its tone: from advocating free land to the landless it started emphasizing a policy to put a ceiling on the size of land holdings. But this shift of emphasis was probably too late to save Bildad Kaggia. Geoff Lamb, in his book Peasant Politics: Conflict and Development in Maurangia (17), narrates how attempts by Kaggia to mobilize the peasants of Murang'a into the KPU on the issue of landlessness failed when Kenyatta suddenly distributed tiny pieces of land to the Murang'a peasants as Kaggia was unleashing his onslaught. Apparently Kaggia had not been privileged to learn from what Lenin had said of the Stolpyn reforms, and continued fruitlessly on his populist binge until his party was proscribed in 1969.

Success of the land reform programmes had obviously, at least in the early and mid sixties, bred a conservative mood among the peasantry in one of the regions where the land issue was most sensitive; the Central Province. Framing the land question in terms of putting a ceilling on the size of land- holdings was not therefore meant to appeal to the peasantry but to the petty bourgeoisie some of whom might have rightly felt that if size was limitless, it would not be long before the good land was all taken by those who had political power.

But the early and mid sixties was also a time when the petty bourgeoisie was in expansion. As the state became an active participant in capital accumulation through the setting up of various parastatal organizations, it also became the biggest employer and the provider of loans and credit facilities for the middle class to facilitate property ownership. Among those employed in state apparatuses, a new class was emerging, what Issa Shivji has referred to as the bureaucratic bourgeoisie (18) and what Mahmood Mamdani has recently referred to, in the case of Uganda, as a class of bureaucrat capital (19). In essence, these are people who, occupying important positions in the state apparatus, can use their political power to gather revenues for private accumulation and personal enrichment. Thus, apart from performing

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their duties as servants of the state, they are constantly engaged in the act of <u>straddling,</u> i.e. running businesses and enterprises for purposes of accumulation.

In Kenya, while Tom Mboya was alive, he seemed to have been singularity against straddling. Once a civil servant saw he could accumulate capital and wealth by dint of his office, there was no telling where this could end. Moreover, argued Mboya, this would be the beginning of corruption and inefficiency in the civil service, let alone an increase in clanism, favouratism and tribalism in granting jobs within the service (21).

Even without legally sanctioning straddling, clanism, tribalism and nepotism were already becoming a problem by the mid sixties. The Kikuyu, in particular, felt that they had been discriminated against during the emergency; now that independence had been won, they needed to be given extra advantage in getting public service jobs. Moreover, with the establishment of new parastatals, there was a tendency for the president to staff top posts predominantly with people of Kikuyu nationality. This led this new faction of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie to owe direct loyalty to the president (22). The critics of this practice except for Mboya, also tended to condemn it as a presidential iniquity, not as a phenomenon which was dysfunctional, in the long run, to political stability and capitalist development. The more Kenyatta came under attack because of the favours he was seen to be granting to his clansmen, the more the Agikuyu bourgeoisie as a whole, whipping up popular support within the nationality, banded together in defence of his presidency. In this atmosphere, the ideological issues that the KPU was raising obviously became secondary in the daily political battles of many members of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie. Even among the working class, a conservative mood was prevalent.

The increase in foreign investment and the deliberate emphasis by the government on expanding the manufacturing sector led to the rise of the share of the GDP of this sector from 10.4 % in 1964 to 12.6 % in 1971. Between 1971 and 1977, the manufacturing sector did not at all increase its share of the GDP. The share of services rose from 39.9 % in 1964 to 44.7 % in 1971; this increase was given by large public investments in education soon after independence. Given the primacy the popular masses put on education before independence, this was the kind of expenditure that generated a lot of support for government policy. With the establishment of new parastatals and expansion of old ones, the state became the largest employer of labour. In 1963, public

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sector employment accounted for 30 % of all "formally" employed persons; in 1971, this had risen to 40 % and this figure did not change much subsequently. By 1977 it still stood at 41.7 %, indicating quite clearly that 1963-71 was when public sector employment expanded most, and quite understandably so.

