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4 PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION IN KENYA

BY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines some philosophical assumptions underlying Kenya's formal system of education and their links to social and educational policies. It therefore also deals with the purposes and objectives of education.

Education as a social process involving the transmission of culture is universal, and its purpose both to the individual and the society at large is basically utilitarian. However, the manner in which an individual is educated and what is inculcated into him may depend or vary according to the prevailing circumstances. For this reason, educational ends do, or may vary from one society to another. If a society has developed or inherited a formal system of education, and if the same society uses the educational system as a means to individual success and overall development, the subject of education acquires socio-economic ramifications. And to begin to, or to continue looking at education as a panacea for the society's socio-economic ills and problems as is happening in Kenya, is as good as overlooking or disregarding most relevant issues to a problem and expecting to arrive at a meaningful or relevant solution.

Chapter one of this thesis consists of the introduction. Here, the hypotheses earlier formulated before the study was carried out are re-stated.

In chapter two the historical background to and philosophical foundations of the formal system of education are examined. The formal system of education in Kenya was established

late nineteenth century by the British. It was basically vocational. Its present overbearing academic bias has, however, done little to show that it has ceased to be vocational.

Chapter three examines the stated purposes and objectives of education in Kenya in the light of the society. In the same chapter, some important philosophical assumptions underlying the country's system of education are identified and stated.

The fourth chapter analyses three of the stated underlying philosophical assumptions. These can be referred to as representing approaches to philosophy of education in Kenya.

And finally, the fifth chapter mainly deals with conclusions and suggestions.

ABBREVIATIONS

FWC	Foreign Western Culture
MES	Modern Educational System (this term is used here to refer to the country-wide formal system of education) or simply, the system of education.
MTAS	Members of traditional African societies
TAC	Traditional African Education or Traditional African education system(s)
TAS	Traditional African society (or societies)
WED	Western Educational system(s)

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study aimed at trying to identify and single out for specific examination, some important philosophical assumptions underlying Kenya's educational system and their links to social and educational policies in order to shed some light on some of the contemporary issues in the country's educational system. By "underlying philosophical assumptions" here we mean those philosophically originated conceptions and theories hidden in, or screened by, policies and other sources and which may be uncritically assumed and fostered. Because these basic underlying assumptions are not usually directly stated in white papers or official documents, and because the roots of educational crises mostly lie in their historical developments, it is important that an inquiry such as this one must treat the issues in their historical perspective. The importance of this is underlined by the fact that in Kenya, unlike in many countries in which the educational system is centralised and government-controlled, a national normative philosophy of education is not explicitly defined or formulated and the question of what the nature of the educational system should be has yet to be answered or agreed upon.

Usually when people talk of philosophy of education in a certain society, they refer to that society's written philosophical literature pertaining to education and which has its

chief exponents (and in some cases, critics as well). The exponents are usually philosophers - or said to be philosophers - and so are their critics. In our present society in Kenya, however, philosophy of education may not be attributed to any particular individuals so that a title like "PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION IN KENYA" may appear misleading to some people as it may be asked: What is this philosophy of education in Kenya and who is, or, are, its exponents? Who are the philosophers in Kenya that have contributed towards philosophical analyses and examinations of educational issues in the country and so far, what have they said? Where is the philosophical literature pertaining to education in Kenya? And what do their critics say in response? What are some of their philosophical assumptions? What are the philosophical standpoints of the individual philosophers? And those who are familiar with the study of comparative educational systems in East Africa may be quick to say something like this: Tanzania has a philosophy of education and it is called "Education for Self-Reliance." "Education for Self-Reliance" was first propounded by President Julius K. Nyerere in 1967 in an article bearing the same title. Some critical evaluations of "Education for Self-Reliance" have been made by a number of people in and out of Tanzania. Tanzania, thus, has something to present as its philosophy of education. Kenya, by contrast, does not have or seem to have something similar to present. It would seem that Kenya therefore, does not have a philosophy of education.

But the danger of totally accepting this argument is not

difficult to see: it assumes that any philosophy of education is the written philosophy of education (especially normative) upheld by a certain country or society - such as the one propounded by Nyerere for Tanzania. Whereas a national normative philosophy of education is part and parcel of what is generally known as philosophy of education, it is not all that passes on as philosophy of education; for the latter is wider than and includes, the former. Philosophy as a subject can be or is more than normative or prescriptive; it can also be speculative as well as analytic. There is also another danger which is not easy to see but one which is probably more serious. This greater danger lies in the erroneous assumption or belief that any philosophy of education (which of course is philosophy) must be written, that it must be that written philosophical literature pertaining to education and it must also be attributed to an individual. Whereas the second part of the conjunction may be necessary or essential, the first part is erroneously conceived. What is definitely essential is the philosophical thought or aspect, and not the fact of writing.. Philosophy can be written or unwritten. It is not the case that unwritten philosophical thoughts do not constitute philosophy. Their being written down is undoubtedly important, but this is not what makes them philosophies or philosophical. If this were the case then it could be argued that literacy precedes philosophical thought, or philosophical thinking, but this is far from being true.

Rather than dwell on attempting to answer the above questions, it may be more useful if we began by conceiving of philosophy of education as critical and philosophical analysis and examination of educational issues, assumptions and concepts. And a philosophical examination or approach can be speculative, prescriptive or analytic or a combination of any of the three.

In this study, the approach is mainly analytic and, as has already been mentioned, the purpose has been to indentify and single out for specific examination, some important philosophical assumptions underlying Kenya's educational system and their link to social and educational policies in order to shed some light on some of the contemporary issues in the country's educational system.

The most frequently cited criticism of Kenya's educational system is that it is inappropriate in scope as well as in content. Critics of the educational system have mostly had a socio-economic approach and have tended to draw a like between formal education and socio-economic advancement. Of late not only criticisms have been sounded but possible solutions have also been suggested. One of them is the constant call from educators, politicians and the public in general, for the complete overhauling of the educational system. This call, unfortunately, is not often accompanied by alternative solutions. It is easy to call for an end of a system but it is not equally easy to provide better alternatives. Significantly,

therefore, a theoretical basis or a philosophical foundation on which to base an alternative educational system or practice has often been lacking. And as a result, the nature of the would-be educational process has not been determined or formulated.

Three things, among many others, have been pointed out as being some of the defects 'inherited' by educational systems such as Kenya's. They are (i) elitism, (ii) a basically academic orientation and (iii) social and cultural alienation. First, let us consider the first two together. That an educational system which is elitist and basically academic in orientation should be criticised is not difficult to see: it caters for a few and frustrates a majority and it overlooks or ignores some non-academic areas which may need equal attention, if not more. In some countries such as Vietnam, China and Cuba, work and training, work and study are combined. Thus academic education is not over-emphasised at the expense of other types of education. In an apparent effort to influence the introduction of more or less similar practices in other 'developing' countries, suggestions to the effect that manual labour should be included in the curricula have been made. In Tanzania, for example, the country has adopted Nyerere's theory of Education For Self-Reliance which, among other things, makes agriculture on a communal basis an important part of the school activity.¹ In Botswana, there is what is called Boiteko. Boiteko in Botswana

in the counterpart of Ujamaa in Tanzania. It is a co-operative self-employed model in Botswana and in which people not only learn but also produce. Writing from his experience in Botswana, Partick Van Rensburg says:

Education should not be conceived in consumption terms like a commodity bought or given free. That encourages passivity on the part of the pupils, and it is reinforced by the whole classroom and lecture structure, and all present teaching methods. Learning is better done through activity and the more meaningful the activity the better the lesson. But this principle may be extended further so that it means not only a change in methods in academic teaching, but so that we bring production into the school or take the school out into production. Production should be diversified for we cannot all be farmers, carpenters, and mechanics, and the production must be related to the learning of technical and manual skill, and must be accompanied by the theory relating to the skill concerned.²

With regards to Kenya, there have been suggestions to the effect that more science and technical orientated subjects as well as agriculture should be introduced. These suggestions are based on several assumptions:

- a) that it is the arts subjects which are mainly academic in nature;
- b) job opportunities for people with arts or mainly academic qualifications are becoming more scarce every year, while
- c) opportunities for those who have studied science and technical subjects have yet to be filled, and,
- d) it is generally known that Kenya is basically an agricultural country.

Working on the basis of these assumptions, emphasis has been laid

on science and technical subjects, an increasing number of village polytechnics are being constructed and several institutes of science and technology are being built. As to whether these measures will ultimately provide the solutions remains to be seen. Then there is the claim that the educational system produces people who are alienated, people who adopt foreign (mostly Western European and North American) values and forget or despise their own. That people should feel inclined to assert their own cultural values and traditions is perhaps too obvious to be emphasised. Consequently, the demand that the educational system should be 'Africanised' and made to foster native cultural values and traditions has constantly been made.

It is probably worth pointing out that currently (i.e. at the time of writing this thesis), a National Commission on Education Objectives and Policies has been established "to evaluate the present educational system, to define a new set of educational goals for the second decade of independence and to formulate a programme of action to implement these goals."³ Its terms of reference are:

- (a) To identify the elements of the educational process which are significant in promoting the nation's social and economic values.
- (b) To examine the relationship between the structure and content of the formal education system and the rate and pattern of economic growth.
- (c) To examine the optimal structure and content of the first cycle of education and recommend steps for its implementation.

(d) To examine the relationship between the training function of the formal education system and other systems of training both public and private.

(e) To study the operation and management, including the cost effectiveness, of the formal system of education, and recommend measures to improve its capacity to formulate, implement and control educational programmes.

The Commission has started its work and we are all anxiously waiting for its findings and recommendations.

In this thesis, the following hypotheses which I formulated earlier in my research proposal have been affirmed:-

(a) That the major problem of education in Kenya lies in the popular attempt to universalise an educational system that was meant to be elitist. The result has been educational 'development' on the one hand, and difficulties in allocating all the products of the formal educational system on the other.

(b) That in Kenya, the educational crisis resulting into the call for the overhauling of the educational system is a significant symbol of the social problems and ills that are often left unconsidered and unsolved.

(c) That the Kenyan society, which is by no means homogenous, and which has over the past years been undergoing dramatic changes owing partly to some foreign influence, has reached a stage at which it is impossible to reverse certain cultural norms or trends to the extent that the educational system in its present form cannot adequately and properly perform the role of fostering certain African cultural traditions.

In this thesis, it is argued that education alone, or education as such, is not a panacea for the ills of any society

(the Kenya society being no exception). There are certain underlying factors which exist in the way of the realization of a happier and more prosperous society making it necessary that questions about educational ends should not be discussed in isolation; they should be examined in the light of the society, its values and its general orientation socially, economically and politically. This is mainly so because educational issues are social, economic and political issues to a very large extent (or inextricably bound with them) in addition to their being of general philosophical nature. Previous criticisms of the Kenyan system of education have tended to overlook this point so that the country's educational system has not only received more than its fair share of the blame for the socio-economic problems that bedevil the country (e.g. unemployment) but has also been looked upon as being the remedy to such problems - provided that it is "overhauled".

Partly because it was possible to devote only a few months for this study and partly because of the shortage of relevant literature, the scope as well as the contents of this thesis have been reduced or kept to manageable proportions necessary for the achievement of quality and style associated with a work of philosophical character. In any case, however, there is no pretence to the effect that what is treated in this thesis has been dealt with exhaustively. There is still room for further research.

FOOTNOTES

¹Julius Kambarage Nyerere, Education for Self-Reliance,
(Policy Booklet; Dar-es-Salaam: March 1967).

²Patrick Van Reasburg, "Alternative Systems of Education
and Training, Education in Eastern Africa, Vol. 5 No. 2, 1975.

³Republic of Kenya, Third Development Plan, 1974 - 1978,
(Nairobi) P. 486

CHAPTER 2

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN KENYA

(I) HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: THE UNIVERSALITY OF EDUCATION

All human societies are different in one way or another. Every human society has an educational system. This educational system can either be indigenous and traditional or externally originated and revolutionary. If the educational system is indigenous and traditional, its chief purpose or function is traditional socialisation, that is, *enculturation*. Enculturation is the transmission of culture traits from one generation to the next. But if the educational system is externally originated, it involves the transmission of culture from one society to another. In this latter case, we may identify certain developments such as: (a) phases of the process involved in the diffusion of culture traits and complexes, (b) acceptance and rejection of culture traits and complexes, (c) the function of transmitted traits within different cultural contexts and different periods of time and, (d) an eventual harmonisation of the different traits that are found to be compatible.

Little is known about the historical developments of the educational systems of the various pre-colonial African Societies i.e. traditional African Societies (TAS) as they are often referred to.

This is not to say that there were no developments as such, but rather to state that there is little remembered knowledge about the nature or characteristic and the course of the development that affected the systems of the various traditional African education (TAED), i.e. the system(s) of education practiced in traditional African societies. However, much has been said and written about TAS and TAED in East Africa, that is, African societies and their systems of educations (in East Africa) as they were prior to the disturbing contact on a large scale with several members of the Western societies who were out on different but equally determined missions from about mid nineteenth century. The contact, together with the inevitable influence, resulted into profound social and educational ramifications. It brought different people together, people with different outlooks, different aims and purposes, different achievements and different beliefs; people with different cultures and different systems of education.

What Education is Concerned with

In many cases when people talk of education they refer to the formal and systematic training and instruction especially of the youth in schools, colleges and universities. They also refer to the intellectual and moral capabilities acquired as a result of such training and instructions. Thus an 'educated person' is supposed to be one who has gone through

such institutions (and has come out with some document or documents certifying his completion of a certain course or courses) and an 'uneducated person' is that one who has not attended any of those institutions and is (supposedly) illiterate. This is tantamount to equating education with literacy, a thing which is not right to do for education means much more than literacy, that is, the ability to read and write.

Education is the process of changing for the better the behaviour patterns of a person or people. This is using behaviour in a broad sense to include thinking and feeling as well as overt action. From this definition it can be seen that the subject of education is a wide one and covers many fields or activities some of which I shall mention or discuss below.

The purposes of education are manifold and not any one of them is sufficient. Education as initiation tries to fit an individual in his society. This is very important because one of the natures of man is to live with others, to form or belong to a community or society. This community or society is held together by some common needs, aspirations and understandings. Any misunderstandings in a society may throw it into confusion and even precipitate its fall and disintegration. It is therefore important that an individual is initiated so that he may know these things and prepare to play his role in his society.

Associated with initiation is the inculcation of a wide range of knowledge that has been discovered, developed and accumulated over many years - folklore, literature, intellectual arts, desirable behaviour or character, discipline-especially of the mind and faculties, practical skills, trades, etc - in short all that amounts to the cultural heritage of a people. Depending on the nature of the educational system, i.e the manner in which the inculcation of this wide range of worthwhile knowledge with the intention of bringing about a desirable state of mind,¹ a curriculum may be designed.

A meaningful curriculum must have its objectives. Objectives are matters of choice, and as such, they reflect the value judgements of those who make the choice. A number of questions may be considered and answered by those entrusted with the responsibility of making decisions. They may ask themselves: What was the state of their society some years back? What is the present state of the society? What kind of society is ideal? How can progress towards the type of society that is ideal be made and in the best possible way? What are their shortcomings? What are their available resources? How can the available resources be utilised or developed? What are the obstacles that may be encountered and how can they overcome? etc. To be able to answer these questions properly one must be acquainted with a wide range of knowledge and have a philosophy of education. He should also have reliable and accepted standards by which he accepts

or rejects certain concepts and determines whether such and such a thing is good or bad, right or wrong, or desirable or undesirable, not only to individual members of the society, but also to the society as a whole. After these questions have been answered and a choice made, a system of education that properly transmits this wide range of knowledge and values from one generation to another is devised. This transmission, whether formal or informal, should be systematic and reliable in order to ensure continuity of the process and the survival of the society.

The concept of formal education may be easier understood if it is contrasted with the concept of informal education. Formal education is institutionalised. It is obtained from such places as schools, colleges and universities where in most cases, trained or qualified teachers are employed to teach. There are sets of curricula and syllabi to be followed and pre-determined periods of time to complete the syllabi. Formal education is often arranged into stages, some of which may be terminal to some learners - depending on such factors as the learners' ages or ability. It is mostly examination orientated and certificates are awarded to successful candidates. On the other hand, informal education is obtained from outside the established formal institutions of learning such as schools, colleges and universities. And because it is not institutionalised, there are no curricula or syllabi to be followed, no specially trained or qualified staff are provided for the sole purpose of teaching, no

timetables for completion are made, and there are no awards of certificates to anybody. Informal education is continuous throughout one's life; it is not terminal except for those who for some reasons are rendered permanently incapable of learning anything or those who die.

Education in Traditional African Societies

Education in TAS was indigenous. Like any system of education that had roots in the society that evolved it, it reflected the nature of the society - TAS. Despite the fact that even prior to the advent of the Western Europeans East Africa was not a region of cultural uniformity but rather, one of cultural diversity, it is widely believed that TAS in East Africa were communalistic or socialistic and that their systems of education ensured the security and continuity of the communalistic or socialistic systems. A couple of example will suffice to illustrate this point.

In one of his popular writings, UJAMAA, Julius Kambarage Nyerere says that:

...when a society is so organised that it cares about its individuals, then, provided he is willing to work, no individual within that society should worry about what will happen to him tomorrow if he does not hoard wealth today. Society itself should look after him, or his widow, or his orphans. This is exactly what traditional African society succeeded in doing. Both the 'rich' and the 'poor' individual were

completely secure in African society... That was socialism. That is socialism ... One of the most socialistic achievements of our society was the sense of security it gave to its members, and the universal hospitality on which they could rely.²

Nyerere does not refer to any particular society in pre-colonial Africa. He speaks generally. And from this generalisation, it is easy to assume that in his opinion there was only one traditional African society or that all pre-colonial traditional African societies were either identical or socialistic. The truth of this claim, the claim that there was only one traditional African society or that all TAS were either identical or socialistic is, however, doubtful. But what cannot be doubted is the fact that different free and independent societies have more or less different educational systems - but with one thing in common - i.e. p u r p o s e. Says Nyerere in his other popular booklet published in 1967 under the title, Education for Self-Reliance:

The educational systems in different kinds of societies in the world have been, and are, very different in organisation and content. They are different because the societies providing the education are different and because education, whether it be formal or informal, has a purpose. That purpose is to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society, and to prepare the young people for their future membership of the society and their active participation in its maintenance or development.

