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# The New Local Level Politics in East Africa

Studies on Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya

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# Acknowledgements

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# Abbreviations

CCM — Chama Cha Mapinduzi (Revolutionary Party)

FORD — Forum for the Restoration of Democracy

KADU — Kenya African Democratic Union

KANU — Kenya African National Union

KPU — Kenya People's Union

NEMU — National Election Monitoring Unit

NGO — Non-Governmental Organisation

RC — Resistance Council

SIDA — Swedish International Development Authority

TAMWA — Tanzania Association of Media Women

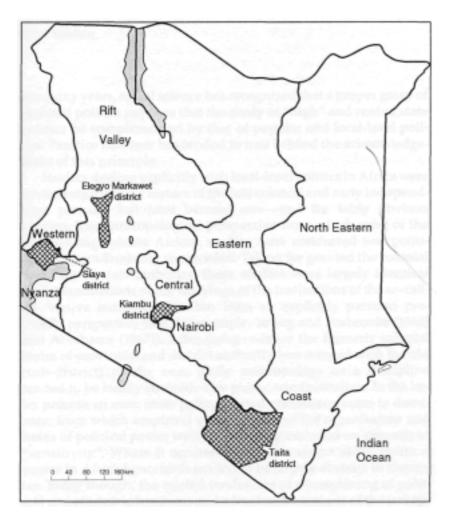TANGO — Tanzania Association of Non-Governmental Organisations

Map 1. *Uganda; district boundaries*

Map 2. *Tanzania; region boundaries, Hai and Ilala districts*

Map 3. *Kenya; province boundaries, Siaya, Elegyo Markawet, Kiambu and Taita districts*

# Introduction

*Peter Gibbon*

For many years, social science has recognised that a proper grasp of national politics requires that the study of "high" and central state politics be complemented by that of popular and local-level politics. Practice however has tended to trail behind the acknowledgement of this principle.

Studies dealing explicitly with local-level politics in Africa were a relatively common feature of the late colonial and early independence periods, but later became rare—and for fairly obvious reasons. The anthropological perspective from which most of the original anglophone African studies were conducted was politically and academically superceded. Taking for granted the colonial structure of state authority, these studies were largely identical with examinations of the workings of the institutions of the so-called "native authorities", often from an explicitly partisan pro-chiefly perspective (see, for example, Young and Fosbrooke (1960) and Abrahams (1967)). After independence the formerly colonial realm of provincial and district authority was merged with the old (sub-district) chiefly one, while anthropology as a discipline tended to be locally succeeded by public administration. In the latter process an even more policy-related orientation came to dominate, from which empirical questions about the organisation and bases of political power were increasingly excluded on grounds of "sensitivity". Where it occurred at all, discussion about political power in Africa henceforth tended to be largely abstract in character. Today though, the related tendencies of a broadening of political and academic freedoms and a few tentative signs of the (re) appearance of an empirical political science have enabled the study of local-level politics in Africa to re-emerge, and to simultaneously acquire a more systematically critical foundation.

This collection of essays on local-level politics takes the East African countries of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania as its geographical focus. These countries were from 1918 until independence bound together by a common colonial power and by broadly similar political structures ("indirect rule"), and for a certain period comprised a political federation. Towards the end of the 1960s their state political and ideological orientations began to sharply diverge and the late 1970s saw them embroiled in serious disputes and, in the case of Tanzania and Uganda, outright war. However, their reform of state structures moved in fairly similar directions. All not only became single-party or non-party regimes, but continued to allocate an extremely limited role to representative institutions, to maintain a four-tier system of government dominated by strong central and provincial authorities, and to separate representative bodies in the lower two tiers from any meaningful revenue base.

In more recent years—along with many other African countries—Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania have further shared the experience of central state contraction, or rather, of central state withdrawl from what were earlier depicted as some of its key responsibilities. The phenomenon of state contraction was most spectacular

in Uganda, where government even withdrew from the basic function of providing minimal physical security, but was also evident in Tanzania and to a lesser extent Kenya with regard to provision and maintenance of infrastructure and basic social services. Alongside this has been a significant rise in provision by non-state actors, from locally-organised private vigilante groups on the one hand to non-government organisation (NGO)-run schools and health clinics and foreign government-run water supply services on the other. Since the mid 1980s, when this crisis of state contraction gained some official recognition, there have also been efforts of varying degrees of seriousness to once more devolve greater decision-making powers to local government bodies, in some cases coupled with a devolution of certain revenue-generating powers (cf Therkildsen and Semboja (1992); Max (1991).

Political differences between the three states remain, although they no longer tend to be expressed in commitments to divergent political ideologies or development philosophies. In 1994, Uganda officially remained a "non-party" state, although political parties including a state party maintain some form of public existence there—including publishing their own newspapers. Kenya meanwhile was a multiparty democracy and Tanzania was well on the way to satisfying most criteria of being one. Nevertheless, actual conditions for popular organisation of opposition parties were hardly more advanced in Kenya and Tanzania than they were in Uganda. A more significant difference was that Uganda, after years of chaos and/or civil war, had clearly entered a period of comparative political tranquility. This followed in the wake of the victory of a popularly supported guerrilla army—the first in Africa to acquire power from an incumbent local regime. Kenya by contrast had been driven into a situation of apparently irreparable ethno-regional division, while Tanzania's traditional unity and stability was threatened by a growing wave of religious antagonism and by seperatist trends of various kinds on both Zanzibar and the mainland.

Each of these three studies addresses a different aspect of the new local-level politics, while also focusing geographically on a different country. All are based on very recent empirical work in one or more districts in these countries. Per Tidemand's Ugandan study concentrates on the politics of the new representative local state institutions which emerged during and after the triumph of the National Resistance Army (NRA) in 1986. The nature of these institutions, at village and district level, is explored with respect to degrees and forms of popular and elite participation in them and the extent to which they can be understood as genuinely promoting "empowerment" and accountability. Andrew Kiondo's Tanzania study, on the other hand, focuses on the politics of the myriad of local-level non-state institutions which have emerged there in recent years, while asking the same questions of them as does Tidemand of state ones. Finally, Karuti Kanyinga examines the phenomenon of local-level competitive party politics in Kenya, prior to 1992 looking at local-level struggles within the only legal party and during 1992–93 looking at multipartyism in a local-level context. In the process, his essay also analyses the interactions between local-level and national party politics, since inner- and intra-party struggles at local level are part and parcel national processes of constituency and coalition building and destruction.

The remainder of this introduction briefly examines four central themes emerging from the essays. These are not all stressed to the same degree in each of the authors' work, but most are present implicitly or explicitly in more than one.

**Theme 1: The nature of village-level political issues and demarcations**

The withdrawal of the Ugandan state from the provision of basic public security, increasingly evident in the late 1970s, during the early 1980s metamorphosed into an explicit state threat to the personal safety of ordinary people—particularly in the so-called Luwero Triangle, where the NRA was based. On this basis the restoration of law and order, or at least a degree of personal security, became a fundamental political issue for virtually all rural social groups and classes. Indeed, not only did the NRA recruit most of its support through a promise (backed up by some hard evidence) that it could restore law and order, but the institutionalisation of personal security remained the central issue in Ugandan village politics even seven years after the NRA victory. In fact, the reconstitution of the village as a political entity and of law and order as a social condition were virtually inseperable.

Admittedly, Uganda is unique in the extent and depth of the chaos it experienced in the decade up to 1986. However, this does not mean that law and order is not a major village-level issue elsewhere in East Africa. Certainly, recent work on Tanzania seems to indicate that directly and indirectly it is of almost equal weight in at least some areas there too. According to Masanja (1992) it was a secular deterioration in law and order in the (northwestern) Tabora and Shinyanga regions, expressed in a wave of armed cattle raiding, highway brigandry and housebreaking, which in 1982–83 provoked the formation and spread of the first major peasant movement in Tanzania since independence. Masanja furthermore shows that this movement, *Sungusungu* (literally, "men with poisoned arrows"), simultaneously represented an assertion of the *village* as a political and judicial entity—against the apparently impotent or indifferent district, provincial/regional and central state authorities. This was the unit of organisation of *Sungusungu* vigilante groups and courts, through assemblies organised independently of and with a popular leadership/set of officials and practices distinct from formal village government.

Tidemand shows however that the constitution of the village as a functioning popular political entity, in and through "security politics", at the same time tends to be an act of collective political self-assertion by one specific part of the village "community". In other words, it is one particular section of villagers who assert themselves through the institutionalisation of the village (as opposed to some other entity) as a political unit. This group of villagers are described by Tidemand as the "village establishment", and it is their conception of law and order which is subsequently enforced. The "village establishment" are essentially the better-off, established, middle-aged, ethnically indigenous male peasantry—as opposed to, for example, big landlords, capitalist farmers, landless peasants, youth (normally also landless), the non-indigenous and women. For the village establishment, which commands widespread spontaneous support within the village, "law and order" means not only restoring personal security but also effectively controlling youth, the non-indigenous and (to a lesser extent) women.

But all this also implies defending a strong degree of autonomy from central state authority, in both its local and more remote forms. Interestingly, virtually all these same traits held also for *Sungusungu* which, Masanja (op. cit.) points out, differentiated itself in important ways from spontaneous capitalist farmer

responses to the security crisis. The latter formed exclusive small clubs of their own—*Chama cha Kumi* (committees of ten)—with membership fees ten times the level of Sungusungu village "war taxes", and whose purpose was to provide financial insurance against theft and to bribe selected state officials to do their job by arresting thieves. In the Luwero Triangle, this same group basically evacuated itself to the towns during the war, having converted as much as possible of its property into movable assets.