Under this atmosphere of expansion in employment opportunities, the executive branch took steps to gain control of the working class organization and the trade union movement without much resistance. The creation of the Central Organization of Trade Unions in 1966 as an umbrella organization of workers whose leaders were effectively presidential appointees was, at that point in time, seen mainly in terms of the Kenyatta-Odinga- Mboya struggle. There were two umbrella organizations of unions already: the Kenya Federation of Labour, grouping unions whose leaders were overwhelmingly Mboya supporters right from his days as the leader of the Nairobi Convention People's Party; and the Kenya Federation of Progressive trade Unions, whose leaders were Odinga loyalists. By statutorily dissolving these two groupings and bringing them under COTU with Kenyatta's patronage at the top, it was Odinga and Mboya who were seen to have lost. The real losers, however, were the workers; for the creation of COTU did not only eliminate more pluralism in trade union organization, it also drastically reduced their autononmy vis-à-vis the executive branch of government, effectively strengthening the hands of the president in controlling union activities (23).

In the immediate, this presidential control did not alienate workers from the government as the marriage between unions and the state actually produced results with regard to several union demands, most of all with regard to employment. There were, for example, the Tripartite Agreement of 1964 requiring all private sector employers to increase their labour force by 10% and central and local government employers to increase their labour force by 15%. This agreement created at least 40,000 new jobs, thereby taking care of 50% of the then unemployed labour force. In return, the unions agreed to abide by a 12 month wage freeze and a total ban on strikes. After the formation of COTU, even without signing new Tripartite Agreements, the spirit of the 1964 Agreement was adhered to by the three parties, and an intricate formula was deviced curtailing strikes as a weapon for making working class demands by giving immense latitude to the Minister for Labour in declaring strikes illegal which were taken without exhausting the machinery for negotiations. The government, therefore, reserved the right to use the stick where and whenever the carrot was not available.

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VI. The Assassination of Tom Mboya and the Banning of the KPU

Goldsworthy has now come out with documented evidence, from interviews and other primary sources, that the assassination of Tom Mboya in July 1969, was the result of a conspiracy involving people who were very close to the president. In spite of several constitutional manoeuvres undertaken between 1965 and 1968 to limit the possibilities of a Mboya accession to the presidency, he still remained a threat given his position as Secretary General of the ruling party KANU. This point needs careful explanation.

The independence constitution stipulated the position of the president and the procedures regarding succession in the event of disability, resignation or death. These stipulations went through some amendments between 1965 and 1968. The 1968 amendment is perhaps the most important for our analysis. It stipulated that a presidential candidate had to be at least 40 years of age, that, in the event of death, the Vice President would succeed the president for 90 days and exercise very limited powers. After those 90 days, there would be a general election at which the president would be elected.

Just before the formation of the KPU in 1966, under the initiative of Mboya, KANU organised an impromptu party Conference at Limuru at which the party constitution was radically revised. The post of Deputy President of the party, then held by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, was abolished and seven new Vice Presidents created, each for every province. This effectively diluted this post and made the secretary General the single most powerful post after the President. Mboya remained the Secretary General of the party and hence the man next to Kenyatta in party hierarchy. The move was meant to neutralize Odinga within the party, but once he left and formed the KPU, the move made Mboya the center of envy of those party barons or factional bosses within KANU who thought they were also qualified to succeed Kenyatta.

Moreover, Mboya's politics and organisational capability was also a threat to them; having known how to summon the otherwise moribund party into action when he needed it, he would not hesitate to use it effectively in settling the succession issue on his favour in the event of Kenyatta's death. Things were made worse for Mboya by the attention the western press gave him as the man "most likely to succeed Kenyatta". It is quite clear that this "grooming" by the western mass media served western economic interests in Kenya; Mboya was the

single most powerful man in government capable of explaining and rationalising Kenya's economic policies and the "happy partnership" between imperialism and the rising bourgeoisie. But a faction of this rising bourgeoisie which was bent on straddling found Mboya's rather rigid attitude towards a professional civil service a menace to their interests.

When Kenyatta had a heart attack in August 1968 and there were rumours that he almost died, the factional struggles within KANU over the succession issue intensified. Soon after that, there was even an assassination attempt on Mboya. The man charged of having fired at Mboya did not say much at his trial except to plead drunkardness; Mboya, on his part, gave evidence which betrayed his desire not to let the public know too much; he was obviously buying time. Goldsworthy reports that, from then on, he was definitely worried about his life, and he seems to have been under very strict surveillance from somewhere.