This is true, explicitly or implicitly, for all societies - the capitalist societies of the West, the communist societies of the East, and the pre-colonial African societies too.

The fact that pre-colonial African societies did not have 'schools' - except for short periods of initiation in some tribes - did not mean that the children were not educated. They learned by living and doing. In the homes and on the farms they were taught the skills of the society, and the behaviour expected of its members.³

Education in TAS was largely, though not solely, informal. It was largely in the hands of the family in particular, and of the society in general with every elder person and every adult-save one suffering from certain mental deformity such as insanity - being a teacher to a greater or lesser extent. But this did not mean that education was confined to the young alone - as may be construed from what Nyerere says. The young, just as the adults, are members of the society and play their limited roles like anybody else. They learn and also teach some of their agemates as well as those who are younger. Furthermore, it is not only the young who learn or the only people that get educated. Adults also learn, they get more and more educated.

The process of education is a continuous one and not one which is terminal with one's initiation into adulthood for it is not possible for one to acquire total wisdom during his lifetime. As long as one lives, one continues to learn, to get educated. Referring to the Kikuyu system of education prior to the advent of the Europeans, Jomo Kenyatta for instance explains that:

... education begins at the time of birth and ends with death. The child has to pass various stages of age-groupings with a system of education defined for every status in life. Parents take responsibility of educating their children until they reach the stage of tribal

education. They aim at instilling into the children what the Gikuyu call 'otaari wa mocie' or 'kerera kia mocie,' namely, educating the children in the family and clan tradition. Apart from the system of schools which has been introduced by the Europeans, there is no special school building in the Gikuyu sense of the word: the homestead is the school.⁴

As for those who were young, they were taught the language of the society, singing and folklore, they were exposed to early acquaintance and initiation into life, they learnt by watching, imitating and helping the older people they accompanied from time to time, they learnt health education which included not going into houses where there were dreaded diseases such as small pox, not touching a lepper's clothes, etc. They also underwent moral and character training with particular emphasis on personal relations - the right relations with, and behaviour to, other people as being the ideal.⁵ Because the educational system was mostly informal, largely practical and mainly in the hands of the family, professional handover was a common phenomenon. If one was a medicine-man, he handed over his knowledge to his child, or, to put it more specifically, a boy whose father was a medicine-man had more chances of becoming a medicine-man than one whose father was not a medicine-man. His chances were by no means reduced by such things as financial constraints, inadequate training facilities, and the like.

One point that clearly emerges from this is that members of traditional African societies were exposed to education, and that was a product of the TAS. Members of TAS therefore got educated. They were educated, some more than others-- depending on various circumstances such as age-groupings and

family backgrounds. And provided that education in TAS was mostly informal and largely in the hands of the family, it is difficult to imagine an ordinary and normal person growing up to maturity totally uneducated.

What was the theoretical basis of the educational systems in traditional African societies? What were the philosophies behind or underlying them? How far were the educational practices in TAS consistent with the theoretical frameworks? Here again we find ourselves handicapped by little remembered knowledge.

As we have already observed, education as such was not something new to TAS. It was something that they were having, something they were exposed to, something they were familiar with. The same thing can be said of all societies: education has always been part and parcel of normal human life.

But traditional African societies were not exposed to and familiar with all types and all systems of education in the world. They were exposed to and familiar with that which was their own and relevant to their needs - TAED. Traditional African education ensured enculturation. No other type or system of education could ensure this for TAS as any type or system of other than TAED would be externally originated; it would be alien to TAS. It would involve the transmission of culture from one society(not TAS) to another(one of the TAS). The effect would be a revolution in the affected society, a revolution for the better or for the worse. The consequences would be far-reaching and long-lasting, and the situation probably irreversible.

Such was the kind of situation that faced TAS in Kenya (and elsewhere in Africa) from around mid-nineteenth century with the coming of West Europeans in large numbers.

(For purposes of simplicity and convenience, Africans in Kenya will simply be referred to as Africans and in some places as black people, the black man or the natives. The terms may be used interchangeably. And the West Europeans will be referred to as Europeans, colonialists, the white man or simply, whites)

The influx of Europeans into Kenya included missionaries, settlers as well as administrators. They probably or presumably came in that order although they were identical in many respects and collaborated with one another for their common interest - their 'civilisation' of the native people by 'educating' them in their 'modern' tradition.

What were the educational aims of the white missionaries, settlers and administrators? Were their educational aims identical? As we shall see, their educational aims were not identical even though they all came from Western societies. But before we come to this, it may be important to make a few observations. One is that the Europeans would probably agree with Nyerere that 'educational systems in different kinds of societies in the world have been, and are very different in organization and in content' and that the common purpose of

education in ALL societies 'is to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society, and to prepare the young people for their future membership of the society and their active participation in its maintenance or development'. This universalistic conception of education is valid only when one is referring to those systems of education that are indigenous and traditional, those that ensure the process of enculturation. But when it comes to an entirely new system of education, a system in which instead of the educational process transmitting 'from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society' members of an alien society undertake to transmit their generation's values, the 'accumulated knowledge and wisdom' of their own society to members of a different society, then the universalistic conception of education ceases to be valid. In other words, this universalistic conception of education is valid only if every society is solely responsible for the education of its members, but not when it comes to a situation whereby members of an alien society assume the role of educating a different society. When the latter situation obtains, we have a different phenomenon - that of deliberate interference and influence. It is here that the Europeans would differ with Nyerere and agree with Gowin who endorses the idea of influence. Gowin asserts that:

Education inevitably, involves deliberate influence. One must interfere with people to educate them. The moral and scientific dimensions of this fact are exceptionally important. Interference with the life of another person calls into play considerations of morality -

of freedom, of equality, of choice, of respect for the individual, of authority. Successfully to influence another person involves considerations of science - of causality, of determinism, of uniform and universal consequences or effects.⁶

In other words, the process of education involves at least two people: the educator and the one to be or being educated (the learner). The educator intentionally tries to teach someone else. By so doing, he seeks to cause in a morally unobjectional manner, a relatively permanent change in behaviour potential on the part of the learner. And by influencing him, he(the educator) interferes with the earlier behaviour of the learner such that the latter can be said to be receiving some education.

By assuming the role of 'educating' Africans, the Europeans in effect undertook to transmit the values of European societies to non-European societies - African societies. This transmission inevitably involved both interference and influence. The traditional African societies were interfered with and some of their members were influenced to a lesser or greater degree. But this did not mean a sudden end of TAED and the discarding of all customs and traditions cherished by TAS.

Later after contact with Europeans, it became common for Africans to adopt some aspects of the Western way of life, while still retaining loyalty to certain traditions

including initiation rites. Efforts by some missionaries to put an end to this met with resistance and alienation from missionary schools. (In central Kenya, for example, in the 1920s the Kikuyu people, resentful of missionary efforts to stop female circumcision, began building their own independent churches and schools. In Nyanza, the Luo people led by John Owola started their Nomiya Luo Missionary (Independent) schools. But there were more reasons to this phenomenon than simply resentment to missionary interference in the traditional life. One other reason, for example, was that the expansion of new educational facilities for Africans did not match the people's needs or demands. This was a result of the colonial Government's policy of basing education on racial lines and racial contribution to the economy of the country. Africans were said to be the least contributors to the economy, financially, and therefore to the educational expenditure and so were given least grant, comparatively, despite their being superior in number, a factor which should have led to their being given a correspondingly higher educational grant). This was not, however, because western education was necessarily incompatible with African cultures in every respect.⁷ What was happening was that one type of education was being added onto another. Enculturation was being interfered with.

Quasi - apartheid beginning in the educational system

It has been claimed by a number of scholars and critics that the systems of education in many developing countries (of which Kenya is one) have been inherited from, or modelled

along, the educational systems of their former colonial masters. Patrick Van Rensburg, for example, in an essay entitled "THE NEED FOR A REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION" (in Africa) states that:

Developing countries have simply inherited the educational systems of the west in the form into which they have developed, along with the social systems which they serve.⁸

However, evidence to support the claim that the modern system of education in Kenya (hereafter simply referred to as the educational system or the system of education - in Kenya) like the educational systems in other developing countries, has been 'inherited' from, or modelled along, the educational systems of the West in the form into which they have developed, along with the social systems which they serve, appears to be scant. The educational system in Kenya developed under unique conditions that were quite different from those situations obtaining in Britain - the colonial Western power that was mainly responsible. It was, right from its initial stages, far from being a model of the British or the English system of education. In Kenya it was based on race. In Britain it wasn't. The organisation of education along racial lines reflected British colonial attitude to race and the administration influenced by Lord Lugard's idea of Indirect Rule which tacitly encouraged separate and differential developments. English education on the other hand, developed on the basis of wealth and social class.

The development of education in Kenya was further influenced by such recommendations as those of the 1919 Education Commission of the East African Protectorate - Kenya's first Education Commission. The Commission was apparently very much influenced by the South African Native Commission of 1903-1905 and proceeded to recommend education on racial lines. The First Education Ordinance of 1924 also provided for education on racial lines - viz, European, Indian (Asian), Arab and African, the last two being sometimes lumped together. Accordingly, three **distinct** systems of education existed in Kenya - European education, Indian education and African education. The Ordinance emphasised development in industrial education, and the Native Industrial Training Depot (NITD) was opened for the definite purpose of training A f r i c a n apprentices. It is thus clear that there was what could be termed as a quasi-apartheid beginning in the development of the country wide system of education. Furthermore, the Phelps-stokes Commission - 1924-5- endorsed the same idea and Tuskegeeism i.e. the system of education as was practised in Tuskegee Institute, U.S.A., during the headship of Booker T. Washington, was held by Governor Coryndon and Education Director J.R. Orr as being ideal for Africans. (It is important to note here that certain aspects of 'African education' for example, the predominance of industrial education, had their origins, as we shall see later, from Black Americans who, out of racial misconceptions and

fear, thought or believed that the best way of achieving racial harmony in U.S.A. was by designing an educational system for the American Blacks that did not produce people who would be inclined to go for the types of jobs that were dominated by Whites. Tuskegee Institute in particular, laid emphasis on the teaching of industrial education. This type of education was unwittingly racial for it was meant only for those who were not white.. It was discriminatory. However, its discriminatory nature was not to be condemned first by those it excluded on the ground of colour - the Whites - but rather by those to whom it was meant - the Blacks. For the Whites in U.S.A., it was a welcome gesture on the part of the Blacks who seemed to realise all on their own, the futility of seeking educational equality and unqualified civil rights, and the necessity of voluntarily accepting inferior positions - for after all, they were supposed to be inferior people!) None of the above factors influenced the development of British education. Moreover, there is a clear difference especially in aims, between a system of education in the colonial 'motherland', i.e., education for the colonialists themselves, and colonial system of education, i.e., a system of education practiced by the colonialists in their overseas colonies and for their colonial subjects in particular. The latter is not necessarily a duplication of the former.

We have now come to a point at which we are no longer dealing with the purpose of education IN a given society but the purpose of education FOR a certain society. The former case refers to one in which the universalistic conception of education

is held to be relevant whereas the latter refers to one in which the universalistic conception is ignored or shelved to the extent that the aim or purpose of education is defined by one community for a completely different one. This situation presupposes that the needs of the community or society to be educated are known better by those who have undertaken for themselves to carry out the task of 'educating.' The situation also presupposes that the educating community is 'civilised' whereas the community being educated or to be educated is 'primitive.' This presupposition is what often gave rise to what was commonly referred to as the 'civilising mission' of certain people especially the white missionaries from Western Europe. Some practices of the missionaries, of 'the civilisers,' however repugnant, often passed uncriticised and uncondemned because their mission was supposed to be honorific and their ideas unassailable. For example, missionary interference in the traditional life was condoned by the administrative powers (see p.24).

Education as such has neither aim nor purpose. It doesn't even have a policy. It is just an abstract idea. Only people have aims, purposes and policies. Some of these aims, purposes and policies have something to do with education. And because these aims, purposes and policies emanate from people, they are often not the same. This is because not all people think or feel alike on every issue. Different people may have different aims, different purposes, different opinions, different suggestions as to how the educational process should be carried out and the means to be employed.⁹

People's conceptions of the ideal world vary not only from one society to another but also from one individual to another. In addition, people vary in their preferences and degrees of emphasis. When it comes to the subject of education, for example, there are those who lay more emphasis on the moral aspect and others that lay less emphasis on that aspect; there are those who have the practical bias and others who have the academic bias; there are those who advocate a liberal type of education and others who advocate a utilitarian type of education, etc. This is a point we should bear in mind when discussing the aims or purposes of education for Africans from the standpoints of the missionaries, settlers and the colonial administrations.

Another point we should bear in mind is the inevitable conflict between those who believe that the role of educational institutions is, or should be, essentially the transmission of cultural tradition - a function that is essentially conservative and one which seeks to maintain the status quo - and those who believe that the role of educational institutions is, or should be, to bring about change and progress in the society.

With regard to the establishment of the modern educational system in Kenya, the initiative originally lay in the hands of those who believed in and sought change. But they differed in the means to be employed to achieve change and the particular direction of that change and development. The differences did not for a long time, however, hamper the

the development of education. They only reflected different educational aims followed by different educational practices each seeking to bring about and foster change. However, one point of convergence was the establishment of Industrial Education for Africans.

We can now turn to industrial education, analyse the concept behind it, and examine its aim or purposes and its underlying philosophical presuppositions.

(II) THE BASIS OF INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION IN KENYA

The idea of industrial education for Africans did not originate from the missionaries, settlers or the colonial administrations.

In May 1881, an American mulatto, Booker T. Washington, left Hampton and founded the Tuskegee Institute for Negroes to teach industrial education. Washington had been teaching at Hampton (founded in 1863 by General Armstrong) where industrial education was being taught. (The term 'Negro' is used here without any derogatory undertones and without the slightest intention of constituting an insult to the Black Americans who have since objected to being referred to by the term. Up to very recently, not only Black Americans but also Black Africans were commonly called 'Negroes' and said to belong to the 'Negro race', and what was thought to be good for the Black Americans was thought to be equally good for their kith and kin in Africa.)

During those days, the American Whites were very prejudiced against any competitive political or professional role for

Negroes. Edward Wilmot Blyden (a West Indian scholar of African descent who became president of Liberia College, Monrovia, in January 1881 and whose ideas on liberal education for Africans later had some influence on educational thought in Africa in the 1920s and 1930s), General Armstrong together with Booker T. Washington and others, believed that because of this strong prejudice, Negro education must prepare them for the type of life open to them without risking considerable white prejudices or reactions and thereby avoid competition with whites. They thought that it was important for Negroes to receive the type of education that did not in any way prepare them for the kinds of jobs that were occupied by the American Whites - most of whom in any case, resented the idea of some Negroes taking up some jobs which they thought should be reserved for Whites only. By avoiding competition for jobs between the Whites and the Blacks, it was believed that the racial tensions, prejudices and emotions would be lessened significantly or avoided altogether.

There was an attempt to argue that since statistics showed that about 80% of Southern Negroes lived in the rural districts, then education for Negroes should prepare them for the unsophisticated rural life, and for this reason, agricultural education must form the core of the curriculum. Negroes were supposed to avoid White contamination or influence from the cities and the seaboard. (This argument was later extended to apply to the African situation without taking into account the urbanisation process taking place

and the economic and social lure into the emerging towns and cities). The training was meant to avoid the 'traditional' alienation of the educated man from his community. The educated Black men would not only continue belonging to their own people in the rurals, but would also serve them for they would be put slightly ahead of their communities. Accordingly, political agitation and the demand for higher education and equal rights were supposed to be shelved by Negroes. Least was it realised by then that this type of education was actually a political affair involving a compromise that was implicitly political in nature.

(a) Negro 'Needs'

It was believed that the underlying principles of Negro schools was, or was to be, the adaptation of educational activities to the needs of the pupil and the community - backward and rural. Negro 'needs' were defined as being sanitation, health training, improved housing, and increased agricultural skills - as well as moral training; and 'Bible and plough' remedy was the prescription.

In U.S.A. the term "industrial" had three different overtones - moral, political and educational. J.K. King who studied this phenomenon observes that:

For the Southern whites it signified the disavowal of all political ambition on the part of the Negroes, and the readiness to stay in the South as a steady labour supply. The Northern whites of missionary and philanthropic dispositions were gratified by the insistence upon the 'morality' of the Hampton industrial work, and

felt able to continue liberally to support a system which Armstrong stressed was primarily 'for the sake of character.¹⁰

The term "industrial education" was used merely to refer to simple forms of trade training or manual training in Negro schools - which included elementary agriculture, cooking and menial service - W.E. Burghardt DuBois later branded the trades, 'decadent'.

W.E.B. Du Bois and some other Negro leaders of the time later revolted against the educational and political assumptions of Negro industrial education. Du Bois argued convincingly that historically, the university preceded the school and that it would not be possible to have the Tuskegee without teachers trained at the liberal arts colleges. He stressed the need and importance of liberal education and criticised the predominance of industrial education for Negroes.