**Theme 2: Political effects of the pluralisation of development actors**

In East Africa, from the late colonial period to the early 1980s, the rural "development arena" largely comprised a number of state or state-related institutions at district and regional level, as well as primary cooperative societies (usually based on one or a small group of villages) and, mainly in Kenya, *harambee* or self-help groups usually based on villages or groups of families/individuals within a village. Especially during the 1960s and early 1970s, some of the state institutions involved in development enjoyed a degree of local accountability through elected district-level government (the latter had disappeared both in Tanzania and Uganda by 1972, though).

As already observed, this situation has been subject to considerable modification over the last decade. The state's (including the local state's) role as a development agent has undergone serious decline. Moreover, there are few surviving regional-level joint foreign donor/local state multi-sectoral development projects still in existence. Resources fed into the development arena have shrunk considerably, but in the process the development arena has also been pluralised. Alongside the state and foreign donor projects are now found "privatised" forms of local government, large numbers of NGOs (internationally- and locally-based) and increased numbers of self-help or "community development" groups.

The heightened presence of NGOs and community development groups should not be seen simply as a popular response from "below" to the state's increasing inability to deliver "development", although there is certainly such an element to much of it. Many NGOs have simply been imported from outside East Africa; the situation is that states there have simply made more room for them than hitherto. Meanwhile, many of the internally-based initiatives which have arisen are tied up with more general economic changes, and not only the decline of state services. Two central factors here are the partial disintegration of much of the classical post-colonial pattern of rural production and exchange—as a result of falling agricultural prices, a crisis in marketing arrangements, growing relative population pressure, declining state input provision, and so on—and a parallel disintegration of the living standards of public sector administrative and professional staff. These trends have been responsible for a massive diversification of survival (and potential accumulation) activities amongst former peasant and other petit-bourgeois strata. Amongst the many activities now promising returns of some kind is organisation or even simply participation in those types of "voluntary" and/or "community" organisations which are attractive to international donors and to the local state and non-state intermediaries which they work through.

In an interesting historical discussion of Tanzania, which touches substantially on the development of rural politics, Bryceson (1990) argues that independence

witnessed a transition in the principal local-level mechanism of political constituency- and coalition-building from the institutions of the "native authority" to those of primary and union cooperative societies. In Kenya, where both local government and self-help groups had a more substantial presence, and the single state party was historically characterised by factionalism, the local-level political conjuncture was always rather more diverse and competitive. With the current multiplication of development actors, local-level political diversity and competitiveness have been generalised and accentuated throughout East Africa. This phenomenon appears to hold regardless of whether a transition to multipartyism has occurred.

As Kiondo shows, amongst the political patrons now asserting themselves one finds individuals with prominent positions in the central state seeking to reinforce or invent a local connection, as well (increasingly) as local economic elites. The latter may act individually but are more frequently found working collectively, and in concert with politicians, reconstructing local government in a "privatised" form, promoting their own "community" NGOs and/or accessing locally-based groups for external NGOs or foreign state donors. In the latter capacity they of course act in a brokerage rather than patronage role, and in the process often hire sub-brokers (often schoolteachers or other local professionals) to do the needed organisational work on their behalf.

In addition however, one nowadays also finds a revival of the patronage role of religious organisations. This was of critical importance during the colonial period, and probably the early independence one (to an extent certainly underestimated by Bryceson), but was steadily eroded in the 1970s through, for example, the nationalisation of church schools in Tanzania. Today moreover, amongst the religious organisations making the heaviest patronage investments, a significant role is being played for the first time by Christian charismatic and especially Islamic "fundamentalist" groups.

Kiondo demonstrates that as a result of these changes, district-level politics has acquired a less monolithic and increasingly fluid appearance. The population at large, to a certain extent atomised and de-classed by the economic changes which have occurred, are found in frequently rearranged constellations of constituencies. In these they may appear at one moment as clients of a particular politician and at others as "women in development", members of NGO-sponsored reafforestation schemes and religious "believers".


**Theme 3: Limitations of political patronage**

Kanyinga's essay shows the decisive importance of national connections to successful local- (in this case district-) level political patronage networks, and vice-versa. Nevertheless, it also shows that even the most powerful national connection cannot create a widespread and deep-rooted patronage network *ex nihilo.* In other words, even in a country as patronage-oriented as Kenya, political identities arise and are solidified on bases other than patronage alone—some of which are actually impervious to it.

Amongst the phenomena which have a deeply ambivalent relation to patronage is that of ethnicity. "Ethnicity" is, of course, itself only a crude shorthand for a complex of linguistic and cultural, geographical, and above all status

differentiations, themselves initially heavily influenced by processes of colonial state administration and organised labour migration. Later, competition for national resources in the independence era further over-determined ethnic identities, as intellectuals and politicians strove to form "home area" constituencies on the basis of claims to embody common traditions and shared interests. Sometimes the latter process even took place in the absence of any colonial era "ethnogenesis". For example, Kipkorir (1978) describes the invention of a "Kalenjin" ethnic identity in the late 1950s by a group of Kenyan intellectuals, all drawn from the Rift Valley but otherwise sharing in common only their marginality from the nationalist politics of the period.

Since the crystallisation of ethnic identities was so often co-terminus with organisation for claims on central state resources, and through politicians depicting themselves primarily as brokers for the local distribution of such resources, the development of ethnicity normally coincided with the development of political patronage networks. Yet what is interesting about the present period in Kenya is that, at least where previously influential ethnic groups and their historically "organic" leaderships become forcibly detached from the state by newly rising "tribes", this detachment created a sense of greivance which militated against the reincorporation of these groups, through patronage, even into a relatively prominent national political role. Kanyinga shows how, amongst the politically "dispossessed" Kikuyus of Kiambu, relatively strong injections of state patronage failed to even create, let alone consolidate, a community leadership who could accomodate the Kikuyu to a national role of subalterns to the Kalenjin.

This did not mean that state patronage found no brokers or clients in Kiambu—it certainly did. But these either retained other loyalties or were too few or uninfluential to have a serious impact. Kikuyu "ethnicity" proved in the 1992 election to be the dominant focus for popular mobilisation against state-based local patronage networks.

On the other hand, Kanyinga also demonstrates that this ethnicity was itself neither undiluted nor monolithic. Two or three distinct variants of it were evident. The first, and most diluted, to appear was a general enthusiasm for democratisation and liberty—expressed in the demand for the repeal of Section 2A of the Constitution, which prohibited the formation of opposition parties. When the latter was achieved and parties organised, the Kiambu Kikuyu divided between a party of the "respectable" bourgeois minority, run by former brokers of the old regime, and a party of the popular masses, run by one of its most inveterate opponents. In the process of sociological and political differentiation of these largely ethnically-exclusive opposition parties, class issues and sentiments played an increasing role. The "respectable" Democratic Party of Kenya appeared to enjoy the advantage of access to the traditional machinery of Kikuyu patronage and brokerage, but was defeated at the hands of the "rough" FORD-Asili which articulated a stronger anti-regime stance and appeared to possess a more uncompromising leadership. (The popular seductiveness of the latter in Zaire too has been described by Wamba-dia-Wamba (1994), who notes the attachment of the masses to Tshisekedi rather than other opposition leaders, on the grounds that he represented "the hammer to crack the stone" (i.e., Mobutu).)

**Theme 4: Questions of "civil society" and "empowerment"**

The pluralisation of formal politics and of the range of development actors in East Africa has given rise to considerable discussion about the nature and form of "civil society" in these countries, as well as to the expression of hopes about a growth in popular "empowerment". This is not the place for a rigourous interrogation of these concepts, which for purposes of this discussion will be used in their currently conventional senses—i.e., respectively, the network of citizens' organisations seperate from the state and the attainment by ordinary people of a degree of control and of rights of accountability over public institutions.

One obvious question concerning empowerment raised by these essays is that of "(em)power(ment) over what?" It is ironic that discussion of popular empowerment in Africa has become widespread only in an era when firstly there are a decreasing number of public institutions in relation to which power can be excercised by anyone, and secondly in which the power of those institutions which remain to effect any kind of outcome has become rather limited. As Kiondo and Tidemand show, a wide range of previously public institutions bearing on ordinary people's lives are now either formally or informally privatised, or have been "projectised", i.e., wholly taken over by foreign donors.

It is furthermore difficult to share the optimism evinced by certain commentators concerning "civil society"—and especially rural civil society—in East Africa. Each of the essays, but most particularly Kiondo's, indicates that while citizens' organisations seperate from the state are perhaps commoner now than at any time since the 1960s, the extent to which the overwhelming majority either promote an extension of real citizenship (all-round social and political participation) or are in an *actively* independent relation to the state is extremely limited. Most are concerned with basically economic activities, and are often little more than extensions of individual survival strategies. Moreover, they are often linked to powerful external bodies—usually (but not always) including the state—through brokers or patrons of one kind or another.
In practice, it is these patrons and brokers who tend to be "empowered" in the process, partly vis-à-vis both the state but mainly vis-à-vis rank and file members of "civil society". In the process, furthermore, an aid dependency culture is more often reproduced rather than broken.

Nobody is denying that a "civil society" of a kind emerges through these processes. However, it is largely a civil society organised around questions of resource allocation. This does not exclude patrons and brokers being occasionally held accountable, but—as Tidemand indicates—it means that this will usually occur only when they fail to deliver promised resources. There is no natural "knock-on" effect whereby the elite or the state are held accountable in wider ways, or the basic system of clientage itself comes into question.