The mass reaction after Mboya's assassination was spontaneous: the Kenyatta Government stood accused of complicity. People of Luo nationality suddenly felt a bond of unity among themselves in the tragedy; for them, their son had been killed to stop him getting what he rightfully deserved given his contribution to the nationalist movement. Elsewhere in the country, the sense of injustice was deeply felt. Without any other weapon to marshal public support behind them, the Agikuyu bourgeoisie banded behind Kenyatta to summon tradition so as to create unity with their peasantry and face the outside world in a united front. At the moment of crisis, the weaknesses within the bourgeoisie came out in the open; lacking an organized community of interest at the national level, natural bonds and ties were the only organizational structures they could resort to so as to solve their contradictions or defend themselves when these contradictions bursted assunder into acute conflict. Obviously Kenyatta lost face nationally; there was no way he could pose as the national hero after the assassination and the subsequent oathing of the Agikuyu people to give him support for riding over the crisis. But the events following the assassination also produced other unintended results: no longer was there any illusion that the nationalist coalition had any real unity within it; factionalism and sheer pragmatic compromise of the bourgeoisie in politics became the general norm. With the banning of the KPU in October 1969, party politics subsequently became almost nonexistent, and the office of the president as the repository of real power was substantially enhanced.

VII. The Presidency and the Crises of Legitimacy: 1970-78

The ILO Report of 1972 on Employment, incomes and equality: A strategy for increasing productive employment in Kenya (24), underscored the political dangers of the pattern of social transformation that had taken place in Kenya since independence. This "growth without redistribution", the report argued in a populist tone, could only alienate the underpriviledged sectors of society from the state. In order to avoid such inequalities among the social classes breaking into irreconciliable conflicts, a belief system must be created that harmonizes the different interests, that keeps them within the bounds of order and that represents the given social order as serving the interests of all social forces. This is the role that a dominant ideology plays in a class divided society. But in order to succeed, ideology must somehow approximate reality; in order for an ideology to provide grounds for state legitimacy, state action must in turn somehow approximate ideological promises or ideals. Once there is a wide gap between the two, a regime loses not only the capacity to rule authoritatively but also its claims to legitimacy. Under such conditions, a tendency to rule through the heavy hand of repression sets in, making the affair of governing uncertain, unpredictable, unstable and even expensive.

Tom Mboya's assassination substantially eroded the legitimacy of the Kenyatta regime. The ideology of Harambee was a laissez faire ideology which called on the people, in spite of their social differences and positions in society, to pull together for purposes of nation-building. Kenyatta, in actual fact, openly acknowledged the inevitability of social stratification in building a capitalist society, and explained them in terms of individuals not being able to use the opportunities put before them to their best advantage (25). In the 1960s, when the economy was expanding and the property frontier was widely open, Harambee needed not to have justified itself: individuals who rose from rugs to riches were plenty. From 1970, however, Kenyatta could no longer effortlessly preside over a society whose social contradictions were no longer smothered by the actual possibilities of progress. Thus, apart from having to contend with the crisis of legitimacy in the aftermath of Mboya's assassination, the banning of the KPU and the detention of its leaders, the economic crunch also set in to further strain relationship between the state and the popular masses.

1972-76 was a period when both the internal and the international environment proved extremely difficult for capitalist development in

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Kenya. Internationally, oil prices went up suddenly following OPEC actions in 1973; the import bill went up creating a sharp deterioration on the balance of payments position. The import substitution industries that had been established with heavy dependence on imported raw materials and technology soon found the changed circumstances unconducive to further expansion or production for export. Inflation went up, and real wages plunged considerably. If we can take an index of real wages as 100 in 1967, in 1971 it stood at 103 only to drop to 83 in 1974. While real wages were systematically going down, the rate of profit for both local and foreign firms was systematically rising. The rate of profit for local firms went from 93 % in 1967 to 95 % in 1971 and 97 % in 1974. The increase for foreign subsidiaries was even sharper: from 110 % in 1967, the rate plunged to 97 % in 1971 only to shoot up every year reaching 118 % in 1975 (26).

To further compromise the state,* the Ndegwa Commission in 1972 legalized straddling once Mboya was out of the way (27). Mboya had argued that the state should superintend over capital accumulation but not be used as an avenue for private accumulation by those who occupy state institutions. But his argument went contrary to those members of the ruling class and the emerging bureaucratic bourgeoisie precisely because, not having a capital base of their own, they could only create it through using state power as an avenue for primitive accumulation. Competition for occupying state positions became even more accute once Ndegwa legalised the involvement of civil servants in business. At the same time, this competition sharpened the contradictions among the competitors. It is this scenario that explains the rise of J.M. Kariuki in Kenyan politics.