In 1901, R.J. Bigham, a White leader of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, delivering an address at the Common Theological Seminary under the title 'Shall We Commercialize the Negro?' opined that:

...industrial education, even with its sideline of a little learning, will, if not safeguarded and undergirded by higher and distinctive intellectual training for the race, forge the chains of servitude on the Black man from which he will never recover...¹¹

Tuskegee, even as Booker T. Washington saw it, was, unlike Lovedale, Freretown or Freetown, the first outstanding

example of the Blackman's voluntary turning to industrial education without the Whiteman's persuasion or dictation. The institute had its first East African student, Mohammed Jama, in January 1915, who went there on the sponsorship of Ex-U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt who had earlier toured E.A. Protectorate with his son Kermit on game hunting. Mohammed Jama was more after 'an education from the standpoint of books' than for working with the hands - the strong industrial courses at Tuskegee. The institute unsuccessfully tried to indoctrinate him and change his bias for literary education and called upon Roosevelt to write to Mohammed an exhortation upon manual training. Roosevelt is recorded to have written the letter thus:

Now will you read this to Mohammed Jama... What we are trying to make everybody in this country understand is that working with a man's hands, that is, industrial activity, is even more important than a literary education. Mohammed can never be a clerk in this country; he will never know enough; but he can be a very good man with his hands doing industrial work.¹²

Mohammed Jama left Tuskegee a few months afterwards - after a total of about one and a half years and having been unable to reconcile between his interests in literary education and the interests of the Institute in industrial education.

Tuskegeeism with its philosophy of community education was later introduced by the work of the Phelps-Stokes Fund into the thinking of missionary and Government officials in

Kenya. However, the idea seemed to have reached them before the Phelps-Stokes Commission by reading the works of some of those who were mainly responsible for the establishment and development of industrial education for the American Negroes, for example, Booker T. Washington's book, 'WORKING WITH THE HANDS.' Evidence for this can be found in the 1924 Department of Education Annual Report which states that:

The general policy of the Education Department as adopted in the 1911 and based upon the excellent work of that great negro, the late Mr. Booker Washington - a book entitled 'Working with the Hands,' not only remains unchanged in principle, but has been confirmed and strengthened firmly, by the agricultural policy of the late Sir Robert Coryndon and secondly by the principles advocated by Dr. Jesse' Jones and the PhelpsStokes Commission, namely, Adaptation to Environment in Education and the distinction between the education of the masses and the education of their leaders.¹³

On the education of the "leaders" - the Europeans - the Report said that:

It must never be forgotten that the European Community is a small handful in the midst of a large African population and that if Europeans would retain the leadership of Kenya, a high standard of education must be demanded.¹⁴

Notice the clear distinction: for African it was 'adaptation to environment' in education whereas for the Europeans it was a 'high standard of education.' By a 'high standard of education' it was meant, generally, academic or liberal education as opposed to industrial education.

But this was not all. There was a third type of education - education for Indians in Kenya - to produce artisans and businessmen. The curriculum in Indian schools later seemed to conflict with the Government policy which expected Africans to be artisans - for it happened that Indian Education tended to be rather literary and aimed at "the development of general education to enable Indians to serve the community as a whole in the ranks of the distributing and professional classes"¹⁵ and catering for certain professions such as law and medicine.

Our concern here will be with education for Africans, the people that industrial/ vocational education was meant for.

(b) The Nature of Industrial/Technical Education

Industrial education for Africans was characterised by the following: (i) practical bias

(ii) adaptation to environment and service to the community;

(iii) Provision of a small class of artisans (working class);

(iv) moral training and discipline in the light of Christian principles.

(i) Practical Bias

What this essentially involved was the acquisition of skills believed relevant to the needs of the community. The term 'community' seemed to be double edged: it was used to refer

to a people's own community, in this case, the African community or race; it was also used to refer to the general (whole) community in the country including the European as well as the Indian communities. When the term was used to refer only to the African community, the 'needs' of the Africans were defined mainly as the provision of social service in a line that was more or less identical with 'Negro needs' - namely, sanitation, health training, improved housing, agricultural skills and animal husbandry, and of course, moral training, the last of which was equated or identified with Christian education. But when the term 'community' was used to refer to all the three races together, it was the 'needs' of the European race (mostly economic) that prevailed: the provision of a small class of artisans working for the European community as labourers - in building, in farms, as menial servants, as clerks and messengers, as religious converts as well as teachers, etc. European needs were being met by the building of more and better houses, increased agricultural productivity that partly led to the fostering of Western enterprise, the employment of labourers, servants and clerks cheaply, the spread of their religion and influence and the increased hold and establishment of the machinery of government. For all this to happen smoothly and in the shortest possible time, 'the co-operation' of the Africans (as well as of the Indians) was considered important. On the 'Co-operation in African Education' J.R. Orr, then Director

of Education in Kenya, wrote in the 1924 Annual Report that:

It must be remembered that African Education in Kenya does not present the same problems as would be found in purely native areas. It is complicated and in the past it has been hampered by the presence of two alien races, representatives of superior civilisation. Political and economic considerations have both played their part, and a system of education which would serve to raise the standard of living in the native reserves has not satisfied the pressing economic demand. The problem presented to the Education Department is the evolution of a system which, while offering the fullest opportunity for gradual and reasonable development of Africans in accordance with their environment, at the same time fits them for cooperation with the superior races. In other words, the activities of Europeans, Indians and Africans must be carefully dove-tailed into each other if the development of the Colony is to lead to peace, goodwill and prosperity.¹⁶

The importance of co-operation was echoed in the 1925 Report but in a wider perspective. The report states in part that:

The Department feels that co-operation alone - especially in African education - is the solution of the educational, social, economic, political and racial problems of Kenya.¹⁷

In this wider perspective, the Report went on to emphasise the importance of co-operation between the Education Department and voluntary agencies especially the Missions, as well as co-operation with other Government Departments, for example, Medical, Agricultural and the Administration.

In African education (the Report says), co-operation is especially sought with the Administration. The Education Department feels that the school should be an instrument in the hands of the District Commissioner for the improvement of his district ... (and) to assist the District Commissioner in skilled work of communal nature, e.g. building the stone piers of bridges over rivers, culverts on roads, etc.: or again in combining for the erection of water mills for the grinding of grain.¹⁸

What was the reason underlying the idea of practical bias, the idea of working with the hands? The African mind, it was believed, was primitive and undeveloped, and that unlike the minds of the supposedly 'superior races,' it was academically deficient and not endowed with high intellect or the capacity to think in abstract terms. This was purely a question of prejudice. The following interesting quotations, though rather long, speak for themselves.

Referring to what he termed as "The Psychological Basis of Education" for Africans, J.R. Orr had this to say:

Much has been spoken and written about the need for teaching the native the dignity of labour, for teaching him to work and for leading him to increase his wants. The first expression is often the slogan of the white man who wants the native to work for him - nor can he be blamed for doing so. But the real cause of these utterances is usually an economic cause - a demand for economic progress and such a demand does not constitute for the experienced educationalists a complete justification for any particular form of education ... Education can be guided by both economic and social aims but its function is the development of human faculties and it ...

is primarily on psychological grounds that any system of education should be approved by educational experts. On these grounds - and on these alone - the Education Department holds that education through industry is the only right system of education for the African of Kenya in his present state of development. It is essentially correct and in accordance with the dictates of psychology. The mentality of the African is undeveloped and it is universally admitted that handicrafts and manual training are especially valuable in developing the motor centres of the brain and for this reason figure largely in Kinder-gartens and in schools for defective children,

Secondly, another common experience in educational theory is that children should "learn by doing." We would rather say: "Let thought develop naturally out of action." The psychological order of development is Sensation, Percept, Concept. In his primitive state the African deals mainly with sensations and perceptions. Thought is not highly developed: education must proceed by the training of the eye, ear and hand, and thought must evolve by means of oral or written composition and the expression of form and number out of the work created by his own effort.

Thirdly,... we need above all, to preach the gospel of Interest; we need more of the principles underlying the Dalton method; we need to develop internal stimuli - the pupil's pleasure in the work of his own hands and his joy in creation and construction.¹⁹

And in support of his conviction, J.R. Orr drew attention to the report by the medical missionary of the Church of Scotland Mission, Tumu Tumu (1923) which recommended that schools for Africans should be built side by side with efficient hospitals because it was believed that:

...the pressure of learning in those going forward for higher education has already adversely affected the health of some. Several boys have been treated in hospital just as they were on the verge of a nervous breakdown owing to the keenness on intellectual work. The unstable nervous constitution of the Akikuyu referred to above has always been kept in mind with regard to scholastic work. A large portion of the out-patients of this hospital and its dispensaries are drawn from scholars attending school. In my opinion it is imperative that each school of any size among the natives should have side by side with it an efficient hospital, especially as few natives are able to remain longer than 6 months without requiring some medical attention. 20

Thus higher education was believed to be too strenuous and even medically unhealthy for Africans.

(ii) Adaptation to Environment and Service to the Community

Adaptation to environment and service to the community was the central aim of industrial/technical education for Negroes as well as Africans. The other aspects, namely, practical bias, provision of a small class of artisans and moral training and discipline in the light of Christian principles, were subsidiary to it.

It was believed that Negro and African education had two main values:- ADPTATION and COMMUNITY CONSCIOUSNESS - to improve the masses in terms of welfare and morality. Thus the idea of adaptation and community consciousness was not only a socio-economic issue but also a moral or an ethical issue. We shall consider the two issues separately although

they were very closely related.

The Socio-economic issue

The socio-economic issue was a rather complex one. But we can identify about four different concerns: (1) relevant education, (2) community welfare, (3) the problem of alienation or assimilation and, (4) the fear of competition for jobs.

The Phelps-Stokes Report emphasised the importance of adaptation and implied that relevant education should be adapted to the conditions of life and especially the learner's environment. In the curriculum were subjects which were meant to provide certain practical skills (such as the ones we have already mentioned above) and an attempt was made to introduce those which gave expression to the natural environment and the culture of the learner's community, e.g. native stories and folklore, traditional dances, local handicrafts, etc.

The introduction of those subjects that provided for the acquisition of practical skills was meant, as we have already seen, for the service of the community. Like the Negroes in America, Africans who had undergone the prescribed training were supposed to return to their communities to serve in the fields of health, agriculture, animal husbandry, education, etc. and to help in the uplifting of the standard of living in the communities' rural areas. The benefits accruing out of these services would be, or were realised by, the Africans and the other communities and the

country as a whole in that Africans realised 'improved' and 'higher standards of living', other communities got the services of those Africans who had been trained to provide service not only to their community but also to the other communities in the country, and the country got 'developed' in terms of improved quality of life among different communities, increased agricultural productivity, the expansion of commercial enterprise, more literacy, etc. Community Welfare was, therefore, being catered for.

Another thing that was of concern was the problem of alienation of the educated Black man from his community's way of life or his assimilation into the white man's community and way of life. This concern was socio-economic in one way and moral-cultural in another. We shall first look at the socio-economic issue.

We may perhaps recall what J.R. Orr said on what had been spoken and written about the need for teaching the native the dignity of labour; for teaching him to work and for leading him to increase his wants. He observed that the first expression was often the slogan of the white man who wanted the native to work for him, but that the real cause of the utterances was an economic one (p.39). However, what J.R. Orr did not point out (perhaps because he had not realised it) was that in order for this to happen, it was not important only to seek and get 'co-operation' but more significantly to alienate the native from his traditional

outlook towards life in general, and from his own traditional society in particular. The Whites, while 'teaching the native the dignity of labour', offered no good example for they often appeared as supervisors rather than as labourers 'working with the hands'. Where a teacher says one thing but does the opposite and yet instructs his pupils to do as he tells them and not as he does, it is what he does rather than what he says that is likely have a more effective impact or influence on the pupils. It is precisely because of this reason that industrial/technical education - more specifically, working with the hands - had little appeal to those it was meant for. Instead of getting them 'adapted' to their environment (as if they were not), it succeeded in alienating them in the sense that they tried to emulate the Whites. The alienation, as well as the emulation, went further - further to the extent of partial assimilation. But attempts at full assimilation suffered heavy blows from racial consciousness or prejudice and colour-bar. The eventual reaction to this saw the birth of Negritude and other types of African 'cultural nationalism', the assertion of 'Black Personality', etc.

The Moral issue

On the moral-cultural side of it, there was concern about the logic of measuring every aspect of African life by Western European criteria and attempting to transplant indiscriminately, European values into Africans without taking into account the short term as well as long term

effects of summarily discouraging or suppressing traditional African customs, cultural institutions and values. We shall examine this issue later in section(iv) under the title:

Religious Training, Morality and Discipline.

We have already seen above that when 'the educating community' talked of teaching Africans 'the dignity of labour' their underlying reason was to get Africans to work for them (p.39). We have also seen that working for the community was not only manual. In addition, we have noted that there were different aims of education from the standpoints of the settlers, the missionaries and the Colonial administration. An Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical African Dependencies (1925) attempted to define the ultimate aims of education in the following words:

Education should be adapted to the mentality, attitudes, occupations and traditions of the various people, concerning as far as possible all sound and healthy elements in the fabric of their social life; adapting them where necessary to changed circumstances and progressive ideas, as an agent of natural growth and evolution. Its aim should be to render the individual more efficient in his or her conditions of life, whatever it may be, and to promote the advancement of the community as a whole through the improvement of health, the training of the people in the management of their own affairs, and the inculcation of true ideals of citizenship and service. It must include the raising up of capable, trustworthy, public-spirited leaders of the people, "belonging to their own race. Education thus defined will narrow the hiatus between the educated

class and the rest of the community, whether chiefs or peasantry... The first task of education is to raise the standard alike of character and efficiency of the bulk of the people, but provision must also be made for the training of those who are required to fill posts in the administrative and technical services, as well as those who as chiefs will occupy positions of exceptional trust and responsibility. As resources permit, the door of advancement, through higher education, in Africa, must be increasingly opened to those who by character, ability and temperament show themselves fitted by such education.²¹

The inclusion in the curriculum of those subjects that constituted higher education helped to undermine the basis of industrial education. On a purely psychological basis, higher education for Africans symbolised power and prestige as well as an elevated social status and closeness to the European community. This type of education was seen as the door to the European technological mysteries and an escape route from manual labour. The white-collar job mentality entered the minds of the Western educated Africans.²² The result was that Western educated Africans moved to towns and sought those types of jobs that were previously monopolised by members of other communities. The Africans seemed to want to be more than good community servants. They partially alienated themselves from their 'traditional' communities or societies. They adapted some aspects of Western culture. In short, the theory of "adaptation to environment" crumbled. Even as early as 1923, the Director of Education in Kenya commented that:

The teachers of this department (i.e. the education department), consider that Reading and Writing unaccompanied by work useful to the Community divorces the pupil from his tribe, gives him contempt for his own people and attracts him to the towns.²³

J.R. Orr was of the opinion that elementary or literary education for Africans should be closely related to practical work. Generally, he was against book-learning. However, he was not the only one holding this view though circumstances and the environment were changing dramatically. An article in the East African Standard (weekly edition) of 1 March, 1924, proclaimed:

We have heard nothing more enunciated in Kenya on the subject of education than Dr. Jesse Jones' basic principles, i.e. that education must bear a direct relationship to (1) hygiene, (2) home life, (3) industry (or more widely the correct use of the opportunities of environment), and (4) recreation...

The African requires to be taught his duty to himself. In his present stage to give him book learning is a waste of energy and funds.

Stronger sentiments were even expressed by Bishop Weston who saw that the literary or academic education being provided was a dangerous thing. He said:

Education is in danger of killing Africans, soul and body. I view with great alarm the movement for educating Africans as quickly as possible... Education is the right of Africa - but education as practised as at present will be Africa's curse.²⁴

And ironically, the formal system of education inherited by independent Kenya has been criticised for being too academic,

elitist, etc.(see Chapter 3).

(iii) Provision of a small class of artisans

Initially, the school system attracted a few people. There were even cases whereby those who went to school thought that they had to be paid for attendance. There were also cases whereby only the misfits and malcontents (perhaps the more critical members of the society who looked forward to rapid change rather than the maintenance of the status quo), went on their own accord, or were sent, to school. Still there were cases in which some communities simply refused to send any of their members to school until they were coerced into doing so.

In Masailand, for example, when the first boys' school was opened in Narok District, not a single boy reported for registration. It was not until several meetings between the District Commissioner, the Kenya Education Department and Masai leaders had taken place that a reluctant concession was wrung from the Masai elders who agreed that each of the seven sections of the community would produce an annual quota of school-boys calculated according to the number of children in the section. However, when it came to sending the boys to school,

Only those boys considered completely useless at home as a result of mental or physical infirmity were selected for the year's first and second quota by the elders.²⁵

Early developments in the education system, as we have already observed, placed emphasis on industrial/technical rather than academic facilities at an elementary rather than advanced level and(as we shall see later), religious instruction. One of the purposes was to get Africans "employed" - to provide

labour. Later interest in European ways of life led to demand, not only from Europeans but also from Africans themselves as benefits accruing out of the education and subsequent employment acquired social ramifications.

The increased popularity of the education being provided for Africans meant that more educational facilities and teachers had to be provided to cater for the ever-increasing demand.