Of course there are exceptions to this situation. Kiondo provides examples of some, namely certain small-scale people's organisations in Dar es Salaam. But undoubtedly of more far-reaching significance is the example of large-scale popular movements, such as the RCs (Resistance Councils) in Luwero. Yet, as Tidemand shows, the latter's emancipatory or "empowering" significance lay not only or even mainly in their scale but also in the fact that they adopted, or were forced to adopt, a *project for state reconstruction* in which ordinary people had

some institutionalised role. Even then, the real degree to which this broke free of inherited social relations (see Theme 1) or generated accountability at even intermediate levels of the state remained low. The real difficulty is less this though, and more the facts that such a popular movement was generated only under really extreme forms of repression, and that there seems to still be very little in the way of "state project"-oriented popular movements of a scale between those of tiny bodies such as TAMWA (Tanzania Media Women's Association) in Tanzania and the RCs in Uganda. When these have emerged, as for example during the first flowerings of the struggle for multiparty democracy in Kenya, they have proved to be short-lived and highly vulnerable to absorption by the emergent political parties (cf. Ngunyi and Gathiaka (1993).

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# New Local State Forms and "Popular Participation" in Buganda , Uganda

*Per Tidemand*

Both Tanzania and Uganda have, in the last few years, seen a restoration of a certain degree of autonomy and authority to local government—although as the result of very different sets of circumstances in each country. Alongside this there has been a rise in discourses concerning "popular participation" and its indispensability both for successful development generally and more specifically for state accountability and the empowerment of ordinary citizens. The emphasis placed on each of these different connections, and notions of appropriate vehicles for them, varies considerably according to who is articulating the discourse (whether for example it is a "radical" northern NGO or the World Bank). However, a feature surprisingly common to otherwise quite opposed versions is a citing of the new local state forms in Uganda as a case of public institutionalisation of "popular participation".

On the basis of fieldwork in two Bagandan villages, one (Namasujju) inside and one (Kamira) outside the "Luwero Triangle" (see below), this paper seeks to critically examine the emergence of the new local state forms in Uganda, particularly at village and district levels. It further attempts to identify the different degrees and forms of "participation" in these forms by local populations. Thirdly, it asks the question of the extent to which these institutions can be regarded as really representative (and of whom) on the one hand, and really effective as means of promoting state accountability and people's "empowerment" on the other. Here, "representative" is used to mean genuinely reflecting the demands and aspirations of all local people. By "promoting state accountability" is meant being really in a position to enforce these vis a vis other state institutional complexes. By "promoting people's empowerment" I mean setting off a process of steady extension of the sphere of democratic (free and equal) public discussion and decision-making. A further question concerns whether having been a guerrilla base/semi-liberated zone has made a difference with regard to any of these issues.

## The local state in Buganda prior to 1986

When the British arrived in Uganda in the late nineteenth century they were very impressed by the political formation they found in Buganda, with a King (the Kabaka) presiding over a heirarchy of tax-extracting chiefs—who also functioned as judges and as military commanders in times of war. The British decided to use and extend this system of rule and to secure its economic base. In 1900 the majority of Buganda's best arable land was designated as *mailo* land, or the private (freehold) property of the Kabaka and around a thousand of his more important chiefs, while the Bagandan peasantry became tenants. Chiefs were appointed at village (*mutongole)* level, existing chiefly councils at parish (*muluka*), sub-county (*gombolola*), county (*saza*) and kingdom *(lukiik*o) level were given official status, and efforts were made to reproduce the Bagandan system in other

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parts of the country. The village-level chiefs basically acted as the agents of the large landowners.

From the 1930s these structures were considerably modified, under the pressure of commodification. In a series of related changes, agricultural marketing boards gradually became the main instrument for peasant taxation and the British restricted the level of exactions which the chieftancy could itself impose; at the same time *mailo* land tended to be subdivided (through sale) and some chiefs at lower levels became subject to a form of selection in which non-chiefs were also involved (with "merit coupled with education" (Twaddle, 1969: 242) as the main qualification).

Towards the end of the 1940s agitation along democratic social and economic lines developed. In 1949 rioters demanded powers to elect all chiefs, a significant commoner presence in the *lukiiko*, the right to gin their own cotton and the right to engage in trade outside Buganda (Uganda Protectorate, 1950: 21). In response the colonial government passed an ordinance providing for 31 "unofficial" members to be added to the *lukiiko*, who were to be appointed by a kind of electoral college based on parish and sub-county elections (Richards, 1982a: 22). This was followed in 1951 by legislation allowing for further limited democratisation at the *muluka* level. Here, the councils were reconstituted to comprise the parish chief, his deputy, the major local landowners and the village chiefs, six co-opted members and two members who were elected by male taxpayers over 21 years old. A further extension of the electoral principle was introduced in 1955, but it is not clear whether it was ever implemented in Buganda.

In the early 1950s "modern" mass politics rapidly emerged in Buganda. It had two distinct strands. In the first place trade unions, peasant unions, political parties and demands for democratisation became established elements of political life. Secondly, Bagandan nationalism—usually expressed in monarchist and often in semi-feudal terms—was also consolidated as independence neared and a "submergence" of Buganda in Uganda or even a "Greater Kenya" seemed likely. While these strands were not completely contradictory, it seems likely that they broadly reflected movements based on landless immigrant labour from non-Bagandan ethnic groups on the one hand, and Bagandan peasants enjoying privileged access to land on the other.

The Bagandan chiefly elite remained largely in control of events, although they could not prevent elections to a National Assembly occurring in 1960, or achieve more than a federal status for Buganda in the subsequent independence constitution. But they rapidly adjusted to the new situation, forming a royalist political party (*Kabaka Yekka*) for the 1962 elections and entering into alliance with Milton Obote's northern-based Uganda People's Congress (UPC) to form Uganda's first national government. Through this alliance the Kabaka became head of state, and the Buganda Kingdom was allowed to have its own police force, courts, the right to incur public debts, and to retain a system of local government dominated by the chiefs—and in which the national political parties had little foothold.

The Kabaka/Obote alliance lasted until 1966 when the Kabaka and his party over-reached themselves through (amongst other things) new territorial claims. Obote used this as a pretext for drawing up a new constitution which basically

withdrew all Bagandan privileges. When the *lukiiko* resisted, the Kabaka's palace was attacked and after bloody battles Buganda was subdued. The price of Obote's attack was a significant ethnic polarisation in Buganda, with northern-based Abaluulu and Langi immigrants (mostly supporters of UPC) and the army on one side, *Kabaka Yekka* supporters on the other and immigrants from other ethnic groups in between (Robertson, 1978: ch. 10; Kasolo Salonga,1992).

In the wake of his victory, Obote introduced a uniform and central state-dominated system of local government all over Uganda. All councillors in Buganda were nominated by the Minister of Local Government, who could also dismiss them at will. Higher-level chiefs in Buganda were reduced to the status of those elsewhere (i.e. civil servants) and many were transferred to other parts of the country. Richards (1982b: 48) reports that up to 85 percent of chiefs in Buganda were removed in this process. Membership of UPC was a condition of appointment for their replacements. From 1966 Magistrates Courts were introduced to take over the functions of native (chiefly) courts at district, county and sub-county level. It seems unlikely that the nominated councillors or magistrates had legitimacy in Buganda however. Certainly the lower chiefs tended to remain important arbitrators at village level (Heald, 1982: 86).

Under the military dictatorship of Idi Amin (1971-79) central government power in Uganda was formally militarised and—relative to local government—extended. On the other hand, the early Amin years were characterised by a certain degree of populism, and in 1973 Uganda's first law allowing for the election of chiefs at parish, sub-county and county levels was passed (Jörgensen, 1981: 307). Chiefly elections, and their rigging and overturning, were remembered by many informants in Buganda. However, a certainly more important characteristic of the period than either of these changes was a general breakdown of central government functions (other than state security) and a collapse of the formal economy. Ironically, since the district administration's revenue base was graduated taxes and market dues rather than taxes on formal sector incomes, it survived the period largely intact—though by the end of it revenue was covering little more than salaries.

Amin's overthrow was accompanied by a settling of scores. At least some Bagandan chiefs were killed by angry villagers, but there seems to have been no general change in chiefly personnel. Local government was demilitarised and district councils revived, but the members were once again nominated rather than elected, and no steps were taken to increase central government financial support to them (Government of Uganda, 1987: 21, 93–97). The main administrative innovation of the UNLF (Ugandan National Liberation Front) regime which replaced Amin was the introduction of a Tanzanian-style Ten House Cell system (*Mayumbi Kumi*). In some places these were remembered as having performed dispute settlement functions, in others they were barely recalled at all. Formally at least however they remained in place under Obote II and Okello, as did the local chieftancy (although the chiefly personnel were subject to replacement at the start of each of these regimes).