Kariuki was a veteran Mau Mau detainee. He became Jomo Kenyatta's private secretary some time after coming out of detention and was subsequently elected to parliament for the Nyandarua North seat. In parliament, he served as an Assistant Minister between 1964 and 1969. Following the General Election of that year, Kariuku had hoped that Kenyatta would make him the Minister for Agriculture, where he was then Assistant Minister, replacing the theh only white member of the cabinet, Bruce Mackenzie. But Kenyatta did not; instead, Kariuki was switched over to be an Assistant Minister for Wild Life and Tourism--an obvious demotion.

Kariuki was a prosperous businessman and farmer. He had built a substantial capital base and was perhaps one of the richest among the indigenous bourgeoisie. Coming from Murang'a, he was not close to Kenyatta in terms of ethnic ties, and seems to have interpreted his non

appointment to a full cabinet post as the machination of a group then referred to as "the Gatundu Courtiers" (29). Kariuki therefore decided to launch a full scale campaign against this group, making it quite clear that he had set his eyes on the presidency. He adopted a populist stance, appealing directly to the popular masses and directing the nation's attention to various aspects of growing social inequalities and inequities in the political process.

The fact that social inequalities were increasing in society was difficult to deny during the seventies. Land ownership was becoming more and more concentrated. According to the ILO study, the largest 4% of farms took up 47% of all farm land; whereas the smallest 70% of farms took up only 13.3 of the total. These aggregate figures were not as important as when they were reduced to local-level social relationships, especially with regard to Central Province where Kenyatta expected to get his primary base of support. In 1976, in Murang'a, Nairobi and Kiambu Districts, three districts which accounted for 80% of all large-scale coffee output – the smallest 70% farms owned 14.3% of the total land area while the largest 10% owned 70%. In other words, it is where the majority of the bourgeoisie came from, it is where bureaucrat capital was most concentrated that there was the largest and widest polarization in land ownership. It was also within this region that the ruling class expected all members of that particular nationality to be loyal to the regime on the basis of primordial ties rather than democratic principles, political party affiliation and mores of social justice. The people were expected to be content, not because of what they were concretely getting from the regime, but because the presidency "was theirs".

But nowhere was the fusing of landed property, industrial property and state power more prominent than in the Central and Rift Valley Provinces where the regime was urging the popular masses to be loyal to it since the presidency "was theirs". Kedong Ranch which alone owned 46.3 % of all ranchland in Nakuru District had 28 owners. Of these, 8 were Members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers; 3 were executives of parastatals; 2 were local government employees and 1 was a company executive. 50 % of all Africanised land in Kiambu was owned by 183 individuals, 44 of whom owned about 70 % of this land. These 44 comprised 5 MPs, 3 ambassadors, 4 senior civil servants, 4 other government officials, 7 executives of parastatals, 2 church officials and the remaining 19 were listed as farmers, traders and professionals. Thus, when J.M. Kariuki shouted: "we do not want a Kenya with 10 millionaires and 10 million beggars", the ruling class knew exactly where this message could strike the first most responsive

cord: in Central Province. And Kariuki was not to be allowed to disturb the hornets' nest for too long lest the hornets learn how to sting through sustained political organization. He was assassinated on March 2, 1975, and a Parliamentary Committee set up to inquire into the death revealed the complicity of people very high up in government and quite close to the presidency. But the committee could only go so far, nobody dared bring the president or his men to book. If anything, presidential powers were used even in a more authoritarian manner to wash the committee's report and to detain some of its leading members.

VIII. The Bourgeoisie Regroups but Contradictions Abound

In a country like Tanzania where the bourgeoisie has developed a political organization of its own, the ruling party, and has managed, through social engineering and political control to bring the masses into politics through the medium of the party, the latter can be effectively utilized to overcome or deal with certain intro-bourgeois contradictions whenever necessary (30). In Kenya, however, where, following the history already recounted, the bourgeoisie did not manage to organize a national political party in which it was effectively hegemonic, crises met the bourgeoisie with only one organized force in society that it could use: the state. And with most powers of the state progressively concentrated in the office of the president as years went by, struggle to control the presidency by determining who actually became the president became even more acute, leading to quite a few assassinations and some unexplained deaths of prominent politicians.

Attempts by the dominant faction of the bourgeoisie to regroup itself outside the state apparatus so as to control the political process occurred in two phases, both of them equally feeble and ineffective. The first one, in 1973, was the formation of the Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association (GEMA) and the second was when the forces behind GEMA tried to expand their constituency in 1976 by appealing for the revival of the old nationalist coalition going back to the KAU days. GEMA was the organization of the Kikuyu bourgeoisie. It brought together a number of individual Kikuyu capitalists who had an interest in common, i.e. that of influencing and controling the political process through a conscious organization of their class outside the state apparatus. They also sought to control, through GEMA, the succession to the presidency. GEMA expected to appeal to the people of Gikuyu, Meru and Embu for their "natural" political support in any conflict in which this bourgeoisie was involved. But

in identifying their primary constituency so narrowly, they isolated themselves from the rest of the nation and could not expect much support from either the bourgeoisie or other popular classes of other nationalities.