As an example, it was noted that:

Throughout the great part of the African areas of the Colony and Protectorate the African demand for more and more educational facilities went on unabated during 1948.²⁶

To meet these pressing demands, more money was required. Gradually, and as the burden of financing education grew heavier, persuasion gave way to restriction and consequently, elitism in the educational structure. What this state of affairs actually amounted to was the success of the educational system in producing not only a small class of artisans - people willing to be employed as it were but a large number of such people who sought both the education and the jobs to be given after acquiring the education. When and where the Colonial Government failed to provide the educational facilities sufficient to meet the demands, some African communities taxed themselves or took the initiative to build some schools(p.24). Some African communities began to regard education as a rewarding investment. The Coast Provincial Commissioner was quoted in the 1948 Report as having said:

It is estimated that over 50% of the Taita have achieved some degree of education and the demand for additional

facilities are continuous and loud. In no other sphere is such keenness and enthusiasm displayed and Education is the only service for which the Taita is prepared to put his hand into his pocket.²⁷

But Africans did not just tax themselves or build their own schools without asking the Government to provide more facilities for education. They did ask for more facilities. However, some Government officials thought that by Africans asking for more educational facilities they simply weren't conscious of the cost! For example, the Nyanza Provincial Commissioner in his 1945 report wrote that:

All the more embarrassing demands made by Africans are connected with education. It is very evident that they have no sort of appreciation of the cost. A Local Native Councillor will rise in Council and quite emphatically declare that so many day primary schools are needed in his area, and that candidates should be sent to overseas universities, without for a moment pausing to consider where funds should be found.²⁸

Education policy during the first half of the twentieth century did not just succeed in bringing up Africans to be employed; it also failed to adapt him to his alleged 'natural' environment, and rather than inculcate into him a long lasting sense of 'community consciousness', it inculcated into him a sense of outward-looking and aversion to manual labour as a form or type of employment. Moreover, education policy during the period did not, as S.P. Abbott correctly states in his thesis, "take into consideration the need to provide for an emerging(African) elite."²⁹ It was, and still is, this success on one hand and failure on the other that has

continued to plague the modern system of education in Kenya.

(iv) Religious Training, Morality and Discipline

Christian religious education, as a matter of fact, preceded industrial education in Kenya. As early as 1846 Christian missionary explorers from Europe began to arrive in Kenya. They were soon followed by traders, settlers and colonial administrators. The Whites have given reasons to justify their coming and their deeds. These reasons included their 'mission' to 'civilise' (Westernise) other people, spread Christianity according to the alleged will of the founder of the religion, to expand their merchandise, and even to expand their empires by finding settlements for some of their criminals, convicts and social misfits and those who had to flee from their homes following religious intolerance and persecutions and socio-economic hardships in Europe. Our concern here will not be to try to do what historical and political analysts have done or are still doing, but to try to examine the concept of Christian - moral education and its role in the establishment of industrial/technical education in Kenya as part of the philosophical foundations of modern educational system in the country. We shall in this section, therefore, examine the aims of education from the point of view of the missionaries.

With regard to education in Kenya, missionary activities can be said to have had two main bases as follows:

- (1) Religious basis - with a psychological reference; and
- (2) Educational basis - with moral and socio-economic references.

Religious Basis

The conversion and Westernisation of the natives is one of the often stated aims and objectives of the missionary activities. That these aims and objectives were achieved is clear enough from the large number of Africans and their adaptation of some aspects of Western culture.

What was probably most significant was the missionary assumption that the African community was something like a black slate on which anything white could be written until the slate was more or less completely white - the whiteness of which represented 'modern' and 'Western civilization.' Consequently, although it was acknowledged that Africans belonged to their 'traditional societies,' it was not believed or thought that they were having what is now commonly referred to as 'Traditional African Religions'(TARs). TARs were brushed aside as mere superstitions and traditional African societies were considered pagan - and therefore(although there isn't any logical connection) in need of Christianity. Even if one were a pagan, it does not always follow that because he is a pagan, he therefore needs to be made a Christian. He could very well remain a pagan; he could become a Muslim, a Hindu, a Buddhist, or even practise voodoo. The fact that one may be a pagan - and therefore a non-Christian - does not mean that one of the person's needs is, or should be, to be taught and converted into, Christianity. Neither does this mean that the person is primitive, that he is not civilized. It does not even follow that he needs, or ought to be, Westernised.

However, early missionaries in Kenya laid emphasis on

the spiritual basis of education - a factor that had some psychological reference in that it had something to do with the convert's state of mind and attitude. Beliefs in TARs were discouraged, condemned and sometimes suppressed. The new converts were taught not to mind much about worldly pleasure but strive to attain everlasting bliss in the life after death. Concern over one's immortal soul had to supersede or prevail over, material concerns. The primary aim of Christian education thus appeared to be to prepare people for the hereafter life through Jesus Christ and to live a sort of supernatural life. As Pope Pius XI said in 1930:

The proper and immediate end of Christian education is to co-operate with Divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian, that is, to form Christ Himself in those generated by Baptism... For the true Christian must live a supernatural life in Christ...

Hence the true Christian product of Christian education is the supernatural man who thinks, judges and acts constantly and consistently in accordance with right reason illuminated by the supernatural light of the example and teaching of Christ; in other words,... the true and finished man of character. For it is not every kind of consistency and firmness of conduct based on subjective principles that makes true character, but only constancy in following the external principles of justice...

The scope and aim of Christian education as here defined, appears to the worldly as an abstraction, or rather as something that cannot be attained without the suppression or dwarfing of the natural faculties, and without a renunciation of the activities of the present life.³⁰

The Pontiff went on to say however, that a true Christian does not renounce the activities of this life nor stunt his

natural faculties but instead, he develops and perfects them by co-ordinating them with the supernatural, and by doing so, he ennobles what is merely natural in life and secures for it new strength in the material and temporal order, no less than in the spiritual and eternal.³¹

It is important to note here that the aim of Christian education as stated by the Pope was meant to be applicable not only to Africans, but to the rest of the world where Christianity was being taught. It was meant to apply to the converts as well as to those who converted them; it was meant to apply to anyone who was, or was believed to be, a Christian; and it was also meant to apply to anyone who was in the process of being converted into Christianity. This aim was therefore meant to be universally applicable, and not one that had to be adapted to the converts' natural environments. However, the practice in this part of the world was different: a lot of emphasis was laid on the African's spiritual development in the light of his natural environment; and to-day, it is not uncommon to hear calls for the 'Africanisation of the Church.' Some Africans even do not see the worth of the church. For example, Okot p'Bitek in one of his books advances an interesting argument to the effect that if the white missionaries from Europe came to Africa only to find that there were African names for their 'God' - e.g. 'Nyasaye,' 'Were,' 'Mungu,' 'Ngai,' etc., and if the African concept of God was the same as the Euro-Christian concept of God such that to refer to 'Nyasaye,' 'Were,' 'Mungu,' or 'Ngai,' and to refer to God was to refer to one and the same

Being, then, the evangelical work of the missionaries in African were superfluous And instead of them providing civilisation to African societies, he argues, they gave them "sophistication."³²

Despite the emphasis on spiritual rather than the temporal well-being of those subjected to Christian teachings in Africa, it does happen that some Christian converts understand the whole thing differently and interpret Biblical teachings to suit their own conveniences and needs. Edward Wilmot Blyden, for example, noted that to some Africans, acquiring Euro-Christian education was a means to richness and greatness. He wrote:

The intelligent natives of the interior with whom we have conversed in our travels between Sierra Leone and the head-waters of the Niger, look with hardly an exception, upon the religion and books of the white man as intended not to teach men the way to heaven but how to become rich and great in this world.³³

Educational Basis

In Kenya, missionaries were the first people to establish schools and it was not until 1911 when the Department of Education was established that the Colonial administration began to actively and directly co-operate with the missionaries to establish more schools. By the year 1929, interestingly enough, the Colonial Government began to have some doubts as to whether some of the strictly and exclusively mission schools deserved to be recognised as schools. This was because of their overwhelming or even exclusive preoccup-

upation by evangelical efforts, turning out more and more church members while doing little or nothing to educate them in the real sense of the word. Under the 1929 Education Ordinance Part I, an attempt at defining 'school' was made. It was stated that a school was not recognised as a school if the instruction given there was wholly or mainly religious. The definition made it possible to distinguish generally between schools in the real sense of the term and catechumenate centres.³⁴ In the catechumenate centres, the spiritual training was meant to be for the spiritual advancement of the African and not of the European as well, the latter being presumably advanced spiritually already and therefore not in need of the spiritual training.

However, attention should here be drawn to the nature and role of the school according to those who ran them. Although it did appear that some schools were not schools in the real sense of the term but only catechumenate centres, it also did appear that some Government schools were mere social centres. A case in which schools were social centres was revealed by the then Director of Education earlier - in 1925. He said:

Whether we take the Government schools of Machakos and Waa, where education begins with hand and eye training, where industrial education is a method rather than a subject of education and leads to the benefit of the community as a whole; or whether we take the Government school at Narok, where boys are brought directly in contact with the community by their dairy work, their

ploughing and their care of cattle: or whether we take the Missions with their hospitals, training dressers and maternity nurses, their industrial departments and their training of teachers to spread education among the villagers - one fact stands out beyond all others, namely, that these schools are not schools in the strict sense of the term so much as social centres, training boys and girls for service to the community and for the improvement of their people as a whole.³⁵ (underlining, mine)

The question that arises out of this is whether for that matter what was being provided could strictly speaking be called education.

But more important than spiritual training, in educational terms, was moral training and the application of discipline in the schools. In this respect, both the missionaries and the Colonial governments agreed that religious education for Africans in the light of Christian principles (whatever they meant) would make them what they seemed not to be - honest, trustworthy, respectable, - in short, m o r a l . It was generally agreed that this aspect of education was better left to the missionaries for:

...the best method of furthering education among the native population ... is by means of the organizations which already existed among the various religious bodies ... (and) any government effort in native education must be allied to missionary effort. We see a great danger in secular education divorced from a moral religious instruction. This is because the native requires something more than an abstract code

in place of his primitive moral law and a definite religious belief is necessary if he is to become an honest and respectable member of the society...³⁶

But being a Christian does not necessarily entail absence of dishonesty. Even Christian missionaries, be they black or white, can be dishonest. Lord Cransworth, himself a white man, observed that some white people who were not only Christians but also "missionary servants... almost invariably lie, drink and steal."³⁷

And the white men in Kenya had even to be cautioned to behave well if at all they were to earn respect from the Africans, otherwise they would not only lose the respect they were in need of, but would also have some of their vices emulated. In addition, they were advised to apply military discipline when dealing with Africans in schools in order to ensure respect, admiration and affection from the Africans. The advice was that:

To the African in his primitive state, military or semi-military discipline makes a strong appeal. No better example can be found than the discipline of the military and police forces of the Colony, which has been adopted in the Government schools ... If semi-military discipline is absent, then the strongest controlling force is that of a well-taught religion which alone can give the power of self-denial and self-control. But the old saying - like master like boy - is as potent in African education to-day as ever it has been. Obedience is based on respect and admiration - of the soldier for his officer, of the pupil for his master, of the convert for his clergy... (and) it must be remem-

bered that every European in Kenya is in the position of a teacher. His virtues and his vices are instantly copied by his pupils ... If we (Europeans) of the superior race give way to alcoholic excess or sexual indulgence - especially with other races - to forgery, theft, assault or even bad manners, it is unfair to blame the schools if the African follows suit. There is no place where the observance of the golden rule is so important as in Africa. The African is human and will repay courtesy with courtesy and ill-treatment with insubordination. It is somewhat late in the history of the world to seek now for a new 'moral basis' for conduct, but it is safe to say that inter-racial discipline and inter-racial relations can be based only on admiration, affection and respect and the only basis for this is ultimately - religion ... The missions are better equipped than Government for reaching the heart of the masses and penetrating into village life. This sphere must be left mainly to them.³⁸

From the above we can identify the multi-role purpose of the early school:

1. The school as a catechumenate centre turned out religious converts for the Christian Church.
2. The school - as a centre for Christian religious conversion and instruction was also responsible for 'moral training' and the administration of discipline required for the smooth inter-racial relations based on inequalities, fear and imposed respect. This role of the school was very important for it was responsible for the so-called 'co-operation' - co-operation between the government and the missions, and more significantly,

'co-operation' between Africans and members of other races for the socio-economic development of the Colony.

3. Where the school was not wholly or mainly a catechumenate centre it played the vital role of teaching literacy. This important aspect of education was mainly at an elementary level - for reasons we have already seen - but as time went by and the need to increase the number of such educated Africans increased, higher and higher education was provided. Out of this came teachers, hospital orderlies, nurses, and even messengers and junior clerks trained mainly through practice rather than theory.

4. From (3) we can deduce one major function of the school: the school as an institution where industrial education - with all its underlying connotations - was taught. Moreover, the educational policy in British Tropical Africa as early as 1925 was that:

Education should strengthen the feeling of responsibility to the tribal community, and, at the same time, should strengthen will power; should make the conscience sensitive both to moral and intellectual truth; and should impart some power of discriminating between good and evil, between reality and superstition. Since contact with civilization-and even education itself - must necessarily tend to weaken tribal authority and the sanctions of existing beliefs, and in view of the all-prevailing belief in the supernatural which affects the whole life of the African it is essential that what is good in the old beliefs and sanctions should be strengthened and what is

defective should be replaced. The greatest importance must therefore be attached to religious teaching and moral instruction. Both in schools and in training colleges they should be accorded equal standing with secular subjects. Such teaching must be related to the conditions of life and the daily experience of the pupils. It should find expression in the habits of self-discipline and loyalty to the community.³⁹

This aim of education was echoed in the Beecher Report on African Education in Kenya, 1949. The Report further stated that education "for education's sake" must not be a guiding principle for any who are concerned with education, but that the aim should be to produce at all levels of African society morally sound and economically valuable citizens. According to the Report,

To state our objective briefly, we desire to see a morally sound education, largely based on Christian principles, conducted with adequate inspection and supervision, providing courses of education each of which is purposeful and complete within itself at every level, ... and which lays particular emphasis on the acquisition of practical attitudes and skills.⁴⁰

Thus we see here the connection that there was between religious conversion and instruction, the inculcation of new moral values that had roots not in the indigineous societies but in the 'educating community', the application of harsh, military type of discipline, the philosophy of adaptation to environment and service to the community, the education of the natives that was geared to the provision of a small class of artisans, the general socio-economic development of the Colony, and the sinister motive behind the idea of co-operation, all of which

had something to do with the establishment of industrial education in Kenya

(iv) GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Generally and as a matter of criticism, it can be said that, first, the type of education being provided was not authentically African education for Africans and by the Africans. Industrial education and Christianity are no more or less African than academic education. Furthermore, whereas in the U.S.A. teachers of industrial education for Negroes were mostly fellow Negroes (who had had liberal education in American colleges and universities), teachers in Kenya were mainly Whites, most of who had preconceived racial prejudices towards those they were teaching.

Secondly, the type of education we are referring to was meant only for the African community. The other communities, especially the White one, had its own "high standard of education" that was meant to train them to be the "Leaders" community received something that was in between "industrial education" and "high standard of education", something that placed them socially and economically above the Africans but below the Europeans. Education for Africans was thus off universal standards and special in a way. This system of education was based on the false assumption that there was an inherent difference between human races, that different racial groups had different needs and different roles to play vis-a-vis other racial groups and that all this entailed different types and aims of education for each group.

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Thirdly, the system of education was riddled with pitfalls, loopholes, conflicts and contradictions. Against the philosophy of adaptation to environment and community consciousness were the concerted efforts to achieve conversion, some degree of Westernisation, etc.; theory did not tally up with practice; there was the false belief in the causal connection between Christian religious training and morality and discipline - that Christianity was the basis of morality and discipline; there was also an ill-grounded belief that harsh military discipline earned for the boss respect, admiration and affection from his subjects, etc.

And forthly, the system of education succeeded in some ways and failed in others. Education in the form of evangelism and as a means of recruiting more church members was a success. Education as means and ways of getting people to employ cheaply was very, very successful; but attempts at avoiding the migration of educated Africans to the towns and competition for jobs initially monopolised by whites, failed. As for adaptation and community consciousness, what happened was that those who went through the educational system increased their sensitivity to what was going on around so that the intended purpose of immunization against politics failed miserably. However, it was against this background of success and failures that the modern system of education in Kenya was established.

FOOTNOTES

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²⁴ Maynard H. Smith, Frank, Bishop of Zanzibar, p.257

²⁵ Anthony Lavers, "Schooling in Masailand," Kenya Education Journal, Vol. 1 No.6 Nov. 1960.

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²⁸ Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, Report on Native Affairs, 1939-1945, pp. 24-25.

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CHAPTER 3

PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION

In chapter 2 we examined the historical background to and philosophical foundations of the modern (formal) educational system in Kenya. In this chapter we shall examine the stated purposes and objectives of education in post-uhuru Kenya in the light of the society. We shall also try to identify some important philosophical assumptions underlying the present educational system and their links to social and educational policies.

(I) THE OMINDE COMMISSION AND PURPOSES OF EDUCATION

The first education commission in independent Kenya, the Kenya Education Commission Report - popularly known as the Ominde Commission (1964) summarised the purposes of education in the country roughly as follows:¹

- (i) Education is a founction of the Kenya nation; it must foster a sense of nationhood and promote national unity.
- (ii) Education in Kenya must serve the people of Kenya and the needs of Kenya without discrimination.
- (iii) Our public schools are an instrument of the secular state in which no religion is privileged, but they must respect the religious convictions of all people.
- (iv) The schools of Kenya must respect the cultural traditions of the peoples of Kenya both as expressed in social institutions and relationships.

- (v) "Competition" should be discouraged so that a majority of school-leavers are not labelled "failures".
- (vi) Education must be regarded and used, as an instrument for the **conscious** change of attitudes and relationships, preparing children for those changes of outlook required by modern methods of productive organisation. At the same time education must foster respect for human personality.
- (vii) Education should **serve national economic development**.
- (viii) Education must foster social equality and remove divisions of race, tribe and religion; and
- (ix) ' Education 'graduates' must be adaptable to change.