Hence, by the mid-1980s and after almost a century of "modern" state forms in Buganda, there had been virtually no experience of local-level democratic structures. But this does not necessarily mean that Buganda witnessed no *legitimate* local-level forms of political representation. Southwold (1964: 156) described how some non-Bagandan immigrant groups in the area elected

leaderships who would try cases and act as intermediaries with the chiefs. Robertson (1978: 114) describes a similar role being played in certain eastern Bagandan villages by individual senior elders, known as *bataka*. Occupants of this role have always had more legitimacy than village-level chiefs, being more involved for example in the adjudication of farm boundaries

**Guerrilla war and the origins of the resistance councils (RCs) in Luwero**

The elections which brought Obote back to power in 1980 were regarded by almost all outside observers[1] as rigged. But while the main opposition group, the Democratic Party (DP) still took their seats in parliament, Yoweri Museveni and 26 supporters went into the bush to launch what later became the National Resistance Army (NRA). This mobilised mainly around the issuing of electoral rigging, especially in its early days. Other guerrilla "armies" were said to have also begun campaigns. Quite soon Buganda became the scene of massive state repression, centred on the "Luwero Triangle". The Triangle is the area between the Hoima and Gulu roads in the districts of Mpigi, Luwero and Mubende. The presence of guerrillas here, in some places only 20 km from Kampala, was impossible for the state to ignore. It became a killing field. Of a population of about one million, between 100,000 and 200,000 (probably nearer the latter figure) were slaughtered over the next five years.

My fieldwork indicates that the population of Luwero perceived the war as having three main stages. The first two of these were a period of initial mobilisation by the NRA and a subsequent violent counter-insurgency campaign by the state. The latter had the effect of polarising the population towards the NRA, and culminated in full-scale war. At each stage different sections of the population related to the conflict in different ways.

At village level, the NRA set out to organise an underground in Luwero through approaching certain older, mature men known to be opposed to the UPC. These were asked to provide various services to the NRA and to recruit others (mainly young people) to join NRA as fighters or act as scouts or spies. These initial contacts were essentially with what I will call the "village establishment". This normally comprised medium- and small-sized landlords and bigger peasants. The most prominent local businessmen and largest landlords tended to avoid the conflict. After a while, the village establishment's leadership seems to have become formalised through the creation of "Resistance Councils" in each village, whose officials were elected onto a committee.

A number of those who assumed leading local roles whom I managed to interview saw the fight as a continuation of the struggle from 1966 between the Kabaka (and the Baganda generally) and Obote. Furthermore it seems that the landlords amongst them had as part of their agenda a "land reform" involving the eviction of "squatters" and the re-establishment of *mailo*. But neither the restoration of the Kabakaship, nor of *mailo* was on the NRA's own agenda.[2]

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[1] With the exception of the Commonwealth Observer Group, who left almost immediately after the election and before the announcement of many of the results.

[2] Restoring the Kabakaship in a "ceremonial" role became a part of the National Resistance Movement's agenda in 1993, however.

During the counter-insurgency operations which followed, the indiscriminate and extreme violence of the government army alienated the peasantry as a whole and became a motive for many to join the NRA. Some villages identified with the NRA saw most of their populations slaughtered, while villagers who initially sought government army protection from the NRA were often themselves tortured and killed. As the NRA gained control of certain areas, it was able to offer protection to local populations from this violence. It also tried to enforce some basic "law and order", often absent since the late 1960s. NRA soldiers were not allowed to steal or rape and where local Resistance Councils were formed, these had legal control over NRA soldiers. RCs would ask for papers if individual NRA soldiers came to a village and would report misbehaviour to their camps, where the soldiers would be judged and punished. In this context, the main basis for mobilisation became simply restoration of peace and security through overthrowing the Obote government. Meanwhile the Bagandan elite simply fled the area. In the period of outright war this tended to consolidate the authority of the "village establishment".

Nonetheless, there was also a small minority giving active support to the government army. As in 1966 these included some immigrants from northern ethnic groups. But they were primarily drawn from Bagandan youth. Sections of the latter took the opportunity to use the shield of UPC Youth Wing membership to pursue private campaigns to obtain the property and women normally reserved for older age groups.

The ethnic dimension of the conflict was thus not entirely straightforward. It was further complicated by the facts that many non-Bagandan immigrant groups in Luwero (e.g. Rwandese, Burundians and Tanzanians) never supported UPC, and that many Bagandans recalled being warned of impending government army attacks by local members of northern ethnic groups. Nor, moreover, was the age dimension straightforward. Peasants in Luwero generally referred to young people who joined or worked for the NRA as *abalenzi* (boys) or *abaana* (children), rather than *abavubuka* (youths)—a term reserved for UPC Youth Wingers. This may have reflected a genuine age differentiation, but more probably relates to the fact that elders conceptualise youth as a dangerous or potentially dangerous category and exclude from it those who they actually control. The committees of the Resistance Councils which emerged in Luwero generally excluded young people, and those of them who were identified with NRA activities were often nominated rather than self-selecting. A post entitled "Secretary for Youth" was introduced to the committees during the war proper, but the initiative for it came from the NRA command.

Women participated in the NRA both as soldiers and nurses and were members of the committees, but their role was mostly confined to providing food for the guerrillas. The inclusion of women did not appear threatening to male elders in the same way as the (possible) involvement of youth, although their participation in warfare and deliberations was clearly seen as new and "unusual". Whether this led to any longer-term changes in gender relations is a different matter.

After the NRA's capture of Kampala and formation of a "National Resistance Movement" (NRM) government in January 1986, Resistance Councils were set up all over the country—initially without a legal basis. In most of the country peace and security were the important early issues, and as in Luwero many RCs established their credibility largely through being able to demonstrate control (or

at least restrictions) over the NRA, which now became the national army. Popular interest in the RCs was also stimulated by the government using them for the distribution of certain goods in short supply—especially sugar but also soap, paraffin and salt. RC committees were temporarily able to use sugar as a means of compelling villager participation in meetings, and later complained of lack of respect when they no longer controlled the sugar supply (*Munno*, 28 May 1987; 2 October 1989).

For some time after January 1986 conflict was frequent over spheres of responsibility between the RCs on the one hand and the courts, the chiefs, the district administration and the police on the other. As a result, in 1987–88 the government promulgated statutes governing the Resistance Councils and Committees, and in the process established an entirely new system of local government in Uganda. RCs at all levels were to comprise assemblies (at village level involving the whole village population) and elected nine-person committees. Essentially, village-level Resistance Councils (henceforth entitled RC1s) became officially responsible for authority over civil and criminal matters previously defined as covered by customary law[3] , while district-level Resistance Councils (henceforth entitled RC5s) were created as "real" units of elected local government, with their own budgets and staff—headed by a District Executive Secretary. However, the latter individuals were to be "supervised" by presidentially-appointed District Administrators (DAs), who were also the official political heads of districts. Provision was also made for assemblies and committees at intermediate parish (RC2), sub-county (RC3) and county (RC4) levels. RCs at any level could pass bye-laws. RC authority is most obvious at the village (RC1) and district (RC5) level and discussion will focus on these.

**The social structure of rural Buganda today**

Some parts of Buganda were very badly scarred by the war of the early 1980s, some much less so. Nakaseke town, near Namasujja (Lowero Triangle) was completely destroyed and has not been rebuilt. In the village of Namasujja itself, traditionally an area of relatively large coffee and cotton farms with an "immigrant" population of over 30 percent, the two richest farmers were killed. By contrast, Kamira (in eastern Mukono district) was left relatively untouched. However, Kamira was already quite different in other respects from Namasujja. Founded only in the mid-1950s on previously virgin land, its population is much more ethnically heterogenous than the latter's, with Bagandans comprising only 27 percent. Its commercial agriculture is also centred partly on more "modern" crops, such as pineapples. Kinship structures are less locally entrenched, and formal institutions seem to play a greater role. Kamira is covered by only one RC1; since a dispute about sugar distribution in 1986 (see above), Namasujja has been covered by two[4] .

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[3] Defined in the statutes as covering debts, contracts, assaults and/or battery, conversion of and/or damage to property, trespass, land disputes relating to customary tenure, disputes concerning marital status of women, disputes concerning paternity of children, disputes concerning identity of customary heirs, impregnating a girl under 18 years, elopement with a girl under 18 years and customary bailment. All cases are initially brought to RC1 courts, with rights of appeal to RC2, RC3 and (in some circumstances) Grade 1 Magistrates Courts.

[4] The Namasujja RC1 discussed here is actually officially called Namasujja A. It covers a part of the old village and was created, as a result of the dispute referred to, in 1986.

Originally there were some 3,700 *mailo* land owners in Buganda. By the mid-1950s it was variously estimated that sub-division by sale had increased this number to between 20,000 and 55,000 (Fallers 1964: 144; Mukwaya 1953: 30). Alongside this development it seems likely that stratification amongst tenants increased. However, the situation probably varied considerably from one part of Buganda to another. Writing in 1984 about Kitende (a village on the Kampala-Entebbe road) Mamdani argued that relative to differentiation between landlords and peasants, inter-peasant differentiation in Buganda was still not significant. Even "rich" peasants in Kitende occupied only 2.2 acres on average (Mamdani, 1984). However in both Luwero and the area around Kamira the situation seems to be that a non-landlord capitalist class had emerged by the 1980s.

People in the two villages were quite clear about who was (or had been) "rich" and "poor". In Namasujja (Luwero) two (male) large landowners, two widows, and a few businessmen were considered rich. Distribution of land was very unequal; 32 percent of households owned less than an acre or no land at all, and most of them borrowed or rented land instead (typically an acre). On the other hand, 25 percent owned 10 acres or above. 30 percent of households hired labour, although neither in Namasujja or Kamira did this seem to still be a critical indicator of differentiation[5]. Yet the severity of the war in Luwero meant that in some respects Namasujja's class structure had become "dormant". The two richest men had been killed and their farms, each with some 100 dairy cattle and many wage labourers, were completely destroyed. The largest landowner in the village (who claimed to own 177 acres) meanwhile lived in a small mud hut and was almost permanently drunk, surviving only through constantly selling off small parcels of land. In Kamira the land ownership situation was more polarised. 49 percent owned an acre or less and a further 36 percent were landless, while only 5 percent owned 10 acres or more. A few genuinely capitalist farmers were again present. One owned around 50 acres and employed 10 labourers, producing matooke, coffee and pineapple.