Even as a political strategy within their so-called primary constituency, GEMA was undermined by the intense social stratification that had occurred in these areas and that did not easily lend the class of capital such ready-made support of other subultern classes. Further, the competition between the capitalist class and other non-capitalist classes of property was most acute in Central Province where the closure of the property frontier – especially in land-heightened this contradiction. If any conflict dominated the latter years of the Kenyatta regime it was between the indigenous class of capital (rooted in Central Province) and non-capitalist propertied classes. The Kariuki crisis showed how tenuous was the political alliance between the indigenous bourgeoisie and non-capitalist classes.

In 1976, the forces within GEMA went out of their way to revive the old nationalist alliance that linked KAU to KANU. A point of unity was again over the succession issue. It was argued that since the then Vice President, Daniel Arap Moi, was originally a KADU leader, KANU could not risk his taking the Presidency in the event of Kenyatta's death. There followed an appeal to the original nationalist leaders within the KANU coalition to give their weight to this new move, and the campaign against Moi temporarily was baptised as "the Change the Constitution Movement". The constitution was now to be changed making it impossible for the Vice President to automatically succeed the president; the new proposals that this movement had were not, however, revealed to the public.

For these forces attempting to change the constitution to succeed, they needed a majority in Parliament. But they apparently made their designs public without first of all ascertaining whether or not they could marshal the required parliamentary majority. In the meantime, there were forces within parliament that did not owe their political rise to the old nationalist coalitions. There were men who had risen within the political process of elections over which KANU superintended as a matter of procedure but did not really control either in terms of party discipline or concrete party support. The hollowness of the party now came alive and clear to the "change the constitution group", as it tried, almost helplessly, to find a method of gaining a parliamentary majority to accomplish its task. Lacking in organization and political loyalty, intimidation and bribery seemed the only

option open to the "change the constitution" group in trying to recruit support in parliament. But, with regard to intimidation and bribery, their opponents, now grouped in yet another defensive alliance around the Vice President and the Attorney General, had more than enough in supply. After all, in politics you either win support or you eliminate opposition.

Those who had skeletons in their cupboards feared to tread on the toes of the Attorney General who then had effective power to bring them to book. Those in Parliament who could do with a few coins in their pockets or some largesse extended to them were not averse to supporting the Vice President's course who was more than ready to oblige their appetites. Thus, this game was played on both sides of the divide. It so happened that, at that point in time, the Vice President's defensive alliance marshalled the majority, no doubt also playing on the ethnic sentiments of Members of Parliament. And that is how Moi finally succeeded Kenyatta: no constitution was changed. But why should the feuding bourgeoisie have stuck so faithfully to legal procedure?

IX. Constitutionalism and Presidential Authoritarisation

A phenomenon that needs explanation is why there has been such cretenism with the law in post-colonial Kenya, that even when it is obvious that the faction of the bourgeoisie which dominates the political process simply wants to get things done in its own interest it must somehow reduce it to law, or to act arbitrarily and then retroactively legalize such action. Why is this?

Part of the explanation is to be found in the colonial inheritance that dominates state action and processes of state legitimation. Things have been done legally from colonial times and they are only accepted or tolerated as legitimate if they pass through legal channels. It is also a way by which bourgeois interests are hidden behind the "neutrality" of the law so that the bourgeoisie is not held responsible for making the state pursue its class interests but the state itself, as if it were neutral, is held responsible. Further, the process of law-making is believed to be by the representatives of the people, i.e. parliamentarians. Once certain interests pass through parliamentary validation as legitimate laws, they acquire a universal appeal beyond the particularistic social forces behind them. In this way, even when the interests of the bourgeoisie were being pursued much more directly through executive action, the need to stick to the law for purposes of legitimation was always there.