The Commission was chaired by Professor S. Ominde, a Kenyan and one of the few Africans in the country to have acquired not only the type of education for Africans, but also the 'high standard of education' originally meant for Whites in addition to the TAED provided by his ethnic society. It is thus reasonable to assume or conclude that he was (and still is) conversant with the three types or systems of education that had been prevailing in the country during a certain period: his traditional African education, the industrial education introduced in Kenya for Africans in the country, and academic education initially reserved exclusively for the White "leaders" in the country. The first type (TAED) was transmitted by an ethnic group or society from one generation to the next and was indigenous. The second and third types were externally originated.

However, with the passage of time, much of their alien characteristics shed away.

The purposes of education in Kenya as stated by the Ominde Commission do not show a radical departure from those purposes of education stated by the colonial authorities. Some of their implications can be stated briefly.

(a) First, since it was the **nation** (and no longer a colony and voluntary agencies) that was responsible or supposed to be responsible for education in the country, it was only to be expected that the education process must foster nationhood and promote national unity, otherwise the nation would be trying to sustain an educational system that ultimately threatened its very existence. The prospect of national disaster could be considered possible if divisive elements were allowed to be taught or emphasised in the country's public educational institutions. This aspect of education which tries to lay emphasis on nationhood and national unity normally embraces political education, indoctrination, etc. and is responsible for the inculcation of a sense of nationalism and identity. This is an **important** aspect of education in any country or society that is, or seeks to be, genuinely independent. In modern days, clearly defined national political ideology and social philosophy seem to be necessary before this aspect of education can be well taught without risking many conflicts and contradictions as to exactly what should be taught and what should be left out, what should be taught the way it is commonly known and what needs a new and different interpretation,

how the thing should be taught, what particular values should be stressed, etc. What this amounts to is a move towards a more centralised system of education in which the state determines its educational objectives and the curriculum to be followed in every educational institution. There is a divergence of views, however, as to whether the state should dictate to educational institutions on what to do or how to conduct themselves on matters pertaining to education.

(b) The second stated purpose - that education in Kenya must serve the people of Kenya and the needs of Kenya without discrimination - is actually a criticism of the system of education in the country as practised during the colonial days: it was based on the concept of community development and differential racial needs in which the minority White race got the lion's share of the benefits accruing out of the system, and it was the interests of the foreigners and their enterprises that were mainly served. Those of Kenya as a country and its people were subordinate. It is also an attempt to play down any element of racialism - something which had been prevalent in the immediately by-gone days. This is in line with the political declaration of forging a multi-racial society in the country in which no race is unduly privileged or underprivileged. More or less similar sentiments were expressed in the following year in the Sessional Paper No. 10 : AFRICAN SOCIALISM AND ITS APPLICATION TO PLANNING IN KENYA, 1965 thus:

Under colonialism the people of Kenya had no voice in Government; the nation's natural resources were organised and developed mainly for the benefit of non-Africans; and the nation's human resources remained largely uneducated,

untrained, inexperienced and unbenefitted by the growth of the economy.² (Underlining, mine)

The three underlined words must have been used in reference to the modern system of education, training and experience in the modern sector of economy and reflect the discriminative practice that tried to deny the Kenya Africans the benefits of 'modern' education, skilled training and experience.

Otherwise it would be a contradiction in terms to talk of the universality of education, the existence of traditional African education and the nation's human resources remaining largely 'uneducated', 'untrained' and 'inexperienced'. This contradiction in terms does actually occur from time to time and even in the Sessional Paper No.10 it does appear implicit. But there should be no contradiction in terms, however, if it is assumed that what should be properly called education is the 'modern', 'new' and formal training that takes place in schools, colleges, universities and other institutions that are built for the express purpose of imparting knowledge.

(c) The third stated purpose of education is appropriately meant to curb religious sectionalism and end the overbearing hand of different religions and denominations especially in the early stages of formal education. It calls for religious toleration in the country generally, and in the schools in particular. But it does not explicitly or implicitly, forbid any acts intended at effecting or achieving religious conversions going on, especially, the systematic and planned conversions of Africans from their traditional religions (whatever their actual names)

to Islamic or Euro-Christian religions. However, the stated purpose attempts to separate religious instruction from education as such. The distinction between religion and education is important if any national educational system is to run smoothly and free from religious squabbles. In some countries such as Cuba and U.S.S.R., religious teaching is not merely de-emphasised but actually kept out of the public schools. There are other states which are secular and which leave religious instruction in the hands of private and voluntary bodies.

(d) The fourth purpose - that schools in Kenya must respect the cultural traditions of the peoples of Kenya, both as expressed in the social institutions and relations - is clearly understandable and genuine. In the previous chapter we saw how it had earlier become the practice of some missionary-run schools in the country to try to put an end to certain African customs and traditions (important elements and aspects of a people's culture) and how in reaction to this practice a number of independent schools were built in some parts of the country, noticeable in Central and Nyanza provinces. This purpose is therefore legitimately meant to curtail Euro-Christian cultural arrogance and imperialism in the country and to respect, protect and foster those aspects of cultural traditions that the indigenous people of this country still hold dear and sacred.

(e) The fifth, that "competition" should be discouraged so that a majority of school-leavers are not labelled 'failures', is easier said than done. Moreover it can hardly be called purpose of education. It is just a simple question of whether

to award certificates to some or all candidates sitting for a certain examination such as the Certificate of Primary Education(C.P.E.) irrespective of their inevitable differences in performance. If a large number of aspiring candidates sit for an examination, and if after the results a few of them are selected to continue with further education while a majority are left out due to the limited number of available vacancies, it makes little real difference to the latter whether or not they are issued with certificates (in terms of selection): the difference between not being selected and failing to be selected if any, is **negligible** And as long as the elements of examination and selection remain there, the idea of competition is inherent.

(f) The sixth purpose implies a fairly radical departure from the conservative approach to education. Education is regarded as an instrument with which to change attitudes and relationships and a means for preparing children for those changes of outlook required by modern technology and advancement without being dehumanised. More importance is placed on change, adaptability and development than on conservatism and the maintenance of the status quo. Historical analysis reveals that no practical economic system throughout the world has survived the test of time without adapting to changing circumstances and needs. But the needs and circumstances in developing countries such as Kenya are changing both more rapidly and more drastically than was normally the case in the countries now relatively advanced. It is becoming important for developing countries to prepare not only to adapt themselves to change but also to play

a major role in initiating change so that they may not be all the time lagging behind those countries that are more developed. In Kenya today, rapid transition is an outstanding characteristic. This transition embodies some fundamental changes in social attitudes and traditions and in the institutional framework for effecting change.

Although the importance of respecting, preserving and fostering some aspects of the people's cultural traditions has already been stated, it is here recognised that turning back the clock and reverting to the pre-colonial conditions is out of question.

(g) The seventh and eighth stated purposes of education in Kenya are superfluous. They are implied and can thus be inferred from (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) above

(h) And lastly, the proposition that education 'graduates' must be adaptable to change seems to be, or is, a modification of an earlier policy: adaptation to environment. The environment, of course, was changing and supposed to continue doing so.

The Ominde Commission Report can be said to be partly a criticism of the system of education as established and developed during the colonial days, and as a partial adaptation of the very system. It contains no suggestion to the effect that the entire system should be demolished and replaced by TAED in an institutionalised form or one that is completely different. The Report does not show how TAED can be institutionalised or accommodated in the already established formal system of education and tacitly recognises the de facto predominance of the

New system of education as being one of national concern.

That the Report does not show or constitute a radical departure from the system of education as practised during the colonial days can be attributed to the Commission's terms of reference which were:

To survey the existing educational resources of Kenya and advise the Government of Kenya in the formulation and implementation of national policies for education which-

- (a) appropriately express the aspirations and cultural values of an independent African country;
- (b) take account of the need for trained manpower for economic development and for other activities in the life of the nation;
- (c) take advantage of the initiative and service of Regional and local authorities and voluntary bodies;
- (d) contribute to the unity of Kenya;
- (e) respect the educational needs and capacities of children;
- (f) have due regard for the resources, both in money and in personnel, that are likely to become available for educational services; and
- (g) provide for the principal educational requirements of adults;

and to report to the Minister for Education.³

Thus the Commission's terms of reference had certain implications - political, social, economic and educational - which virtually limited its scope to the extent that it could not take a very radical approach (that is, of course, if it could have taken a very radical approach in the absence of certain terms of reference such as (a), (b), (c) and (f)).

Politically the Kenya Government had not officially stated

its ideology. It was not until the following year (1965) that the country's political ideology, social and economic policies were stated in the Sessional Paper No.10: African Socialism and Its Application to Planning in Kenya

In the absence of an official political ideology or political philosophy, and advisory commission such as the Ominde Commission could only but treat issues **cautiously** lest it incurred the wrath of the very Government that had instituted it by making a radical departure from what was then existing or prevailing.

Socially, the country had undergone dramatic changes so much so that proposing radical changes could probably have caused a lot of public controversy. In any case, the Kenyan society during the material period had little radicalism - politically, socially, economically, etc.) to boast of.

Economically, financial constraints and lack of sufficient trained personnel to man the modern sector of the economy, the vigorous competition for entry in that sector and the crash-programme for the Africanisation of the same sector were factors to content with. And the education system was seen as the means to provide the country with such skilled personnel. Little was it considered that the uncontrolled quantitative expansion of the educational institutions would soon (as the Report cautioned) plunge the country into a crisis of a wider dimensions - the crisis of unemployment.

The educational-philosophical factor is probably the most complicated to explain in this context. However, one thing that stands out clearly is that it is naturally possible that members of the Commission did not share the same philosophy

of education such that for purposes of convenience, they had to agree to compromise on their differences of opinion as to what should be the nature of the education system. Such an agreement could have been instrumental in watering down certain propositions that might have been considered somewhat too radical to be accepted. In any case, in the absence of a clearly stated political social philosophy, it is a risky business attempting to formulate a national normative philosophy of education.

Educational commissions such as the one just referred to above, only make recommendations to the Government. It is up to the Government to adopt the recommendations either in part or in full; it may even reject to implement the recommendations. After all, in the present Kenyan situation, it is the Government that is charged with policy formulation and their implementation. It is thus in Government sources that we should look more for material concerning the theoretical framework on which the country's educational practice is based in order to identify the approaches to philosophy of education in the country. In the next section of this chapter, we shall, therefore, examine Kenya's educational objectives vis-a-vis societal objectives as stated in the official documents. We shall see that the country's educational objectives are more or less identical with the purposes of education as stated by the Ominde Commission.

(II) KENYA'S EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Reference has already been made on Sessional Paper No.10.

This document contains what can be referred to as the official position of the Government with regards to political ideology and societal objectives. According to this document, for Kenya as a developing country,

The progress wanted cannot be easily won and it cannot be achieved by reverting to the pre-colonial conditions. The best of Kenya's social heritage and colonial economic legacy must be re-organized and mobilised for a concerted, carefully planned attack on poverty, disease and the lack of education in order to achieve social justice, human dignity and economic welfare for all.

We are bound to ask ourselves where we are going and how we will get there. It is in answering these questions that this paper has been prepared.⁴

The paper then goes on to outline 'the objectives of societies' as falling under six categories, namely: political equality; social justice; human dignity including freedom of conscience; freedom from want, disease and exploitation; equal opportunities; and, growing per capita incomes equitably distributed. It then states that the system adopted in Kenya is 'African Socialism- a term it defined as

...describing an African political and economic system that is positively African, not being imported from any country or being a blueprint of any foreign ideology, but capable of incorporating useful and compatible techniques from whatever source.⁵

And accordingly, the principle conditions that the system must satisfy are that: (i) it must draw on the best of African

traditions; (ii) it must be adaptable to new and rapidly changing circumstances; and (iii) it must not rest for its success on a satellite relationship with any other country or group of countries.⁶

This idea of blending the old and the new is somewhat akin to what Kwame Nkrumah tries to propound in his book entitled, Conciencism.⁷ In this book, Nkrumah argues to the effect that African conscience demands that a new African society be created in which three components, viz, traditional African values, Islamic components and Euro-Christian components, be synthesised to produce a new society on the continent. All the three components, he argues, have had their impact on African life and African experiences and have thus become part and parcel of Africa's historical experience and historical past. What is basic in 'African society' as Kwame Nkrumah sees it, is Humanist Egalitarianism' - the concept of all men being equal in all aspects and the society being communalistic - something which seems to be lacking in Islamic and Euro-Christian traditions whereby the ultimate need, salvation, depends on individual performance and response to Alla and Jehova. For this reason, it should be considered that unless these problems are solved and the differences harmonised, one cannot create a New Society nor can he build a new African society without compromising these elements. Nkrumah, however, must have realised later or learned that there are certain elements or components which cannot be compromised. One must at times choose between the new and the old. A decision has to be made between changing and being adaptive on the one hand, and striving to sustain tradition on the other. Simply stitching some old and new pieces together, even in education, may produce

shoddy systems and result into costly confusions. And costly confusions are not, unfortunately, rare occurrences in the field of education.

According to the above outline in Sessional Paper No.10

these societal objectives are apparently universal and timeless; they apply to each and every human society anywhere in the world and irrespective of the period of the society's existence. But history has repeatedly shown that during certain periods and in some parts of the world, some societies deliberately aspire to and actually succeed in depriving others some or all of the objectives stated above. Even today, there are some countries such as South Africa, where those who believe in their racial supremacy deny others of different racial origins, political equality, social justice, human dignity, equal opportunities and fair returns from the growing economy even though they all belong to one and the same country. Then there are some countries in which some members who belong to minority groups are also deprived of some or all of these things and are forced to fight or struggle for their rights. The very fact that some societies, or members of some societies, find themselves compelled to fight for such things as political equality, social justice, human dignity, more equitable distribution of the national wealth whose production they contribute to, freedom, etc., shows that there must be 'others' inclined to deny these things to some people at one time or another. To those oppressed and struggling societies, such 'objectives' as have been stated, may be said to be 'their' objectives also; but to those oppressor societies, some of these 'objectives' could hardly be called 'theirs' or identical to 'their objectives.' In addition, there are some societies, especially those which are

relatively affluent and industrialised, which claim to have achieved some of these objectives, notably, political equality, social justice, human dignity and freedom of conscience, freedom from want, freedom from exploitation, high and growing per capita incomes and "equitable" distribution of wealth. Much, however, also depends on the societies' dominant political ideologies, their concepts of an ideal society and the practices of their systems.

What we may therefore safely say of the 'objectives of societies' as outlined in the Sessional Paper No.10 is that they are the official objectives of the Kenyan society. And now, we may consider how the Kenyan society will officially try to "get there" by means of education. In doing this, we may as well look at Kenya's educational objectives and content and the process by which they are supposed to be arrived at.

Kenya's educational objectives have been stated from time to time. For example, in the same Sessional Paper No.10 under the subheading, EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE, it is stated that:

At Kenya's stage of development, education is much more an economic than a social service. It is our principal means of relieving shortage of domestic skilled manpower and equalizing opportunities among all citizens. For that reason it is of the utmost importance that the construction of unaided schools should conform to the nation's needs and supply of teachers, and curricula should be required to meet the Government specified standards ... In addition to its economic benefits, widespread education should develop good citizens, promote national unity, and encourage proper use of leisure time.

The declared Government policy is that of universal primary education ... and the immediate objectives in

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The declared Government policy is that of universal primary education ... and the immediate objectives in

education are to expand secondary level facilities as rapidly as teacher supply and recurrent cost implications permit.⁸

Elsewhere (in the first, second and third Kenya Development Plans) it is even stated more clearly that Kenya's long-range objectives are as follows:-

- (1) to meet the middle and high-level manpower needs of the country by providing sufficient numbers of people with skills, knowledge and expertise to support an independent, modern economy at a high rate of growth.
- (2) to expand educational opportunities at all levels.
- (3) to provide universal primary education in order to ensure equal opportunities for all people to play their full part in the development of the nation and to remove social and economic inequalities.
- (4) to inculcate those cultural values which not only contribute to the people's lives, but which are essential for the maintenance of a cohesive and productive society.⁹

(III) CONCLUSION

From what has been discussed above, some major philosophical assumptions underlying Kenya's educational system can be identified and formulated. They are:

- (i) Education is a tool for rapid economic advancement.
- (ii) Universal Primary education ensures equal opportunities for all people and removes social and economic inequalities.
- (iii) Education is a social service.

- (iv) Education must serve the political need of fostering a sense of nationhood and promoting national unity.
- (v) Religious education must be subordinate to national needs.
- (vi) Education must inculcate in the individual those qualities which make him/her adaptable to change.

Because of the limited **scope** of this thesis, only the first three assumptions stated above will be examined. This will be done in the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES

¹The Kenya Education Commission Report, Part I, 1964, (Nairobi; December, 1964)

²Government of Kenya, Sessional Paper No.10: African Socialism And Its Application to Planning in Kenya, (Nairobi; 1965) P.1

³The Kenya Education Commission, Op. cit. P.2

⁴Sessional Paper No. 10, Loc. cit.

⁵Ibid. P.2

⁶Ibid.

⁷Kwame Nkrumah, Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization and Development with Particular Reference to the African Revolution, (London: Heinemann; 1964)

⁸Sessional Paper No. 10. Op. cit. pp.39 - 40

⁹See for instance: the First Kenya Development Plan, 1966 - 1970, (Nairobi) pp 305 - 314; the Second Kenya Development Plan, 1970 - 1974, (Nairobi) Ch.17; and the Third Development Plan, 1974 - 1978(Nairobi) p.404

CHAPTER 4

SOME ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

In the previous chapter we discussed the purposes and objectives of education in Kenya and identified some major philosophical assumptions underlying the country's system of education. In this chapter, we shall try to examine the first three major assumptions underlying the educational system, viz:

- (1) Education is a tool for rapid economic advancement (which we shall refer to as education and the concept of advancement).
- (2) Universal Primary education ensures equal opportunities for all people and removes social and economic inequalities (which we shall refer to as mass education and equalization of opportunities).
- (3) Education is a social service (which we shall refer to as the culture-bound concept of education).