Although the gender division of labour in Buganda does not differ in major ways from elsewhere in east Africa, women have been able to inherit, own, purchase and rent land since the introduction of freehold. Women land owners, known as *banakyeombekedde* are economically independent and are free to marry or take lovers. Survey data from the two villages show around one fifth of households in each were female-headed, a figure which corresponds to findings from the 1950s by Southwold (cited in Obbo 1981, 89). Bagandan women also have rights to demand divorce and maintain separate savings. Certain of these rights appeared to be also exercised by non-Bagandan women living in Baganda. No significant difference existed between the average size of land holdings by women and male household heads.

In Namasujja (Luwero) all the big farmers were Bagandan, while in Kamira four out of five were. There was a concentration of landlessness amongst non-Bagandans, especially Banyarwanda (those originating from Rwanda and Barundi (those originating from Burundi). Despite making efforts to assimilate, including in some cases buying small plots of land, the latter were generally

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[5] Since the 1970s political and economic instability have made labour migration to Buganda problematic, and labour hiring has tended to become partly displaced by other accumulation strategies. Some wealthy households now manage without hired labour if their household labour is sufficient. On the other hand, as before, some labour-poor households who are worse off have to hire labour in.

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regarded by Bagandans as inferior, if servile and unthreatening. Whereas Banyarwanda and Barundi immigrants had traditionally migrated to Buganda as wage labourers, those from northern Uganda mainly came to rent land for one or two years in order to grow cotton. They also retained a higher degree of political autonomy, and were regarded locally as "difficult". Some settled permanently in Buganda, especially in the Luwero Triangle.

A final aspect of social structure worth drawing attention to is that of religion. Religion has been a factor in post-independence politics in Uganda. Baganda is normally identified as a protestant area. On the other hand, the principal opposition party in Uganda's two Obote regimes, the mainly catholic Democratic Party, has traditionally attracted Bagandan votes (in sharp contrast to the UPC). Village surveys in Namasujja and Kamira showed protestants to be the largest group in both, 50 percent in the former and 45 percent in the latter. However the catholic minority in both areas was substantial—45 percent in Namasujja and 31 percent in Kamira. Kamira also had a significant muslim population (22 percent of the total). Most Bagandans were indeed protestant, and most Banyarwanda and Barundi (and Tanzanians) catholic, but there were plenty of exceptions.


**Degrees and forms of participation in the RCs**

*The RC1s*

In Namasujja and Kamira I asked samples of the populations about voting in the 1992 RC elections and attendance at RC meetings on the one hand, and about their knowledge of members of RC committees at various levels on the other. In Namasujju (Lowero) 82 percent participated in the election of the RC1 committee and 50 percent participated in the last RC1 assembly meeting. The corresponding figures for Kamira were 62 percent and 42 percent. 96 percent in Namasujju and 78 percent in Kamira knew the name of the RC1 chairman; only 18 percent in each knew the name of the RC5 chairman. 24 percent in Namasujja and 30 percent in Kamira knew the name of at least two district (RC5) councillors. Knowledge of the names of chairmen of RC2s and RC3s was in between those of RC1s and RC5s. In neither village did participation in the sense of voting or attendance at meetings have any significant relation to class position. But knowledge of the names of officials of RCs operating at levels higher than RC1s was differentially distributed by class: knowledge displayed by the landless was below average and that of big farmers above.

The RC1 committees themselves tended to be numerically dominated by the small and middle peasantry, i.e. those owning between one and twenty acres. Candidates' presentation of themselves shortly before the 1992 elections tended to emphasise their settled and stable character. Long-term residence, marriage, "maturity" and land ownership itself were important both to them and to the electorate. By contrast those who were *abasuze* (not permanently settled) or *omupakasi* (landless labourers) had little chance of election.

The exclusion of the unmarried, "immature", landless etc. from committee membership was of course an exclusion of "youth". Although those under 35 years comprised over 60 percent of all adult males in the two villages, and although they would usually be better educated than a *ssemaka* (one with a

permanent home) they were not expected to behave responsibly and would definitely not be given leadership responsibilities.

Although the emergence of RCs had for the first time given women in Buganda the opportunity to participate in politics, my survey showed that in practice their participation was at a far lower level than men's. Only 55 percent of women voted in Namasujju and 43 percent in Kamira. Moreover, levels of awareness of RC officials at various levels was generally only about half of that of men. Those women who did participate politically were overwhelmingly Bagandan.

Amongst men on the other hand, there appeared to be no substantial correlation in either village between ethnicity and levels of participation, either in RC1 elections or in knowledge about RCs. Nevertheless the ethnic composition of the two RC1 committees varied considerably in these terms. In Namasujju (Luwero) the RC1 committee was entirely Bagandan. In Kamira, although Bagandans were also the largest ethnic group, there were only two Bagandans elected onto the nine-person committee. But no Banyarwandia, Barundi or Tanzanian was elected here either. It appears that in many parts of the country those designated ethnically as Banyarwanda, Barundi or Tanzanian were simply not allowed to stand, irrespective of whether they would have qualified for Ugandan citizenship[6] . The distinction between Rwandian citizens and Ugandan citizens of Banyarwandian, Barundian or Tanzanian origin seems to be unknown in these areas anyway. Nobody has a passport and the *omusolo* (tax ticket) is the only form of official personal identification.

*RC5s*

RC committee members at levels higher than RC1 are elected not directly, but by a series of electoral colleges made up of committee members from the next lower tier of the system. In this process the social composition of RC activists was also filtered, and became increasingly exclusive (see also Burkey, 1991). While elected RC1 committee members were virtually all peasant farmers, those of (parish-level) RC2s and (sub-county level) RC3s were mostly better-educated and/or richer peasants, teachers or businessmen. The (district) RC5 councils—or at least those superior to the RC1s in Namasujju and Kamira (Luwero and Mukono respectively) were actually dominated by members of the professional classes. Many members had University degrees, sometimes from British or American universities and many had "professional" political experience, having for example stood for one of the political parties in the 1980 elections. The Democratic Party claimed in 1989 that the entire RC5 committee just elected in Luwero had stood on DP tickets at earlier elections. But many had also actively participated during the guerrilla war as NRA activists, and the Luwero RC5 recommended a continuation of the ban on formal party political activity in Uganda.

In all but the most minimal form, campaigning is not allowed for RC5 elections. This makes it difficult for candidates to do any more than expand on their personal qualities to the electorate, and reciprocally for the electorate to do much more than debate the candidates in these same terms. Hence candidates list their higher degrees and "top management experience" in banks, parastatals,

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[6] Of 30,000 Banyarwanda recorded as resident in Luwero in the 1991 Census, 24,000 were described as citizens (presumably on the basis of place of birth).

transnational companies, etc. while the voters discuss whether the candidate is "approachable" or, for example, "just a briefcase"—i.e. a person who will be always away from the district doing his own business.

The notion of "approachability" tended to designate two separate qualities. One was social and referred to the candidate's physical availability. The other was economic, and referred to his wherewithal for acting as a patron. Hence it would be emphasised that a candidate had given such and such an amount of land to women or youths for a project, or was employing local people on his farm.

## RC "representativeness"

The issue of "representativeness" will be examined here in terms of the extent to which RC practices and decisions appear to correspond to politico-ideological stances amongst the populations they serve, and insofar as these are differentiated, to *which particular groups* within these populations. What is therefore partly at issue is the extent to which RCs embody a kind of "organic" and legitimate authority, absent from earlier local state forms in Uganda but perhaps comparable to that described above as having previously been attached at village level to the *bataka*. But alongside this there is also the issue of whether such an authority is closer to the interests and outlooks of some sections of the electorate than others. An exploration of these issues at village level will be conducted by an examination of the social control/law and order functions of RC1s—which incidentally are the main functions which they perform. At district level, RC5 taxation policies will be discussed.

*RC1s and law and order*

The regulative functions of RC1s are several. One is regulating strangers, undertaken by requiring all visitors to register with the RC1 chairman. More important is the general social regulation of subordinate or deviant groups, and moderating disputes of different kinds.

An RC committee member once explained to me how he saw political "progress":

> First a man has to learn how to handle his family. Without order in the home you cannot interfere in village disputes. Then, when the village is well-managed, you can start to discuss political affairs at parish level, (and so on)...

In many ways the general socially regulative functions of RC1s can be perceived as extensions of the social order established in the household, that is of control by male elders over youths and women. Indeed, a large part of RC1 activities appeared to be taken up by efforts to regulate youth. In both Namasujju and Kamira, all youths were obliged by bye-law to "have some project". This was reflected, for example, in minimum acreage regulations. It was also normal for RC1s to pass bye-laws restricting drinking hours and prohibiting card-playing. The RC1 in Kamira went further and withheld permission for "youths" to sell their land, if they considered that the proceeds would be frittered away. Usually such decisions were justified in terms of a claim that the breakdown of "traditional" (Kabaka-led) and "modern" state structures in Buganda had inclined youth to even greater hooliganism and irresponsibility than was usually the case.

Regulation of the behaviour of unmarried women was also a concern of RC1s, though a far less prominent one. Referring to *banakyeombekedde*e (see above), Kamira's RC1 ruled that:

> ...women who are not officially married but involved in love affairs with men should introduce their partners to the committee and should not have more than one man at a time. When they separate they should also inform the committee, to avoid insecurity.