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At the particular time when Kenyatta died, law, and not force, prevailed in the process of succession for both conjuctural and historical reasons. The historical reasons are the ones referred to above. The conjunctural reasons are those to do with the paralisys among the various contending factions which had resulted in the constitution not being changed while some Members of Parliament also remained quite autonomous of the contending factions. It was quite possible that, given another round and a new possibility of re-bribery, the balance of forces could have changed quite considerably. There was also the fact that Kenyatta was expected to die but nobody knew just when and where. The week that he died, there were no obvious signs that he would. Those who were around him simply seem to have made the kinds of decisions that favoured a smooth constitutional succession.

Moreover, there were no immediate social tensions in society which could have prompted some dissatisfied elements in the armed forces to intervene. The country had just come out of the coffee boom during which property acquisition had been the order of the day. Business had been great for both petty trade and the grand commerçants; the middle class had also revelled in the temporary opening of the property frontier. While real per capita incomes had been more or less stagnant since 1971, between 1976 and 1978 when the boom lasted, real per capita incomes went up by almost 10 %. It was, in general, a brief period of recovery and prosperity. There was little sign of a constituency of discontent that an army colonel or captain could appeal to for support in undertaking a coup in opposition to the smooth succession.

X. Conclusion

A rigid presidential authoritarian system does not allow for much political discourse even for the bourgeoisie; if anything, it tends to narrow the avenues of political participation and encourage intrigues and plots with the ruling class. Intra- bourgeois conflicts may be violently settled as competition for the presidency stiffens, further alienating the political base of the regime. That the regime may weather such storms is quite often a function of favourable economic conditions, effective repression or the successful manipulation of the political process by the authoritarian president. But since all these largely depend on conjunctural circumstance they are no guarantee to ascertaining stable bourgeois rule. Such a rule can only be accomplished if the bourgeoisie can effectively organize its political control of society outside the state apparatus. In the case of Kenya,

attempts by the bourgeoisie to do this systematically failed first, because of the internal fractionalization of the bourgeoisie itself, and second, because when it tried it society had already changed so much that the nationalist alliance of the old days no longer had a corresponding social basis. Thus, in order to guarantee its political dominance of society, the bourgeoisie was once again compelled to prostrate itself before the executive branch of government, the authoritarian president.

Notes:

* ASAMI - Arusha, Tanzania.

1. See A. Mazrui, On Heroes and Uhuru Workship (London: Longmans, 1967).

2. The phenomenon that Mazrui describes as "monarchical tendency in African politics" is aptly illustrated by P. Short in his biography of Banda (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974). On page 281, Short comments:

"Within the 'Malawi tribe" the position Banda had come to hold was like that of the old Maravi kings, complete with divine right and absolute authority. So, at least, he saw himself, and so he wanted to be seen. At first, unlike a monarch, he was not Head of State for life. Nor, indeed, was this necessary, for Banda held the presidency of the Republic by being President of the Party, and he was President of the Party for life".

3. W.M. Hailey, An African Survey (London: Oxford University Press, 1937).

4. These demands for "civil rights", couched very much in bourgeois-democratic language, are vividly recounted in the numerous biographies and autobiographies of African nationalists. See, for example, K. Nkrumah, Ghana: The Autobiographie of Kwame Nkrumah (London: Nelson, 1957.

Oginga Odinga, Not Yet Uhuru (London: Heinemann, 1967;

Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Awo:The Autobiography of chief Obaremi Awolowo (London: Oxford University Press, 1966);

Nandi Azikiwe, My Odussey: An Autobiography (New York: Praeger, 1970.

5. See, for example, M.P. Cowen, "The British State and Agrarian Accumulation in Kenya", in M. Fransman (ed.), Industry and Accumulation in Africa (London Heinemann, 1982).

6. For an account of a soldier's experience who also became a nationalist in Kenya, see the autobiography of Bildad Kaggia, Roots of Freedom (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1980).

7. The putting together of such a coalition under the conscious political entrepreneurship of middle class nationalists is well described by Tom Mboya in his autobiography Freedom and after (New York: Andre Deutsch, 1963). For a more recent appraisal of Tom Mboya's role in the nationalist movement, see David Goldsworthy, Tom Mboya: The Man Kenya Wanted to Forget (Nairobi; Heinemann, 1982).

8. For a detailed account of this, see A. Zolberg, One- Party Government in the Ivory Coast (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

9. For more discussions on land ownership and social transformation in Kenya, see the Review of African Political Economy, N°20, (1981), special issue on "Kenya: the Agrarian Question". See also C. Leo, Land and Class in Kenya (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 1984); M.P. Cowen, "Commodity Production in Kenya's Central Province", in J. Heyer et.al (ed.), Rural Development in Tropical Africa (London: Macmillan, 1981); J.W. Harbeson, Nation-Building in Kenya: The Role of Land Reform (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973); M.P.K. Sorrenson, Land Reform in Kikuyu Country (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968) and Origins of European Settlement in Kenya (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968).