These three assumptions feature more frequently and prominently in most debates pertaining to education in Kenya by educators, policy-makers and laymen alike as they are at the core of every answer that may be given to the common question: What is, and what should be, the nature of the educational system?

I. EDUCATION AND THE CONCEPT OF ADVANCEMENT

One of the purposes of education in all societies is, as we have already noted, to prepare its members for the

maintenance and development of their societies. First, the societies must be adequately maintained or else they may run into serious troubles and disintegrate. And second, they must be developed if they have to avoid the risk of getting stagnant. It is therefore important that attention must be paid to both the maintenance and development of societies. This attention is to the good of all human societies. And the principal means by which people are prepared for the maintenance and development of their societies is education.

It may be asked, what is meant by the development of a society? Is it the development of a society as a whole or is it the development of its individuals? Is it the exploitation and development of its natural resources or is it increased industrialisation? Or is development merely linear expansion of certain significant institutions and facilities in the country as may be evidenced by statistics? What exactly is the nature and purpose of development?

All societies are composed of people and their resources - natural resources accruing out of the land and water and the air above, and human resources such as labour, skills, talent, etc. These resources are developed by man and for man's good. Whether only some members or all the members of the society derive some good out of a certain aspect of development, the fact remains that it is man that has benefitted. It is man that has achieved a certain measure of development however insignificant. When and where man has achieved some measure

of development, some member of the society may be said to have made some progress. However, it does not necessarily follow that every time some individual develops something or benefits from some aspects of development, then his society achieves some development or benefits from the same aspect of development. There have been cases whereby individual developments or advancements on the one hand have resulted into or meant corresponding under-development on the other hand, i.e., that of the society as a whole. In any case, however, development or advancement is achieved by man for man. It is man-centred.

No significant development by man of natural and human resources can take place without the deployment of trained manpower resources. This being the case therefore, it may be asserted that development requirements are inextricably bound up with manpower requirements or manpower supply. It may as well be argued that the provision of such manpower is a necessary (but not a sufficient) condition for effecting the required development or advancement.

Nowadays the school and the educational system as a whole, play very important roles in the training of manpower to be allocated various positions in the society as may be required for the society's maintenance or development. The school system, or in a wider sense, the educational system, is charged with the production of sufficient numbers of people with skills and knowledge to man essential services in the society and to maintain and develop means of production, communication, distribution, etc. Some of the services need

more specialised skills than others and those who can run them may need longer training and more specialisation than others. Some of the services may not even necessarily require people with long periods of training or experience; nevertheless, for purposes of greater efficiency some amount of education may be necessary. And as the needs of the society increase or change, so should the method or system of training and educating members of the society.

As early as 1951, the colonial government in Kenya issued a major policy statement on African education. The policy statement recognised the need to provide more quality education for more Africans so that their services could be utilized for the advancement of the country. It said in part that:

The educational policy which the Government proposes to follow is based on two fundamental principles. The first of these is that in all educational planning priority must be given to an improvement in the quality of the education now given in the schools. Kenya needs a well educated body of men and women from which it can meet the needs of its technical and professional services. It needs well trained teachers in large numbers, it needs - perhaps even more urgently - skilled artisans, technicians, engineers, doctors, veterinary surgeons and agriculturists, men and women upon whose skill and ability the economic development of the country depends, for without the wealth that will be produced by the development of our natural resources we cannot afford the social services - schools, hospitals, roads, water supplies - that we urgently need. To achieve this object the Government intends to expand the secondary school system as rapidly as possible....¹

Up to the time of independence in 1963 the need to provide middle and high level manpower to run the economy was still there. The need even became greater and more urgent with the attainment of independence when a number of people of European and Asian origin who were occupying certain senior positions left the country or automatically became expatriate workers, a situation that called for their immediate or eventual replacement by Kenyan nationals, people with the genuine interest and stake in the development of their country and in whose hands the means of maintaining and developing the nation was supposed to be rightly placed. A Kenyanisation programme was created. Consequently, since independence, one of the tasks the educational system has been charged with is the production of people with skills and knowledge to run the expanding modern sector of the economy - teachers, doctors, technicians, technologists, agriculturalists, administrators, etc., to replace the foreigners in the country. To meet this urgent need, a kind of crash programme (embracing a *laissez faire* approach to education) was initiated in which within a few years educational facilities at secondary and tertiary levels were rapidly expanded through both Government and Harambee efforts. Secondary education was, and still is, regarded as providing a growing base for increasing the supply of middle and high-level manpower. It was feared that the shortage of professional, administrative, technical and other skilled personnel "threatens to defy and frustrate Kenya's efforts to modernize and expand the economy."² In other

words, the purpose was to create a national bourgeoisie to replace the former colonialists, and to maintain and expand the modern sector of the economy, with all its privileges. Bearing in mind that the modern sector of the economy was and still is, largely a conglomeration of foreign investments, we shall soon see that much of our educational efforts may be misorientated.

And as the economic incentive for those individuals who had the education and/or experience and who happened to obtain jobs in the modern sector of the economy was already there due to the glaring social and economic disparities between those who did white-collar jobs and those who did other types of jobs, formal academic instruction even became more popular; and the more one had it, (all things being equal) the higher socio-economic ladder he climbed - a phenomenon that triggered competition and the drive for higher and higher academic qualifications. In fact, the Government's policy on secondary education during the 1970 - 74 plan period was (1) to expand enrolment at all levels to meet the social and economic needs of the society for its general development, and, (2) to make adequate provision to meet the demands of qualified individuals for their personal development and self-fulfilment.³

Thus the educated and skilled people to man the modern sector of the economy do not only contribute (supposedly) towards the advancement of the country's economy as such, but also reap significantly the benefits accruing out of that advancement for their personal development and self-fulfilment.

The express provision and drive for personal development

and self-fulfilment by products of the formal school system virtually neutralises a fundamental societal objective - to create an egalitarian society without social or economic inequalities or distinctions. Human beings differ greatly in their abilities and luck in defining or satisfying their needs. They also differ in degrees of taking advantage over others by exploiting whatever privileges or opportunities that may be open to them even by reason of circumstance. Already the income gap between the few elites working in the modern sector of the economy on the one hand and the masses of peasants in the country and the unskilled and semiskilled urban workers on the other, is not only conspicuously big, but growing.

At this juncture it could as well be asked: Was this, or, is this, a socio-economic objective or an educational objective? Could it be the case that national economic requirements determine national educational objectives? Is our educational system regarded as an investment, an enterprise? If so, what are the cost-benefit relations? What does the society expect from education, and from every level of educational institution and course? What is the influence of education on society and that of society on educational objectives and content and the process by which they are arrived at?

In one of his articles on education, S.H. Ominde asserts that:

We have committed ourselves to a point of view that considers education as an investment. Whether we look at it in economic terms or in social terms this

is a point of view that is forced upon the community by the nature of resources available.⁴

This assertion does not contradict the Government's statement that at Kenya's stage of development education is much more an economic than a social service.

This view of regarding education as an investment is not confined to Kenya alone. Elsewhere, Joseph Ki-Zerbo speaking in a conference of African States on the development of education in Africa, Addis Ababa 15 - 25 May 1961, expressed the view that education should be regarded a "productive investment" - in the political, social, economic and international spheres, and went on to advocate that education should prepare an individual for his future role in the society.⁵ Ten years later A.C. Mwingira of Dar es Salaam University, speaking in a conference in Nairobi posed the question, "If.....young men coming out of primary schools are only going to flood the cities, are we investing our money in education or are we investing in a volcano which is going to explode on us in the not too distant future?"⁶ Moreover, we have considered the importance of education in providing useful manpower for the maintenance and advancement of societies all over the world.

But, whose investment is it? Is it the Government's investment?, the parent's investment? or the learner's investment? Or, should it just be said to be the society's investment?

Interestingly, in our country it is the Government's, the parent's, learner's and society's investment! For the Government, it provides "qualified" people to work in its civil service, armed and police forces, para-statal bodies,

etc. in additon to increasing the stock of literate citizens. In other words, it provides people with training, people who have been prepared for the maintenance and development of the modern sector of the economy (and that bracket of the society), people "qualified" to join the Government itself or form a Government, people on whose craftsmanship the Government may depend. To the parents, education in its present form can be a worthwhile investment when their children later on ascend to positions of power or influence. In addition to the psychological satisfaction or pride they derive out of their children's relative success in life, they may also be direct beneficiaries when the children remit to them some sums of money every now and then, subsidise their costs of living, buy them some prestige items, enhance their social and economic status, etc. - all mounting to well over the parents' costs and efforts of educating the children. We have already seen in chapter two that even during the colonial days, some African communities regarded education as a profitable investment and the only service for which they were prepared to put their hands into their pockets.

With regards to the community, a major motive for even going as far as building Harambee secondary schools is to provide their young ones with recognized qualifications to enhance their chances of getting paid jobs. And as for the learners, the fact that they are the ones to be eventually exposed to opportunities whereby their personal development and self-fulfilment may be provided for while rendering

etc. in addition to increasing the stock of literate citizens. In other words, it provides people with training, people who have been prepared for the maintenance and development of the modern sector of the economy (and that bracket of the society), people "qualified" to join the Government itself or form a Government, people on whose craftsmanship the Government may depend. To the parents, education in its present form can be a worthwhile investment when their children later on ascend to positions of power or influence. In addition to the psychological satisfaction or pride they derive out of their children's relative success in life, they may also be direct beneficiaries when the children remit to them some sums of money every now and then, subsidise their costs of living, buy them some prestige items, enhance their social and economic status, etc. - all amounting to well over the parents' costs and efforts of educating the children. We have already seen in chapter two that even during the colonial days, some African communities regarded education as a profitable investment and the only service for which they were prepared to put their hands into their pockets.

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certain services to the 'country' is clear enough. Consequently, the idea of socio-economic equality for all people in Kenya has been effectively undermined. And in the 3rd Development Plan 1974-76, the Government conceded:

The educational system, however, has also developed certain characteristics which are best understood by looking at two major factors. The first factor is that the formal educational system is seen as the most accessible route to individual social and economic advancement. In the period since independence, most of the gains from Kenya's rapid economic growth have tended to concentrate in the modern formal sector of the economy. Entry into this sector of the economy has been easiest for those who have completed secondary and tertiary levels of the formal educational system. The second factor is that the structure and content of the formal educational system has reinforced this pattern. Its objective is to produce a few individuals who are equipped for placement in the modern sector of the economy. Its highly selective nature and exclusive orientation toward the modern urban sector are in fundamental contradiction to the social and cultural value upheld by the Government....And, the products of the formal system are still fundamentally unchanged. They are narrowly orientated and are, as a group, ill adapted towards playing their role in the social and economic development of Kenya.⁷

Let us examine more closely the implications of some of the key expressions from the above Government statement:-

- (i) The formal educational system is seen as the most accessible route to individual social and economic advancement.
- (ii) Most of the gains from Kenya's rapid economic growth have tended to concentrate in the modern formal sector of the economy.

(iii) Entry into the formal sector of the economy has been easiest for those who have completed secondary and tertiary levels of the formal education system.

(iv) The structure and content of the formal education system has reinforced this pattern.

(v) It is highly selective in nature and exclusively orientated toward the modern urban sector, which is a contradiction to the social and cultural values upheld by the Government.

(vi) Products of the formal education system are still fundamentally unchanged, narrowly orientated and ill adapted towards playing their role in the social and economic development of Kenya.

The first (i) is in harmony with the policy of making "adequate provision to meet the demands of qualified individuals for their personal development and self-fulfilment" and the concept of formal education as a social and economic investment. Those who invest their money and time in it do so with the expectation of greater returns eventually. And as long as the investment continues, or appears to be continuing, to be most profitable, there is no reason why it should not be seen as the most accessible route to individual social and economic advancement. It is only when returns fall below the inputs, when the investment stands high risks of causing losses and frustrations to many, and when alternative means to individual social and economic advancement are discovered, that the formal education system may cease to be regarded by many as the most accessible route to individual social and economic advancement, and investment in the formal system of education for personal reasons and benefits appear less attractive. In Nigeria, for instance, a 1964 report on education in Eastern

Nigeria, four years after the introduction of universal primary education (1960) said:

We are in great danger of facing a possible era of swing-back from universal popularity of and a belief in education to a scepticism as to its value and doubt as to whether it justifies the value set on it and the sacrifices it entails.⁸

The second, third, fourth and fifth expressions (ii,iii, iv and v), together imply the existence of unequal economic benefits derived out of the formal system of education by some of those higher products of the system who chance to be recruited into the modern sector of the economy. Let us look at this issue of unequal economic derivations more closely.

No society has yet evolved a system whereby all its members earn equal social and economic rewards irrespective of what jobs they do or the contributions they make to the society. There is no known society in which all its members are bestowed with privileges, rights and rewards equal in every sense and nature, a society in which, for instance, the executive head is socially, economically, politically, administratively equal to his messengers or those working in prisons. More or less different rewards may be paid to people doing different jobs that are considered to contribute unequally to the well-being of the society. Criteria for these differences in reward could be one's level of education, length of experience, type of job, family background, race, religion, age, sex, ethnic group, familiarity, etc. The application of some of these criteria (ascribed or inherited characteristics in allocation) tends to perpetrate some degree of social and economic inequalities, inequalities that may

be intrinsically bad. What then, should be the solution?

It would appear that the most effective and thorough way of eliminating such social and economic inequalities among members of the society is to do away with the application or practice of bestowing any privileges of whatever nature to any individuals, and to provide for every member of the society equally. The Marxian dictum of "from each according to his ability and to each according to his needs" and the capitalistic laissez faire approach would be replaced by a policy of from each according to his role, opportunity and ability, and to each equally irrespective of his position, status or contribution. But as may be sensed, such a utopian concept can hardly be put into any effective practice by any society. In any case, who would be the people to direct and execute such a move unless they were bestowed with some privileges, power or authority over the others?

It does not mean however, that because inequalities of some sort exist in societies, any amount of inequality is acceptable or justifiable. Neither does it mean that because equality as such appears to be untenable nothing should be done to arrest conspicuously widening inequalities and to try to stop the evil that may be done as a result of the existence of inequality from taking place. Equality is an ideal, a virtue, a value. On the other hand inequality as such may be a vice, a negation of value. Where there are two open options, options between equality and inequality, if one chooses the latter in preference to the former, then he acts

in a manner that can be termed immoral or unethical. Such a behaviour is unworthy of social approval.

Some societies do not countenance social and economic inequalities and try to minimise them as much as possible. Different societies have their own ways of doing this. Some do it by legislation, others leave it to individual trade unions or workers to get as much as they can from their labour. B.F. Skinner sees that this problem of inequality in rewards can be solved by making it mandatory that those who do the most distasteful or boring jobs should work for fewer hours but receive equal rewards from the community.⁹ The issue, however, is not which kind of occupation is more distasteful or boring than the other, but one of equal rewards or status for all ("qualified"?) members of the society engaged in one occupation or another. In what way does education contribute towards this state of affairs? Or, in what way can education be used to solve the problem? In other words, does education contribute to the problem or to the solution?

The sixth expression hinges on the attitudes of mind inculcated during ones' instructions in the formal system of education, attitudes that have been known and criticised for being undesirable and not in the best interests of the country. The question of desirability or undesirability is, however, personal or subjective. What one may consider desirable the other may consider otherwise. As to attitudes being desirable or not desirable, it may depend on whether they are considered to be agreeable or objectionable.

Again, this matter is mainly subjective - although concurrence or inter-subjectivity may lead some people into thinking that the matter is or could be, objective or one which can be dealt with objectively. Frequently when some people succeed in persuading or convincing others to agree with them on certain issues such as those involving attitudes and behaviour, they tend to think that their views are and must be, objective and that those who hold different views from those particular ones are not objective or do not look at the issues objectively enough - and must consequently be wrong.

It may be recalled (Chapter 2) that among the purposes of formal education in Kenya were to spread evangelism among the indigenous people, to produce clerks, junior officials and subservient workers who could be used to support and foster colonial enterprises and to produce those individuals 'educated' to co-operate with the colonial establishment for 'peace' and 'community development', while at the same time remaining adapted to the environment. However, the nature and content of the formal system of education was such that those who successfully graduated from educational institutions adapted themselves differently and were in some ways semblences of the products of western societies especially in matters pertaining to cultural values and outlook to the extent that they appeared to be alienated from their own ethnic groups. Cultural alienation seemed to have been influenced by the content of what was taught (which was largely alien), the method of teaching (which included disparaging, condemning and suppressing African values and beliefs), and the natural

desire for most people to want to prove that what others can achieve, they too can, even if it involves some degree of emulation or adaptation. Secondly, and more importantly, the socio-economic benefits attached to the formal education helped to reinforce this factor.