Such rulings however seem unusual. Unlike the case of youth, regulation of women still occurs primarily directly through the household and/or through elders and clan leaders.

RC1s were also involved in enforcing dominant community norms in other respects. One was dealing with witchcraft accusations. Four such cases were heard in Kamira in 1991-92. As a result, two men and two women whose behaviour was considered to seriously depart from what was commonly acceptable were expelled from the village. In Kamira the RC also enforced community norms regarding funeral arrangements. These included each household being taxed Ush 100 (USD 0.07) for each funeral, which is passed on to the bereaved, males helping to dig the grave and females to assist with cooking for the wake. The *mutaka* and his assistant collected the money but relied on sanctions by the RC1.

RC1 judicial functions share continuity with those which have always been carried out *de facto* at village level. They are also contiguous with these in other respects—few if any technical terms or rules are used, cases are conducted in the local language, and people represent themselves[7] . The sentences meted out are generally of what Durkheim called a "restitutive" kind.

Little is known of the content of local-level judicial decisions prior to the formation of RC1 courts, but the latter's have a certain "popular" content. "Common sense" prevails when it clashes with customary, religious or modern law, particularly in cases of custody and inheritance. Tenants as opposed to landlords appear to be favoured too, at least in cases where the latter try to use an absence of written contracts to justify an eviction. In land disputes, a general pattern is clear whereby tenants bring cases to RC1s and landlords bring them to the "modern" Magistrates Court.

Given Uganda's recent history, equally important is their insistence on following legal procedures as such, rather than conceding to pressures for mob justice. The latter, which became prevalent in many areas of Uganda after about 1970, in any case usually had a populist as opposed to popular content: violence was primarily directed at "foreigners" of various kinds(cf. Obbo, 1988: 211–12).

RC1 courts are by no means entirely popular, or even always proficient. Members' education is sometimes inadequate for carrying out a basic judicial role, and the lack of any other way of meeting court expenses sometimes makes the levels of fines arbitrarily high. Nor do villagers believe that their powers

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[7] Costs of bringing a case under the previous judicial system are not clear. But the RC1 courts are generally affordable. The registration fee for a RC1 court case is Ush 500 (USD 0.66), for a RC2 case Ush 1,000 and for a RC3 case Ush 3,000.

should be systematically extended, since it is recognised that they probably cannot do justice in cases of very serious crime (e.g. murder).

Moreover, the nature of RC1 courts' "popular" character is limited insofar as it generally corresponds to articulating the particular version of the "local interest" embraced by the "village establishment". As seen already, it was this group which formed the bedrock of wartime local support for the NRA, and which afterwards took over the RC1s. Within this version of the "local interest", women and especially youths are seen as having few entitlements.

*RC5s and taxation*

Historically, district-level local government in Uganda has been responsible for the provision of education, health, water and feeder roads—to mention only the most important services. Generally, the bulk of their finance came through central government grants. As is well-known, these services began to collapse from around 1973 and practically disappeared by 1986. A severe decline in real levels of central finance to local government played a major role in this process, although obviously other factors were also important. There has been little change in real levels of central support to local government since 1986. As a result the situation in Uganda (and not just in Uganda) remains that whereas virtually all local government finance is mobilised locally, providing local taxation levels are not raised this will always be grossly inadequate to meet even the running costs of most services. As it is, districts just about manage to collect enough revenue to pay staff a nominal salary but not enough to maintain or develop services. Furthermore, a large part of staff time and even expenditure is dedicated to revenue collection. Thus in Mukono district no less than 55 percent of the 1990 budget was spent on tax collection and tax administration.

In rural areas, the mass of the population are taxed in a variety of ways. Firstly, they contribute to central government revenue through sales taxes. Secondly, they pay fees, legal or illegal, for various services which in the past were provided free. The largest of the legally-levied fees are in the education sector and in the study area amounted to about Ush 100,000 (USD 136) per annum for each child at secondary school and Ush 10,000 (USD 14) per annum—plus uniform, personal equipment, etc.—for each child at primary school. Technically illegal fees must be paid for consultations with (e.g.) underpaid health assistants. Thirdly, peasants pay a Graduated Tax to the district council. Compared with the cost of school fees, this is low—usually not more than Ush 5,000 (USD 7) per annum. But even so it is a matter of contention.

The Graduated Tax is graduated only in name. In reality it is highly regressive. The vast majority of households pay between Ush 3,000 and 6,000 (USD 4 and 8). In the study area the ceiling seemed to be around Ush 10,000 (USD 14), while virtually nobody—including the large landowners—paid more than Ush 9,000 (USD 12).

In general, the graduated tax assessment seems to have been more progressive in Luwero district than in Mukono, as have been proposals to revise it. In Mukono a more progressive dispensation was discussed in 1990, but in May 1991 the Council proposed abolishing the graduated tax completely in favour of a poll tax (on grounds of greater administrative simplicity). This followed a tax rebellion which covered many areas of Buganda, but seems to have been more serious in

Mukono than Luwero. The rebellion appears to have been led by RC2 and RC3 members, and directed against efforts by many RC5s to increase the burden of graduated tax on better-off peasants (RC2 and RC3 members are themselves mainly better-off peasants). Following the rebellion in Luwero, by contrast, a decision was actually made to introduce a specific tax on larger farms, as well as to levy ground rents, and fees from (amongst others) ranchers, coffee processors, maize millers and timber harvesters and dealers [8].

Although the introduction of a more progressive form of taxation was the occasion of the rebellion, it is likely that its real cause was the failure of RC5s to show that they were employing taxpayers' money with any visibly useful effect. Correspondingly, its severity in Mukono probably reflected the particularly poor record of the the local council in this respect. Indeed, it is clear that peasant resistance to the Graduated Tax is not a resistance to taxation as such. There is little resistance to the "fees", legal and illegal, already described. Nor is there to taxes occasionally collected for "projects" at sub-county (RC3) level. In both cases the taxpayer can much more visibly monitor the use of funds than at RC5 level, though.

While approving a poll tax, Mukono district council thus had to make a concession of a different order to its critics. This took the form of allocating 20 percent of total revenue collected to the RC3s in the district.

Meanwhile, wider questions about the structure of the taxation are not asked—even in Luwero. There is general agreement—and not just at RC5 level—that there is little potential for increasing district-level taxation to the level where decent services could be provided. Yet, as Mamdani (1991) has argued, overall taxation in Uganda runs at only a fraction of that in neighboring countries and the really well-off (including the really well-off in rural areas) pay only token amounts or nothing at all. It seems likely that a lot of the RC5/district councillors themselves fall into this category.

Though there are some important inter-district variations, the popular "representativeness" of RC5 councillors is hence much more negative and mediated than that of RC1 councillors. RC5 councillors are able to "represent" the unwillingness of ordinary people to pay more for district councils, but only after a struggle. Generally they do not reflect popular aspirations for decent social provision. The latter instead has to be supplied privately, semi-privately or through structures at levels between RC1 and RC5, and at considerable cost to individual peasant households. This cannot be separated from the fact that the RC5s are themselves drawn from the rurally-based elite, the taxation of whose incomes constitutes the only plausible revenue base for a significant improvement in local-level public provision.


**Holding the central state accountable**

As already noted, the RC system exists alongside a central state system in rural Uganda. The division of labour between them is not particularly well defined. This is true at all levels—in the villages in 1992 there were still government-

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[8] At the time of my last fieldwork visit, in November 1992, these decisions were still awaiting approval from the Ministry of Local Government.

appointed chiefs alongside the RC1s, at sub-county (RC3) level there were state-appointed magistrates, police and another layer of the chieftancy, while at RC5 level were found the District Administrator (DA) and various civil servants.

*Lower-level RCs and the chieftancy*

It seems that the real authority of village level chiefs has never been especially strong in Buganda, even during the phase in which they represented the Kabaka. As already observed, senior village elders or *bataka* seem to have played a more authoritative role—at least since the 1950s. Since the emergence of RC1s the power of village chiefs has become even more attenuated. A survey of villagers in Namasujju (Luwero) and Kamira indicated that only four percent of persons in each village considered the chief to be amongst the two most important people in their village. Insofar as they have been by-passed, chiefs are hence politically impotent and there is no real sense in which they *need* to be held accountable. A more logical trend (already proposed in some quarters) is that they are simply abolished.

In Namasujju the senior elder or *mutaka* still has very considerable significance, but he is not a state official. In effect he is rather an ex-officio member of the RC1, brought into play when land disputes are to be settled. In Kamira meanwhile, while the office of *mutaka* persists, its significance seems to have been also downgraded, and certain of its duties (such as supervising the collection of the "funeral tax") have been transferred to the RC1.

The higher chiefs remain state officials and retain a role, but this too is increasingly overlapping or becoming merged with senior posts on RC2 or RC3 committees. The parish *(muluka)* chief in Kamira became the RC2 chairman, while the reverse happened in Namasujja. In both cases chiefs thus became subject to election. Indeed, chiefs are no longer considered by ordinary people to form a distinct class from "commoners" *(bakopi)*. Rather, chiefs are now regarded as part of a broader social category which is commonly referred to as *ssemaka*, which connotes property ownership, being "properly settled" and being decent citizens.