10. Tom Boya, The Kenya Question: An African Answer with a forward by Dame Mergery Perham, Fabian Tract N°302, (London Fabian Colonial Bureau, 1956).

11. For details, see Kaggia, Roots ·of Freedom.

12. See, for example, Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya: The Political Economy of Neo-Colonialism (London: Heinemann, 1975).

13. See Oginga Odinga, "Bombshell in Legco", in Not Yet Uhuru.

14. Kaggia, among others, have given personal witness to this.

15. Colin Leys lays undue emphasis on the ideological difference between KADU and KANU. He characterizes KANU as radical and KADU as conservative. It is much more likely that there were elements of radicalism and conservatism on both sides.

16. This view was strongly held by Masinde Muliro, one of the leading founders of KADU.

17. G. Lamb, Peasant Politics: Conflict and Development in Murang's (Sussex: Julian Friedman, 1974).

18. See Issa Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania (Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1976).

19. M. Mamdani, "forms of Labour and Accumulation of Capital: Analysis of a Village in Lango, Uganda", Mawazo, Vol. 5, N°4, (December 1984): 44-65.

20. M.P. Cowen and K. Kinyanjui, Some Problems of Capital and Class in Kenya, Discussion Paper, IDS, Nairobi (1977).

21. These views were expressed by Tom Mboya at a panel discussion at the University of Nairobi in July, 1968. The other members of the panel were Dr. J.J. Okumu, then Head of the Department of Government at the University, and Mr. Ciira Cerere, then an undergraduate student in political science. The topic was "African Socialism".

22. See, for example, John Nellis, "Is the Kenyan Bureaucracy Developmental?" IDS, University of Nairobi, 1971.

23. It is unfortunate that the only authoritative account of the history of the Trade Union Movement in Kenya ends in 1952. The late Makhan Singh's History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement to 1952 (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1969) needs to be complemented by a similar study of the period since then.

24. ILO, Employment, Income and Equality: A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya (ILO, 1972).

25. This was demonstrated very vividly by Kenyatta during the Little General Elections campaign in 1966 when, in addressing a public rally in Kandara where the KPU's Vice

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President, Bildad Kaggia, was defending his seat, Kenyatta accused him of having done "nothing for himself". This was unlike his other colleagues with whom he was detained like Kenyatta himself and Paul Ngei. They, unlike Kaggia, Kenyatta pointed out, now had property in land and other things. Kaggia, however, was waiting for "free things", to be handed to him, like manna, from heaven!

26. Figures here are quoted from Kaplinsky, "Repression and Development", Sussex, IDS, 1982.

27. Kenya Government, Report of the Commission of Inquiry (Public Service Structure and Remuneration Commission) - Known as "The Ndegwa Commission" - (Nairobi: Government Printer, 1971).

28. See, for example, Tom Mboya, "The Role of the Civil Service in Developing Countries", in Challenge of Nationhood (London: Heinemann, 1969).

29. The "inner cabinet" of the courtiers comprised Mbiyu Koinange, Charles Njonjo and Njoroge Mungai. As court politics always go, even within the inner cabinet there were factions one - man factions: The drama of this factionalism was to unfold as the succession struggle became more intense in the seventies.

30. For an apt analysis of this phenomenon in Tanzania, see Issa Shivji, "The Re-Organization of the State in Tanzania", in P. Anyang' Nyong'o (ed.), Authority and Capacity to Rule: The State and Social Transformation in Africa - forthcoming - (Trenton: Africa World Press).

RESUME

Pourquoi faut-il que les dirigeants politiques jouent un rôle aussi prépondérant dans la vie politique en Afrique, au point que leur départ de la scène publique crée de sérieux problèmes sociaux? Est-ce à dire que des classes dirigeantes efficaces et hégémoniques, font défaut en Afrique ou que l'ensemble des contradictions sociales favorisent la domination des hommes forts?