The formal system of education being an establishment of some western colonialists, inculcated mostly those values and attitudes of the establishers and taught skills that were of relevance and contributive to the promotion of their interests, enterprises and overall advancements. It may also be recalled that between 1940 and 1945 Britain passed "COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE ACTS" after she had realised that it was to her economic advantage to spend money and develop her colonies, make them wealthier to help prop up and complete the economy of the mother country, and to do so in such a way that the economies of the colonies and the colonial master remained inter-dependent for a long time. For educational development, millions of pounds were allocated for the improvement of primary and secondary education in the colonies. In East Africa, Makerere College (now Makerere University, Kampala) and the Royal Technical College, Nairobi (Now the University of Nairobi), got boosted, and more facilities and opportunities for higher education were made available for Africans. Development Plans were drawn up by British officials in and for the colonies to fit in this scheme. The idea behind it was that if British colonial subjects were more highly educated, they would be more productive in promoting British enterprises in the colonies by providing more efficient

manpower requirements and provide wider markets for British manufactured goods and ideas. Thus the development of education in the colonies is meant to be tied up with the advancement of British interests, and the colonies and their development as such, can be said to be projects established to further overseas enterprises. If therefore, the products of the formal system of education are still fundamentally unchanged, narrowly oriented and ill adapted towards playing their role in the social and economic development of Kenya, then it implies that the products of Kenya's formal system of education are NOT contributing to the social and economic development of their country as such, but are still oriented and employed to sustain and advance foreign interests, establishments and enterprises. In which case it may be inferred that the formal system of education in Kenya at secondary and tertiary levels (the levels that are concerned with the provision of middle and high-level manpower requirements) does not produce people with skills and knowledge to maintain and develop an independent Kenyan society and economy as is, or should be, required. This is despite the fact that one of the main purposes of education is supposed to be to prepare people to play useful roles in the maintenance and development of their own societies first and foremost.

This sad conclusion appears to have been arrived at some years ago by Frantz Fanon when he argued that the national middle class in certain ex-colonies was, unlike the middle class in the capitalist and colonial societies in Europe, an underdeveloped middle class that has not learned anything

from books, was engaged in neither production nor invention, and was mainly canalized into activities of the intermediary types. Said Fanon with contempt:

The national middle class which takes over power at the end of the colonial regime is an under-developed middle class....The university and merchant classes which make up the most enlightened section of the new state are in fact characterized by the smallness of their number and their being concentrated in the capital, and the type of activities in which they are engaged: business, agriculture and liberal professions. Neither financiers nor industrial magnates are to be found within this national middle class. The national bourgeoisie of the under-developed countries is not engaged in production, nor in invention, nor building, nor labour; it is completely canalized into activities of the intermediary type. Its innermost vocation seems to be to keep in the running and to be part of the racket. The psychology of the national bourgeoisie is that of the businessman, not that of a captain of industry: and it is only too true that the greed of the settlers and the system of embargoes set up by colonialism has hardly left them any other choice...

In an under-developed country an authentic national middle class ought to consider as its bounded duty to betray the calling fate has marked out for it, and to put itself to school with the people: in other words to put at the people's disposal the intellectual and technical capital that it has snatched when going through the colonial universities. But unhappily....the national middle-class does not follow this heroic, positive, fruitful and just path; rather it disappears with its soul

set at peace into the shocking ways - shocking because antinational - of a traditional bourgeoisie, of a bourgeoisie which is stupidly, contemptibly, cynically bourgeois.¹⁰

The solution to this may lie in the setting of the economy on a new footing so that the national middle class-the product of the formal system of education - may ultimately contribute to the development of their country as such rather than to the advancement of foreign interests, canalising foreign investments into projects for national development, and re-orientating the intellectual resources so that more attention may be paid to innovation, inventiveness and production than to administration and maintenance of what is already established leaving investments almost entirely into the hands of non-nationals. This, is more of a policy than a philosophical issue.

From what has just been discussed above, it can be reasonably concluded that the secondary and tertiary levels of the formal system of education in Kenya are beneficial or useful to only a few "qualified" individuals in the country who may chance to be absorbed into the modern sector of the economy. It can also be concluded that the formal educational system at those levels is not only elitist, but also encourages individualism and competition, leads to the acquisition of individual wealth and high social status being regarded as the end of education, perpetrates and contributes significantly towards social and economic inequalities in the country contrary to the stated social or Government objectives of creating a society in which all people are socially and economically equal - a society in which the growing income is supposed to

be equitably distributed to all its members instead of being concentrated in the hands of a few urban-based mental workers, and produces people who contribute little towards the advancement of the country. If this is the case then the concept of education as a tool for rapid economic advancement becomes clear when by "rapid economic advancement" we mean or refer to the economic advancement of some products of the formal system of education rather than to the advancement of the country as a whole. Granted that secondary and tertiary education is a tool for individual rapid social and economic advancement, would it not be fair to give it to all members of the society so that they all may make use of the tool to make rapid advancements for themselves? By doing this would it not be the case that all people would have equal opportunities to make rapid advancements? Would this be or not be the end of elitism? However, would it end individualism, competition and the attitudes of acquisition of wealth and privileged social status?

II MASS EDUCATION AND EQUALIZATION OF OPPORTUNITIES

Secondary and tertiary levels of formal education are preceeded by primary education. It is at the primary school level that some candidates make or do not make it to secondary and perhaps tertiary levels of education later on. Primary schools feed post-primary institutions.

Let us now examine the compound proposition that universal primary education ensures equal opportunities for all people and removes social and economic inequalities. To begin with,

we can split the proposition into two simple ones, thus:

(i) Universal primary education ensures equal opportunities for all people; and (ii) Universal primary education removes social and economic inequalities. By Universal primary education or mass education here we mean formal education for all the children of the primary school age groups.

In view of what has been discussed above concerning secondary and tertiary levels of education and the conclusions arrived at, it would seem unnecessary for us here to examine or discuss the second part of the proposition (ii.) because if secondary and tertiary levels of the formal educational system have been known to be contributory factors towards social and economic inequalities in the society, and if, as it is, these levels of education come after primary education, it is pointless to assert that primary education (even if it is made universal) removes social and economic inequalities. This assertion even becomes more ridiculous when other things are borne in mind. For example, the sitting of an examination at the end of primary education for purposes of selecting some candidates qualified to proceed to Government maintained and Government aided secondary schools - which have more and better facilities than most private and Harambee schools; it is not the responsibility of primary education to allocate material rewards or social status to individuals; and the fact that the primary schools system (universal or otherwise) does not make laws or legislation, and has neither power nor authority to prosecute or punish anybody that may be participating in "the racket" leading to social and economic inequalities. In other words, education lacks ways and means

of ensuring that social and economic inequalities in the society are effectively removed. Furthermore, to try to argue the other way round, that the provision of universal primary education removes the said inequalities is equally futile. The argument does not show how the provision of universal primary education alone can remove the inequalities. In short, the proposition that universal primary education removes social and economic inequalities must, if considered all alone, be false. What may be accepted is that universal primary education, especially if it is made mandatory and free, may be, or is, one of the necessary means of removing or minimising social or economic inequalities.

Let us now examine the first proposition that universal primary education ensures equal opportunities for all people. Assuming that this proposition is true and believing that the provision of equal opportunities to all people is socially or morally desirable, then universal primary education should be provided. Thus the society can be said to be having a moral duty to provide at least a certain minimum amount of education (call it primary education) to all its members, and members of the society can be said to be having a right to at least that minimum amount of education. Speaking on "Guinean Revolution on Social Progress" in 1963, Sekou Toure stressed the importance of the provision of universal primary education to all children of the primary school age and argued that such children had the right to education. Said Sekou Toure:

...mass education will put an end to the contradiction between the natural right to education - a right of each citizen - and the limited opportunities offered in our schools.....

We should also promote an education that will acquaint children with real life - not only giving them a vocational training, but by closely relating school with life. Life, indeed, is the true school, and our schools, whether of general education or vocational training, should be auxiliaries of life.

If education does not help the pupil to understand this world, fit him into the community, and awake to awareness of man's duties to himself and his country, the teacher's efforts are pointless.¹¹

To correct the anomaly between the social desirability of education for all and the limited opportunities offered in schools, argues Sekou Toure , there must be mass education; the provision of universal primary education becomes imperative. Indeed, mass education at the primary level has been seen as the solution to some of the problems associated with the elitist nature of the educational system of many a country - including Kenya. The principle behind this is that educational opportunities and educational resources should be open to all in accordance with their individual qualities and potentialities and irrespective of the wealth and status of their forebears.

The question to be answered, however, is how the provision of universal primary education ensures equal opportunities to all people, or whether it actually ensures the equalization of opportunities. At first thought it may be seen that if the opportunities referred to are only those

directly connected with the school system then the provision of universal primary education (free and compulsory) would give every child some formal education and therefore some opportunity of his/her advancement. But upon further reflections it will be noticed that there are certain limitations which if not corrected, make nonsense of the idea of equalization of opportunities. A few examples will suffice to illustrate this point:

(a) Different areas of the country have attained different and unequal levels of development in various fields - social, economic, etc. With these differences in environment, inequalities in prior experience are inevitable. The answer to this problem lies in trying to achieve as much as possible, uniform levels of development throughout the country.

(b) It is a well known fact that different schools provide different qualities of education. This difference occurs because some schools have certain connections which give them advantage over others when it comes to allocation of staff, provision of facilities such as buildings and equipment, etc. To remedy this problem, it is important that allocation of staff and the provision of facilities should be done fairly - so that no school is unduly advantaged or disadvantaged.

(c) Partly because of the different qualities of education provided by different schools some schools have become more famous than others such that a student from Alliance High School for instance, is more likely to be

considered for allocation than one from a private or Harambee secondary school even if the two may happen to be having "equal" qualifications.

(d) All societies train their members to perform tasks necessary for the continuation and development of the society. In addition, they provide for the allocation of individuals to positions in the society. Some positions require very specialised skills. For this reason it may cost more to train such people and moreover, the length of training is likely to be long. As not all people in the society can be trained for the same skills at the same levels of sophistication, and as not all people are able to benefit equally from the same or similar trainings due to some reasons such as psychological causes, motivational factors, interest, brain damage, differences in past experiences, etc. a way must be found in which individuals can be screened or examined. The result of this formal evaluation of individuals makes it possible to identify and develop talent for the common good. The system of examination may not necessarily be fool-proof. Kenya's system of examination in particular, still leaves a lot to be desired.

In short, some ascribed or inherited characteristics constituting preferential treatment in allocation of individuals, if allowed to persist as they are now make it inevitable that some people have more opportunities than others.

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(III) CULTURE - BOUND CONCEPT OF EDUCATION

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to purport to treat exhaustively the subject of education and culture either generally or with reference to this country only. In this case, I will examine briefly the culture - bound concept of education, the proposition that education as a social service is responsible for the transmission of culture.

It has often been stated that one of the defects of new systems of education "inherited" by most recently independent countries (as well those countries which are under foreign rule and domination) such as Kenya, is inappropriateness of content leading to the transmission of values, attitudes and knowledge of the people of the former (or currently) occupying powers rather than those of the native people. This phenomenon is inconsistent with the universalistic conception of the purpose of education - the transmission from one generation to the next of the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society and the preparation of the young people for their future membership and their active participation in its maintenance or development. This inappropriateness, coupled with the method of teaching, is believed (some would say, known) to be responsible for causing cultural alienation among those who graduate at/.....

different levels from the established centres of "mixed education". It has often been pointed out that our culture and our traditions are African, not European, and we have contributed to the world culturally more or less like any other people; and yet Westerners, partly through the school system, tried to make their culture our culture.

Culture can be defined broadly as a people's way of life. This is not to say that each and every member of any given society or any defined culture area, has the same way of life with his neighbour. Such a situation is practically non-existent. People differ in their experiences and temperaments and do behave differently when confronted with similar situations. Within the same society some people live in poverty whereas others live in possession of relatively vast amounts of amassed wealth; some people live happily while others are haunted with all sorts of agonising experiences; some people are hard working and thrifty and others are lazy or dishonest; etc. In fact no one person ever lives exactly the same life as another. Virtually every individual has his own way of life, his own culture - so to say. However, certain groups of people or a number of societies, possess the same or similar traits or share a dominant cultural orientation. It is the existence of these similar traits, or this dominant cultural orientation that is referred to as a people's culture or simply, culture.

Culture thus is the total pattern of human behaviours and its products embodied in thought, speech, behaviour, and

artifacts and dependent upon man's ability for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations through the use of tools, language and systems of abstract thought. It embodies customary beliefs, traditions, social forms and material traits of a people. A cultural process therefore entails a process of education.

It is not only the case that a cultural process entails a process of education; it is also the case that an educational process entails a transmission of culture - which is a cultural process. In other words, where there is education there is some culture, and where there is culture there is some education. (Education $\longleftrightarrow$ Culture)

The culture that is transmitted from one generation to the next is not the total (whole and unmodified) culture of the preceding generation. Only some core, some deeply rooted aspects of culture are transmitted; some aspects become unfashionable and are discarded in due course. If all aspects of culture were transmitted unmodified, there would be no difference between the cultures of the ancient people, those of the moderners and those of the future generations. Culture is a product of human creation and invention. It is not only the ancient, the ancestors, the old generations that have been able to be creative and inventive, the only people that have been able to contribute to the world culturally. Even those of the present generation make their contribution to the cultural world and so will those of the future generations. As long as this ability to be creative and

inventive still remains inherent in human beings, there always will be some sorts of cultural change. There always will be some things certain people will do that their ancestors, or any other people before them, did not do. And there may always be some things which the existing older generations will have to learn from the younger - e.g. some styles of dancing, some songs, more recent literature, new technology, etc. In other words, even some people of the older generation can, and do in fact, learn something from those who are younger.

In addition to the transmission of culture from one generation to the next, is, as has already been stated, the transmission of culture from one society to another. This process takes place when people of almost completely different cultural backgrounds get into contact. The extent of cultural flow and cultural influence from one society to another varies greatly from place to place and from one individual to another. People learn from others.

We have in this country had a mixture of two or more different societies with virtually different cultures and therefore virtually different types of education or educational systems. We have had many cases of members of traditional backgrounds (TAC) going to schools or colleges established by or built along the lines of those established by people from distant lands in the west and which naturally purport to transmit their foreign Western cultures (FWC). It does not require a lot of thought to see for instance that such

foreigners who engage themselves in teaching people who do not share their cultures can teach only that which they know - that which belongs to their own culture. They can transmit only their culture because that is what they have. But they cannot transmit (unless they have acquired it) the cultures of other people because that they do not have.

In the evenings and/or during the holidays and on "completing" formal education in the institutions referred to, MTAS get time to return home where they may undergo customary rites and initiations, thus virtually going through TAED system as well. They consequently go through more than one educational system. They go through TAED system (which is indigenous) and another system of education which is alien (let us call it Western Educational system - WES). Such people end up having two types of education. The question is, is it right or valid to conclude that such people must necessarily be alienated?

Given that to an African (or for that matter MTAS),
(1) traditional African education (TAED) transmits traditional African culture (TAC) resulting into initiation and conformity to the traditional African society (TAS),
(2) Western education (WED) transmits foreign Western culture (FWC) leading to alienation from TAS, and that to such an African,

(3) If (1) then it is not the case that (2), and;

(4) If (2) then it is not the case that (1),

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that TAED can transmit FWC. However, in a case whereby such an African receives both TAED and WED, provided only that the influence of WED significantly exceeds that of TAED, then such an individual may be said to be alienated from TAS. Similarly, provided only that the influence of TAED is significantly greater than that of WED, then the individual that receives both TAED and WED can well be initiated in TAS and conform to TAC. If it must always necessarily be the case that (for MTAS) to receive both TAED and WED implies acquiring FWC or the predominance of FWC over TAC, then all African recipients of WED must consequently be alienated and as such, unqualified to give any lessons on TAC or TAED. And provided that the same people (or at least some of them) are the ones who run the country's formal system of education, then it is not possible for them to transmit much TAC in the formal educational institutions for the simple reason that they are alienated and lack TAC to transmit. In due course, it can be argued, TAED (and for that matter TAC) may be no more. The new system will be the only one, and taking into account man's ability to be adaptive, the question of alienation may be meaningless as there wouldn't be TAC or TAS to be alienated from. What then would be wrong, supposing someone asked, if we are teaching our children through an educational system that is (now) ours (by virtue of adoption or otherwise), does it make much sense talking about cultural transmission

in our schools? Wouldn't we be doing just that?

It might be sensed from the above analyses and that in Education $\longleftrightarrow$ Culture, then to say that one of the purposes of education is to transmit culture, is to state the obvious; that "education transmits culture" is tautologous for one implies the other and vice versa.

IV CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the following three things may be said. First, that although one of the key underlying philosophical assumptions is that education is a tool for rapid economic advancement, analysis and practice both show that much of our educational efforts are misorientated. Thus, whereas there has been a considerable amount of "development" in the field of education, economic development in the country as a whole has been relatively slow so much so that an increasing number of those people educated to play their roles in the development of the country find that they cannot play the expected roles. This is a clear case of misallocation of economic and intellectual resources. It is obvious that educational development is not properly related to developmental requirements in other fields.

Secondly, tackling the problem of inequalities in a society should not only take one dimension. The provision of universal primary education - free and compulsory - is insufficient. It needs to be accompanied by an overall and

effective policy of egalitarianism.

And thirdly, that education is a social process, or that education is, or should be a process by which culture is transmitted, is a truism.

FOOTNOTES.

¹Colony and Protectorate of Kenya, African Education; A Statement of Policy (Issued with the Authority of the Member for Education, Health and Local Government, Nairobi: 1951) p. 2

²Republic of Kenya, Development Plan, 1966-1970. See Section on Secondary Education.

³Republic of Kenya, Development Plan, 1970-1974, pp. 456-461.

⁴S.H. Ominde, "Education in Revolutionary Africa," East Africa Journal, May 1965, pp. 6-14.

⁵Joseph Ki-Zerbo, "The Content of Education in Africa," Conference of African States on the Development of Education in Africa. (Addis Ababa: 15-25 May, 1961.) Final Report pp. 55-60. Also printed in Education in Africa: Research and Action, Ed. R. Jolly, (Nairobi: E.A.P.H., 1968).

⁶Speech delivered by A.C. Mwingira while attending Universities of Eastern Africa Tenth Annual Conference On Teacher Education, University of Nairobi, 4-6 October, 1971 on "The Role of Teacher Education in Promoting Rural Transformation."