*The RC5s and the district administration*

Problems of holding the central state accountable at district/RC5 level concern not only the unclear nature of the respective responsibilities of RC5s and representatives of the central state, but also the very considerable reluctance of central government staff to accept the authority of elected politicians. In the first place, far from being able to hold central government employees accountable, RC5s have experienced difficulty in carrying out some of their statutory local government functions due to the latter's interference. While the RC5 is responsible for the "formulation and review of development plans" for the district, a quite separate District Development Committee made up of professional staff is charged with the "preparation, evaluation, monitoring and implementation of the plans of the district" (Government of Uganda, 1987b: paras 7b and 25a). This is the occasion for many conflicts, for often the DA and the professional staff simply fail to recognise that plans emanating from the RCs could have any validity. In September 1992 a meeting of DAs expressed concern that further decentralisation of power in Uganda was undesirable since "some RC5 councillors are not competent enough to handle the district administration" (*Weekly Topic*: September 4, 1992). Sometimes such sentiments are expressed in

brazenly class terms. In October 1992 I attended the annual meeting of the Ministry of Local Government, where the respective roles of RCs and central government staff were discussed. At this event, the presenter of the conclusions of the syndicate group on district staff development, a civil servant, argued publicly that :

> now there is a heavy responsibility on the politicians. Civil servants transferred to the districts have (in future) to be of high quality. This should therefore also apply to politicians. If he is a peasant he can't be accepted by officials.

This observation was greeted with loud applause and was also repeated several times by other participants.

When RC5s attempt to explicitly raise more general issues of accountability, and thereby fulfil what is supposed to be part of their central role of "watch dogs" in relation to civil servants who may abuse their powers, the problems can be equally severe. The significance of this role has been repeatedly stressed by President Museveni and was incorporated in the NRM's 1986 Ten Point Programme, but as Ddungu (1989) has noted the only mechanism provided for it is that of reporting cases of abuse to the very same civil servants. Sacking unpopular civil servants is clearly beyond the legal powers of RC5s. However, in some areas (for example, Mbale town (Ddungu, op. cit.: 28)) RC5s have managed to resolutely confront corrupt individuals and have forced them to resign.

*General observations*

At all levels, rather than having generally enforced state accountability, the achievements of RCs are perhaps better characterised as having consolidated a certain local-level political space for themselves. Partly this space exists because the material ability of the central state to dominate has become so attenuated. The process of formation of RCs on a national scale illustrates this very well. One DA (then called a "Special District Administrator") with no more than five to ten cadres would have had responsibility for some 1000 to 2000 villages. He or she would not even have a list of these. Only at the lower administrative levels were there officials (chiefs) with even the simplest information like village names and rough estimates of their population. Even today a typical sub-county with some 35,000 inhabitants will share one magistrate with two or three other sub-counties. One NRM cadre will be responsible for perhaps 10 sub-counties. The chiefs and local defence force are almost entirely pre-occupied with tax assessments, tax collection and arrest of tax defaulters. If there is a police post its main task will be the protection of a bank. None of the staff at sub-county level will have any transport. Even in Kampala the police can often not conduct investigations as a result of lack of fuel. In any case a magistrate earns only Ush 15,000 (USD 20) per month, enough to purchase only 12 days' worth of matooke, and must hence find other work.

On the other hand it is also clear that the spaces which RCs have come to occupy are guarded jealously by ordinary people. For example, a magistrate told me:

> ...the ordinary people, when you stay near them, they are (now) even jealous when we speak English. They say 'these people are the ones who went to school, but see, the powers have been given to us, the RCs. Who are you to ask ? We can also now judge cases. Why did you go to school? You used to be proud that you read law, but now?'. There is that tendency.

Both the absence of any alternative and the apparent increasing self-confidence of some RCs means that the central state can probably now no longer run the country without some kind of consent from them, just as the RC5s are dependent on the consent of lower-level RCs for tax collection and other purposes. If nothing else, this clearly acts as a brake on coercive and extractive tendencies within the state.

**The RCs and "empowerment"**

At the outset of this paper I defined the promotion of people's "empowerment" in terms of the extension of the sphere of democratic (free and equal) public discussion and decision making. This has a very wide range of possible dimensions. One concerns the extent to which *all* people become involved in public discussion and decision-making. Who precisely is incorporated in the RC system, to what extent, and at which levels, has already been discussed and will not be returned to here. Rather, the relation of the RC system to three other aspects of empowerment will be examined. In each case the prognosis is not especially encouraging.

The first of these is a kind of "lateral" empowerment. To what extent has the emergence and apparent consolidation of RCs led to local people taking a leading role in discussion and decisions about the full range of state functions traditionally located at the local level?

Local leadership in the sphere of law and order has already been described, as has the constrained and internally conflictual nature of local leadership in the field of taxation. It is also clear that certain local common resources (wells, local roads, etc.) previously maintained by forced labour organised by the chiefs are now being maintained by RCs on a voluntary basis. But there are meanwhile broad areas of collective provision whose closure to democratic participation has been reinforced, not through a refusal of the central state to let go of them but rather through their alienation by the central state to other actors.

Two different tendencies can be detected in this regard. The first is what Philip Amis (1992) has called the "projectisation" of public provision. Through this, central and district level government have virtually ceded control over whole service sectors—not to mention large numbers of staff—to foreign donors. DANIDA, for example, has become responsible for the development of basic water and sanitation services for Mukono and six other districts. The local budget for this project is USD 40m over ten years. For Mukono alone the annual local budget is USD 0.7m or Ush 514m. This is equivalent to well over half Mukono's entire annual budget and around 250 times its annual budget for water services. Meanwhile workers attached to the project earn triple their basic salary in additional allowances, paid for everything from attending meetings to driving project vehicles.

The other tendency is that of privatisation, or rather, creeping privatisation of public provision. As noted, peasants increasingly have to pay for both materials and salaries in the delivery of basic social services, as well as for repairs to infrastructure, boreholes, etc. In some cases these services are privately provided in a formal way. For example, over 4,000 or 50 percent of Uganda's primary

schools are established on the basis of private funds—largely parental contributions. Government contributions to the running costs of private education correspond to about 10 percent of total costs. Although parent—teacher associations are the main mechanisms for raising the balance, they seem to have little input to decisions about the form or content of the education provided.

A second aspect of "empowerment" which will be examined is that of the extent to which RCs are able to expand the frontiers of discussion and decision-making beyond the realm of purely "local government issues", that is the extent to which they are able to articulate broader claims about general interests and citizenship. Naturally, this is partly a matter of their own social character. But their relation to the central state is also relevant, for the latter may give space for such debate or may seek to restrict it.

From mid-1990 a conflict broke out between the RC5 Chairman in Mukono and the state-appointed DA. This eventually required the intervention of all the local MPs, the NRM National Secretariat and two Ministers, including the Minister for Local Government. The conflict was partly one of personalities, partly one of leadership styles, and partly one over how "political" RC5s could be. The DA is the "political head of the district", charged with "providing political direction" in the area (Government of Uganda, 1987b: para 20(1). The RC5, by contrast, is meant to be the (present) pinnacle of a system of popular government, which also implies the articulation of a certain "political direction". At the heart of this contradiction is a profound ambiguity in the ideology of the NRM and the president himself. On the one hand, general statements are made such as "You, the RCs, are the Government" and "RCs have the power", while on the other the NRM and the president often refer to the "backwardness of the people" in order to justify direct intervention by the National Secretariat or the President in RC affairs.

Behind part of the conflict in Mukono lay the RC5/District Council's efforts to contribute to the debate on a new constitution. The RC5 was basically sympathetic to other voices within Buganda which were calling for a restoration of the Kabakaship (albeit in a ceremonial role), a confirmation of the *mailo* system of land tenure, a restoration of federalism at a national level, the restoration of multiparty politics, and installing Luganda as the national language (Mukono District Council minute book: extraordinary meeting of Mukono District RCs on Constitutional Proposals, June 21, 1991). In order to neutralise the RC5, the DA in Mukono mobilised women's and youth groups to issue public statements backing the NRM, particularly on the question of multipartyism (see e.g. *Weekly Topic*: September 11, 1992).

Elsewhere DAs intervened more sharply still. In August 1992 the DA in Mubende told the local RC5 chair to resign since he was "consistently criticising the NRM government" (*New Vision*, August 16, 1992). In the 1992 RC elections the Minister of Local Government barred a candidate in Mpigi from contesting at RC3 level, after he had quarrelled with the DA[9] . A year later *New Vision* (August 24, 1993) ran a story suggesting that the DA in Butime had suspended two RCs he suspected of opposing his own candidate for the Constituent Assembly.

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[9] The Minister later accepted that he had made an error.

A final aspect of empowerment concerns the nature of the public discussion which is generated around the mandates leading RC politicians ask for and receive from their own constituencies. Does the content of these mandates increasingly reflect a tendency to make demands on leaders to pursue broad democratic issues , or are they pre-eminently "parochial" ? The answer to this question has already largely been supplied. Since at least 1980, and probably long before, there has been a popular base in Buganda for politicians willing to articulate a "restorationist" platform of the type advocated by Mukono RC5. Although not all RCs in Buganda articulate it, it is not clear that there is a basis for any alternative national political platform. Within a general local consensus which identifies broad democracy with such platforms, there is also a general idea that the role of RC leaders—and RCs themselves for that matter—is "delivering the goods" to the local population, that is, obtaining their "just" or "rightful" local share of the national cake. Politicians who cannot or will not act as brokers have little chance of election.

Given the general sensitivity of the "Bagandan agenda" in national politics, not to mention NRM's own ambivalent relation to it, it is hardly surprising that official expectations of politicians as they are expressed by the NRM and in the movement's newspaper, *New Vision*, also emphasise their patronage role at the expense of all others. Better patronage politics, than a "backward" ethno-regional agenda whose trajectory would be difficult to control.