Il faut, affirme l'auteur, chercher la réponse à ces questions dans la sociologie de la conduite des affaires politiques en Afrique, dans l'histoire de l'accession au pouvoir de ces individus et dans les intérêts des forces sociales qui cherchent à profiter du pouvoir, de l'intérieur comme de l'extérieur. Les qualité personnelles sont également un atout qui permet à un individu de jouer un rôle prépondérant une fois qu'il assume des fonctions présidentielles. En d'autres termes, des qualités personnelles telles que l'ambition et la compétence triomphent ou échouent, selon que les individus savent ou non reconnaître, utiliser, persuader ou même manipuler les forces sociales, et s'en servir comme tremplin pour assouvir leurs ambitions profondes. De même, les forces sociales en tant qu'acteurs historiques concrets, organisés ou non, cherchent également à ménager leurs intérêts en soutenant la carrière de ces individus. En dernière analyse, les revers de fortune de l'un ou

l'autre de ces dirigeants sont davantage le fait de changements intervenant dans l'équilibre des forces sociales.

Depuis l'époque coloniale, il y a eu deux transferts de pouvoir en Afrique: d'une part, des colons aux nationalistes et d'autre part des colons à des présidents autocrates et même dictatoriaux. L'autoritarisme présidentiel naît lorsque le pouvoir politique est tellement concentré entre les mains du président que des décisions administratives ne sont légitimées que si l'on peut se prévaloir de la bénédiction ou de l'aval du président. Il est vrai que l'article décrit l'évolution historique de l'autoritarisme présidentiel au Kenya, mais il faut espérer que ses conclusions permettront d'établir un parallèle avec des processus politiques d'autres pays africains.

Dans le cas du Kenya, l'autoritarisme présidentiel est né et s'est développé comme un appareil du pouvoir étatique et témoignait de l'évolution et de l'organisation sociale du pouvoir politique. Le Kenya est devenu indépendant non sous la houlette d'un parti dominant mais sous la direction d'une coalition d'organisations nationalistes. L'absence d'une organisation hégémonique de la bourgeoisie au pouvoir, susceptible de présider à la destinée du mouvement nationaliste donna lieu à des rivalités entre factions, chaque faction essayant d'user de son influence et de se servir des organisations pour dominer les autres. Il arriva donc que le pouvoir politique réel de la bourgeoisie fut directement associé aux sens propre et figuré à la présidence. Comme le président en fonction était obligé d'arbitrer quotidiennement les différends opposant des factions rivales de la bourgeoisie et de servir de médiateur entre elles et les masses la présidence acquit une autonomie chaque fois plus grande vis-à-vis de la majorité des factions bourgeoises et devint le dépositaire du véritable pouvoir politique.

L'Etat post-colonial participa activement au processus d'accumulation capitaliste. Par la mise en place de plusieurs organismes para-publics, l'Etat devint le plus gros employeur, facilitant l'accès des classes moyennes à la propriété par l'octroi de crédits et grâce à des facilités de crédits. Dans ce contexte, une bourgeoisie bureaucratique vit le jour; cette nouvelle classe composée de grands commis de l'Etat, et utilisant leur pouvoir politique pour accumuler le capital à des fins personnelles, refusait de se compromettre.

L'esprit de discorde qui régnait et l'autoritarisme présidentiel émergent exacerbèrent les côteries, le triabalisme et le népotisme. Les emplois de la fonction publique et en particulier les postes de

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responsabilité étaient attribués sur une base ethnique, et cette situation s'aggrava du point que la bourgeoisie bureaucratique faisait directement acte d'allégeance au président. Autrement dit, une communauté d'intérêts organisée au niveau national faisait défaut à cette bourgeoisie, car, leur loyauté se fondait sur des liens primitifs plutôt que sur des principes démocratiques, l'affiliation à un parti politique et la justice sociale.

Tout au long des années 1960, le Kenya connut une certaine expansion économique, bien que ce fût "une croissance réelle sans redistribution", qui contribua à asseoir la légitimité du régime de Kenyatta, fondée, sur l'idéologie du laissez-faire d'Harambee. L'on exhorta les masses à s'unir dans le cadre de l'effort d'édification nationale, en dépit de leurs différences sociales. C'est également au cours de cette période de croissance qu'eut lieu la démobilisation du mouvement syndical, l'assassinat ou la détention de chefs de l'opposition et l'instauration d'un système à parti unique qui engendra une crise de légitimité exacerbée par la crise économique mondiale des années 1970.

La crise économique fit ressortir les inégalités sociales croissantes ainsi que les injustices du régime politique. Faute d'un parti politique hégémonique, l'Etat était la seule force sociale organisée que la bourgeoisie pouvait utiliser en cas de crise. A mesure que le cabinet présidentiel centralisait la plupart des pouvoirs, un système présidentiel autoritaire et rigide se renforçait face à la crise.