⁷Government of Kenya, Third Development Plan, 1974-1978, p.404.

⁸Report of the Conference on the Review of the Educational System in Eastern Nigeria, (Enugu: Government Printer; 1964).

P.1. Quoted in David Abernathy, The Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case, (Stanford, California; Stanford University Press). See also, J.S. Sheffield, Education in Kenya, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing office; 1971) p.91.

⁹B.F. Skinner, Walden Two, (New York: MacMillan Co. 1962)

¹⁰Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, (Penguin Edition; 1963) pp. 119-121.

¹¹Sekou Toure, Guinean Revolution and Social Progress, (Conakry: Government of the Republic of Guinea: n.o. 1963) VI pp. 240-243. Also printed in (Ed) I. Gray Cowan, James O'Cannel and David G. Scanlon, Education and Nation-Building in Africa, (London: Pall Mall Press Ltd., 1965) pp. 125-132.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In an attempt to identify and single out for specific examination some important philosophical assumptions underlying Kenya's educational system and their links to social and educational policies, it was necessary to begin from a historical background in order to examine the issues in their proper historical perspective. Taking the view that education is universal and that if one society imposes itself on another, it does, or may, impose in that society an educational system that is alien to it, we reached the background to the establishment of the present system of education in Kenya. Of particular interest was the discovery (contrary to common views) that although Kenya was for a long time under British rule, the system of education introduced by the British was not, strictly speaking, identical to the British system of education in Britain. The system in Kenya, as was in a number of other British colonies and protectorates in Africa and elsewhere, was very much influenced by certain factors that had nothing to do with education in Britain so much so that there were definite differences between the British system of education, i.e. the system of education in Britain for the Britons (and their nationals in some parts of the world), and the British colonial system of education, i.e. the system of education in British colonies for the British

colonial subjects. This distinction is important. We may lay claim to having inherited at independence time, a British colonial system of education, but not a British system of education. One system applied to the colonised people, the other to the British themselves - the colonisers. One was meant for people that were supposedly inferior, the other to "leaders", people whose mission and burden was to "civilise" others. One was meant to bring up subservient people while the other was meant to produce people to govern themselves and their overseas subjects.

The system of education in Kenya established by the British was basically vocational. The syllabus was mainly utilitarian with a definite practical bias and adapted to meeting the economic demand for clerks, teachers, subordinate officials, etc, to promote Western enterprises and profits. The later introduction and predominance of academic education in the system did little to alter the fact of its being vocational. "For nearly a half a century," commented J.S. Furnival, "educational policy....has been directed to giving a technical, utilitarian bent to the system of instruction, but has been unable to prevail against the economic forces creating a demand for (more strictly utilitarian) academic courses."¹

There is no sufficient evidence from which to conclude that the predominance of the academic or general nature of our educational system means that the system has ceased to be vocational. True, there are many graduates of the system

who find themselves unemployed. However, this situation should properly be linked with the vocational nature of the educational system. The unemployed are those (generally) who have gone through the formal educational system but are not yet in the practice of any vocation, something which they are still looking forward to. Due to the higher economic returns and social status accruing from the acquisition of formal education, competition raised the standard of qualifications for the various appointments, and soon the demand for that type of education exceeded supply into the labour market, leading to unemployment, frustrations and, expectedly, criticisms of the educational system as being too elitist.

"The rapid extension of formal education has itself been a significant factor in the growth of unemployment" because the education creates higher aspirations, says Archibald.² For Calley J.W. Hanson, "The stark reality of the growing mass of disillusioned, unproductive, uprooted school children flocking to cities where they join the ranks of the unemployed" is there because school children are much more prone to unemployment than the "uneducated".³ Most "uneducated" people stay at home and follow their parents' occupations. This is partly because job opportunities for them in towns are slim. The educated unemployed youth, however, do not remain in towns and cities permanently. After they have sought jobs for some time, they eventually give up and return to the rural areas.

"Unemployment for young people is not a permanent

condition, nor is it one that is usually experienced in towns or cities," observes Tina Wallace in a research paper. She continues to say:

In my sample the overwhelming majority of the unemployed returned to or stayed in the village when they had no job, and lived with relatives, sharing their houses and their food. It is almost impossible to remain unemployed for long in town, as the cost of living is high, and the problems of staying clothed and fed become very great. The only youth that seem to stay in the city when they are unemployed are those who are unable to return home because of family quarrels and have brothers who are prepared to support them there....

This finding is consistent with Brouncstein, Hoad and Hutton who found that youth only wait a short time in unemployment in town, and then from necessity and convenience they return to the rural areas. In the word of Jeijuen, 'The majority of Sukuma job seekers in Mwanza town simply go back home if they do not succeed in securing permanent employment in town.⁴

The same could be said of the youth in Kenya. Nevertheless, there are some of those who resort to criminal and anti-social activities such as theft and robbery as a means of living when they cannot go back to the land.

The system of education, therefore, is being blamed for

certain consequences which are not necessarily of its own making. It does not allocate individuals into positions in the society for that is beyond what any educational system can do, but it provides individuals with certain knowledge and skills which can be utilised. If for certain reasons some such individuals find themselves unemployed it is because there is no employment for them due to such reasons as the glutting of the labour market, the slow expansion of the labour generating sectors of the economy, misallocation of manpower resources, social inequities, etc. In an attempt to solve this problem, suggestions are sometimes made to the effect that academic or general education should be substituted by more vocational and technical education. However, the demand for this substitution overlooks the fact that technical education depends to a large extent on good general education, and as long as the education provided (even if it is technical) remains vocational, if there are no sufficient opportunities for the practice of the learned technology and acquired knowledge, the problem will remain unsolved: that would be like putting the cart before the horse.

The fact of life is that we are living. An important question that we should constantly ask ourselves is: Are we living well enough? If so, how long are we going to continue in this bliss? If not, what are the alternatives and, of these, which is/are the best possible alternative(s)?

Like everybody else, we are living in a society that

has not achieved perfection. There is no perfect society, and there has never been any known to be perfect. One of the struggles of every society is, or has been, to improve on the present in order to ease conditions for the future. In order to try to achieve maximum improvement, a deliberate attempt must be made to understand the existing problem. Understanding the problem or maximising improvement is not always easy. Now and then unforeseen problems and obstacles crop up making further demands on human attention.

Like everybody else we belong to a society that has a past. We can look to this past with glory, or shun it. Much depends on exactly what we are looking for. We have made significant achievements in the past, and we have also experienced some shortcomings. We can look to the past for an example, or look to the past for a lesson. Either way we shall learn something. And what we learn we may utilise.

There may be a tendency to think that education in schools, colleges or universities is a panacea, a cure for all the ills of any society. But education alone, or education as such, cannot be a panacea. Then there is a belief that this type of education, i.e. institutionalised education, can be used to change the environment. But when environment is changed, the change may be reflected in the educational system.

Of late, second-chance institutes in the form of Harambee or Self-Help Village Polytechnics and Institutes/Colleges of Science and Technology have been mushrooming in the country-

constituting what may be referred to as a Shadow System of Education in Kenya - as a reaction of deficiencies of Primary and Secondary education, respectively. And currently (1976) a National Commission on Education Objectives and Policies has been established to evaluate the present educational system, to define a new set of educational goals and to formulate a programme of action to implement the goals (P.7). It is clear, therefore, that the present educational system is a subject of concern, and this study cannot overlook the Village Polytechnic and Harambee institutes of technology movements and their implications for educational development.

A Village Polytechnic is a low-cost training centre in a rural area catering for post-primary school leavers. Its orientation is towards producing rural handymen. In a handbook produced by the Youth Development Division of the Ministry of Co-operatives and Social Services, the objective of a village polytechnic was defined as follows:

It (a Village Polytechnic) aims at giving primary school leavers from that area skills, understanding and values which will make them able to look for money-making opportunities where they live, and to contribute to rural development by building up the economic strength of their own community.⁵

Village Polytechnics are widely perceived as a means of alleviating unemployment among the majority of primary school leavers who fail to make it to secondary schools or

whose chances of getting wage employment are remote because of the stiff competition for such jobs by more educated people and those with practical experience in similar or related types of jobs.

The type of training in village polytechnics is mainly vocational and wage-employment orientated or self-employment. Students in village polytechnics such as Maseno, Ahero (near Kisumu), Keveve (near Kakamega) etc. are taught skills in carpentry, masonry, brick-making tailoring, bread-making, vehicle maintenance, metal-making, typing, elementary book-keeping, accounting and business practices etc. As they 'train on the job,' they in a way help to meet certain needs of the community, for example, construction, repair and maintenance of vehicles and other things, clothing, bread etc. The utility of commercial subjects also enables some products of the village polytechnics to obtain wage-employment in some offices as clerks or secretaries and thereby joining the prestigious modern sector of the economy which they might otherwise not have managed to join.

Vocational training alone, or for that matter, the acquisition of practical skills, does not create jobs or entitle one to a job. Hence one of the problems that face village polytechnics is that of identifying jobs within the local community.

Enthusiasm for the building of more village polytechnics was at the beginning of this decade overshadowed by the massive popular support given to the proposed Harambee

Institutes/Colleges of Science and Technology. (Some of the institutes have by now opened their doors to students even though they are not fully completed according to their proposed programmes, but a majority have yet to be built or completed). The institutes of technology propose to offer more advanced technical-vocational training as compared to what is taught in the village polytechnics. Students for the institutes of technology will be (or are, in the case of those which are open) selected from among those who will have completed Form IV. Thus mostly academic qualifications are or will be, needed for entry into the institutes of technology. Although it seems obvious that some of the courses in the institutes of technology will be duplicated for one reason or another, it does seem that some of the institutes will offer courses different in content and scope from those offered in other institutes. Thus the Ukamba Agricultural Institute (UKAI) will, hopefully, concentrate more on imparting skills necessary for the development of agriculture and the Ramogi Institute of Advanced Technology (RIAT) will offer courses more advanced than those taught at the Coast Institute of Technology (C.I.T.), for example.

Underlying the movement for the construction of the Harambee institutes are political, economic and educational factors, all of which are inextricably bound together. Following the rapid expansion in the field of academic education and the relatively slow expansion of job opportunities for people with mainly academic qualifications

during the same period, unemployment for many people with such qualifications has since become a disturbing phenomenon so much so that it has been suggested that there should be a heavier dosage of technical-vocational training in the educational system to enable the majority of school-leavers who inevitably cannot get wage-employment in the modern sector of the economy to be self-reliant by being self-employed. In addition, whereas "educated school-leavers" have been loafing about in the streets, it has come to be noticed that there is a section of the labour market in the country in which demand exceeds supply. The section of the labour market in question - the one requiring technical knowledge - is actually very small indeed so much so that if all the proposed Harambee institutes (numbering about twenty) get completed and operate at full capacity, then, unless opportunities in that particular field are significantly increased, there will soon be an excess supply of people with technical qualifications - some of who will be no less unemployed than those with academic qualifications.

Village polytechnics and the institutes of technology serve two main purposes as the I.L.O. Report on Employment, Incomes and Equality in Kenya (1972) states in its findings:

...First, to recuperate drop-outs and other early leavers of all ages, in order to get them back into the mainstream of education and employment opportunities. Secondly, to help those young people leaving the mainstream of education with phasing into employment, if this proves to be necessary.⁶

Whereas village polytechnics with their marginal self-help support are oriented towards producing rural handymen, the institutes of technology with their massive popular backing are for formal training for the formal sector - for the training of technicians and technologists. Again as the I.L.O. Report states:

This distinction is very important because it brings clearly into the open the pressures building up in the total educational scene to formalise and ritualise the more technical and vocational types of education and training. It thus admits the failure of the society at large to diversify and re-channel some of this newly awakened interest in employment-oriented education into areas of the economy where most of the potential for employment actually lies - small scale farming and social infrastructure at the local level.⁷

It may be recalled that during the early stages of the development of formal education in Kenya, the so-called "African Education" was basically industrial/technical/vocational education and that academic education for Africans was a later development. (See chapter 2). Industrial/technical or vocational education however useful for the predominantly rural community, was undermined by the low status attached to it, and the philosophy underlying it was couched in racism. Thus what A.C. Mwingira terms as "enlightened attempts to introduce agriculture and vocational training into the schools" failed.⁸ The current move for the re-vitalisation of technical and vocational training

is not, however, based on the same old philosophy; it is grounded on the fact that the acquisition of academic qualifications alone no longer guarantees one a higher social status or bright economic prospects, and that an additional training, say in the field of technical or vocational education, enhances one's chances of employment in the formal sector of the economy. If, however, such an individual does not get work in the formal sector of the economy, he or she may as well stay in the rural area and earn a living by self-employment. In either case, the individual can, or will be said, to be in "employment" in one way or another. According to this concept, therefore, the re-vitalisation of technical and vocational training in the educational system, is a solution to three problems that are inextricably bound together - educational, economic and political: the present educational system will cease to be mainly academic and elitist in nature; all, or a majority of, the products of the school system at any terminal stage will be employed in one way (or sector) or another; and the country will be rid of an otherwise increasing number of educated malcontents that might eventually pose a threat to the apparent stability of the present political situation. One good thing with this is that it corrects the gross imbalance that has for a long time riddled the country's system of education, and that is, the gross imbalance between the academic type of education on the one hand and the technical and vocational types of education on the other. Consequent to the persistence of this imbalance in which one

type of education has at one time or another, been over-emphasised much to the neglect of another, there has been quantitative educational development of some type on the one hand, and problems of finding opportunities for the products of the educational system with more or less similar training or qualifications while at the same time certain sections of the labour market have been under-supplied. This tendency has been a contributory factor in the existing differences in the socio-economic status in the country. In any case, however, this traditional manpower approach to education has its short-coming: it loses relevance once the existing sectors of the labour market has been glutted and thereby exposes itself to undue criticisms.

There is an urgent need for the present system of education to do more than service the existing establishments, to transmit traditional African culture, and to prepare the youth for rural life. There is also a need to balance the contents of the curriculum, to have a reasonable balance between technical and academic aspects of education. This can be done by restructuring the educational system such that what is taught (or supposed to be taught) in the village polytechnics and the institutes of technology is incorporated into the school curriculum. Since the village polytechnics and the institutes of technology do not offer very advanced or specialised courses, and since these institutions have, or are supposed to have, competent members of staff, and given

that they draw, or are supposed to draw, their students from the formal system of education at different levels, the problem of providing teachers for technical education if formalised, should not be insurmountable. One important advantage that can be gained by doing this is that it will provide a strong basic education with a vocational - academic basis.

It may be necessary to lengthen primary education from seven to nine years so as not to put too much load or burden on the primary schools by incorporating technical/vocational subjects into the curriculum. By incorporating technical/vocational subjects into the curriculum, much of the efforts put into the building of village polytechnics and some institutes of technology will be spared. Eventually, the idea of the second-chance institutes operating as shadow systems of education will therefore be unnecessary.

As a matter of fact, academic education has not been all that worthless. It has played a very useful role - evoking nationalism and contributing towards the historic struggle for political independence. Despite the criticisms that may be levelled against it, the importance and usefulness of academic education cannot be very much minimised or belittled.

For Kenya, like in many developing countries, agriculture forms the mainstay of the economy. For this reason, a great deal of emphasis has been put on agricultural development and

the need to make rural life more attractive to school-leavers. However, the mere fact that agriculture forms the mainstay of a country's economy does not entail an argument to the effect that agriculture should for a long time continue to be the mainstay of the country's economy. Moreover, the present state of the country's rural/agricultural economy badly needs a strong industrial base or backing. For this reason, the country needs a policy of industrialisation. Digging, ox-ploughing herding, crude and unfashionable carpentry, simple tailoring and the like, are soon becoming decadent economic practices in the country. There should be more emphasis on learning new technologies and adapting them to the country's situation. Education, thus, should be called upon to develop the country's intellectual resources necessary for rapid technological advancement and industrialisation. In particular, technical/scientific education at high levels must be called upon to steer the country out of technological dependence, or lagging behind other countries technologically.

Copying other people's social values may be considered bad, but there is nothing bad with successful scientific and technological imitation if by doing so, we can generate industrialisation, reduce our dependence and make significant advancements within a short time.

As it is, the traditional manpower approach to education, or the banking' concept of education in which the student is fed with certain facts the learning of which makes him "qualified" for a certain type of job existing within the

formal sector of the economy, is faulty - and one which should not be encouraged. Education should be for the development of intellectual resources. It is not enough to give people vocational training; it is not enough to provide higher academic education; it is not enough to provide universal primary education. It is important also that intellectual resources are appropriately developed so that the country may assert itself and its position as a developed nation rather than continue to be referred to as a poor developing country that always stands in need of foreign aid.

FOOTNOTES.

¹J.S. Furnival, Colonial Policy and Practice (Cambridge U.P., 1948) p.387.

²Calley Archibald, "Educational Planning and Unemployed Youth," Prospects for Employment Opportunities, (Ed) Ronald Robinson and Peter Johnson (London: 1971) p.12.

³J.W. Janson, "The School Leaver Looks for Work," Education and Development of Nations, (Ed) J.W. Janson and C.S. Brembeck; (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston; 1966)

⁴Tina Wallace, "Young and Unemployed - Who is and What Does it Mean?" East Africa Journal, Vol. 9 No. 11 (November 1972) pp 18-24.

⁵How to Start a Village Polytechnic, (Nairobi: Ministry of Co-operatives and Social Services, 1971) p.4.

⁶International Labour Office, Employment, Incomes and Equality: a strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya, (Geneva: I.L.O.; 1972) p. 248.

⁷Ibid, p. 239.

⁸A.C. Mwingira. "Education for Self-Reliance: The Problem of Implementation," Education in Africa: Research and Action, Ed. Richard Jolly, (Nairobi: E.A. Publishing House; 1968).

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