**Liberated zones as explanatory variables**

At various points in this paper contrasts have been drawn between events in Namasujja RC1 and Luwero RC5 on the one hand and Kamira RC1 and Mukono RC5 on the other. The former were deep in Buganda's "liberated zone", the latter were outside it.

Summing up these contrasts, the RCs based in the "liberated" Luwero Triangle had somewhat higher rates of political participation, more progressive tax regimes, a less conflictual relation with their "political commissar", and a less "restorationist" set of national-constitutional policies than those examined outside the Triangle. Somewhat paradoxically in view of the last point, they were also more ethnically homogeneous. Yet this list of differences is perhaps shorter than one would be which listed all the things the RCs in the two areas shared in common. Both had similar social compositions, a similar pattern of day to day activity informed by practically identical ideologies, similar inter-relations between higher and lower levels, and so on. Moreover, most of the differences which existed (e.g. on taxation), were not fundamental or absolute ones.

There is also a problem in trying to identify which precise factor or factors in the experience of being in a "liberated zone" may have had a (progressively) radicalising influence. The NRA did not try to overturn local property or power relations in the liberated areas—on the contrary, they propped them up and developed them, or at least their informal expressions. "Liberation" was popularly understood as law and order, with strongly "traditional" overtones. Insofar as people's power was strengthened in Luwero in a way which did not happen outside the Triangle, it was the power and self-confidence of the "village establishment" which was reinforced. The issue clearly requires further investigation.

## The RCs and "popular participation"

While most outside observers have seen the RCs as unambiguous vehicles of the extension of popular participation, in Uganda a debate has been in progress since their inception, in which they are variously characterised as "bureaucratic, democratic or sectarian" (Mamdani, 1988). According to the "sectarian" view, they represent no more and no less than a stratagem whereby Museveni can hang onto power without submitting himself to "genuine" (i.e., multiparty) elections. According to the "bureaucratic" view, power is essentially vested not in the RCs at all, but with the DAs, while the RCs succeed the *mayumba kumi* in playing a repressive security role. Characterisation of them as "democratic" or popular is not common in the internal mass media, where the "sectarian" argument prevails.

However, perhaps this tells us more about the internal mass media than it does about the RCs. The research described here certainly does not support the "sectarian" view. Many old UPC and DP politicians participated in the 1989 and 1992 RC elections and many were elected at all levels, including parliament. Moreover, there is little doubt that all the RCs examined here enjoyed considerable legitimacy.

The issues of "popular participation" and/or "people's power" are much more difficult to sum up. To a certain extent, and particularly at the lowest level, RCs are indisputably people's organisations. But not all people have an equal say in them, and they are only partly expansive of the rights of even those sections of the people whom they represent. Furthermore, the power they enjoy depends to a large extent on the very limited capacity of the central state to intervene with regard to them. At higher levels they represent a much narrower stratum, are probably less expansive of people's rights, and also confront much stronger obstacles to exercising power meaningfully. Having said this, they represent a historic landmark in the development of local-level democracy in Uganda, and probably in east Africa generally.

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# The New Politics of Local Development in Tanzania

*Andrew S.Z. Kiondo*

If the 1980s and early 90s have generally been a "lost decade" in Africa as far as development has been concerned, they have nevertheless witnessed a series of important economic and political developments. One of the most dramatic of these has been the related growth of formally organised community development activity (CDA) on the one hand and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on the other[1]. By and large, this development has been the subject of celebration—and occasionally condemnation—by scholars, but rarely serious empirical and analytical investigation. This essay describes some preliminary findings of a research project in Tanzania which attempts to come to grips with the extent and nature of the changes which have occurred in the local-level development space as a result of the recent expansion of CDA and NGOs.

## The background

By 1993 there were 224 NGOs registered in Tanzania (*Business Times*, 14 May 1993). In 1990 there had been only 163—roughly two-thirds of which had themselves been formed since 1980, however. In 1992 there were also 21 NGOs registered in Zanzibar, including 10 registered since 1990. Beside this, there were probably in the region of 800–1,000 District Development Trusts, Tanzanian versions of "hometown associations", roughly 40 percent of which had been formed since 1986. Furthermore, there were large but unknown numbers of registered and unregistered CDAs. Lastly, there were a whole host of women's informal rotating savings societies (*upatu*). Half of all self-employed women interviewed by Tripp in 1987–88 in two poor areas of Dar es Salaam were members of at least one such society (Tripp, 1992).

In an essay published in 1993 (Kiondo, 1993) I indicated some of the main elements of the background of this expansion, and also suggested a framework for examining certain aspects of it. Except probably in the case of *upatu*, this situation was a dramatic turnaround from that of the late 1970s in Tanzania. Although the era leading up to independence was one in which there was a brief flourishing of independent trade unions, parents' associations, and youth organisations, and although cooperatives and urban ethnic associations (of which there were 51 in Dar es Salaam by 1954 (Tripp, ibid: 224)) were well-established much earlier, independence saw a suppression of voluntary organisations and activities of all kinds. From 1964 until the early 1980s Tanzania was the site of one of Africa's furthest-going forms of statism, that is, of systematic efforts by the state to penetrate/dissolve civil society and remould it in the image of the state itself. In this process voluntary associations were either suppressed or

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[1] The term "NGO" refers here to organisations registered with national government authorities and usually operating in more than one basic administrative division. CDA groups are organisations registered with district authorities and not organised outside the district. District Development Trusts (see below) are a kind of hybrid of these two forms.

incorporated within the state and given a new role as monopolistic regulative agencies. Within the latter the (single) party—first TANU (Tanganyika African National Union), then CCM (Chama cha Mapinduzi) played a leading role, leaders were selected by the state, and membership often became compulsory or at least strongly "encouraged".

Despite its obviously undemocratic features, this state form won strong approval from donors—especially those keen on promoting a "third way" between communism and free market capitalism. This was largely because the lack of democracy was accompanied by a distributivist and welfarist economic development model, with heavy emphasis upon investment in education and health, as well as on the restriction of social differentiation.

From the second half of the 1970s onwards, the Tanzanian "model" began to experience severe problems. Firstly, the economy entered a period of serious difficulty. Production of all major export crops declined sharply, in turn sparking off balance of payments difficulties. At the same time, the industrial sector, which had expanded greatly during the decade, began to experience a major decline in capacity utilisation. Secondly, from around 1980 onwards it became clear that donors' preferences were changing. A pro-free market wind began to blow, first in the US, Britain and Germany, then in the World Bank and then by, 1983–84, in the Scandinavian countries which had been Tanzania's most important supporters. Since from 1980 to 1983 Tanzania tried to retain its "model" essentially without compromises, it suffered a decline in aid alongside its growing economic crisis.

One consequence of this was a disappearance of many of the gains which had been made in social provision in the 1960s and early 1970s. Life expectancy, rates for infant mortality and child death, population per physician and per nursing person, access to improved water and school enrolments per capita all went into reverse. Nor, when policy changes were introduced (1983 onwards) and aid resumed (1986 onwards), was there a major recovery in these respects. Indeed, the first years of homegrown adjustment witnessed probably the sharpest cutback in state social expenditures of any period in Tanzania.

Inadequacies in social provision—and unresponsiveness/inefficiency of local government even when it had resources—generated voluntary responses first in the secondary education sector. The phenomenom of District Development Trusts (DDTs) being set up in urban areas to provide "home area" secondary schools became common in the early 1980s. After the mid-1980s voluntary provision became common in other areas of social provision, and registered NGOs and CDAs also expanded rapidly. Behind this growth was not only the crisis of social reproduction, but also a major expansion in northern NGOs' funding and interest in finding southern "partners". As southern state-based provision became unfruitful (and unfashionable) to support in the north, NGOs became the major beneficiaries.

By the late 1980s the new rules of the game, as far as social sector-related aid was concerned, were clear to most actors and would-be actors on the Tanzanian development stage. While the state was meant to shoulder the largest burden, aid directed at providing welfare services and which was targeted at the poor would be increasingly funnelled through local non-state channels, which were assumed to be expanding from below to fill some of the "gap" which the state was leaving.

This had a certain amount of truth. People's organisations, that is, grassroots, member-run, self-reliant bodies were indeed springing up spontaneously in many areas, often challenging efforts by the state and ruling party to maintain local power monopolies. Moreover, as has been seen, alongside these were the DDTs, also member-run and self-reliant, but less easily seen as grassroots initiatives and usually tied to a "home area" politician or at least prominent business figure.

Yet this has not been the whole picture as far as the voluntary development scene in Tanzania is concerned. In the first place, there are some foreign NGOs which are operating directly in the country without local counterparts at all, usually in relief activities of various kinds. Secondly, and more commonly, there is a whole range of local CDA and CDA-based organisations which have arisen as counterparts of foreign NGO/state donor activity or funding (either direct or through the local state). Some of these organisations are run relatively democratically, some are not. Some are grassroots in the sense of expanding on firmly-based local economic activities and/or social practices, some are not. Some would be able to survive in time without external support, others would collapse overnight. Thirdly, there are a large number of organisations which call themselves NGOs which are actually either government-organised (what Shivji has called "GONGOs") or which are elite-organised for the purpose of accumulation.

"GONGOs" are particularly evident in fields in which there is a widely-publicised donor interest to support local-level activity in both extensive and intensive ways. Two such fields are the environment and "Women in Development" activities. Hence in Tanzania one finds afforestation schemes with NGO status, but in which civil servants are employed to monitor and coordinate activity, and "Women in Agriculture and Livestock Development" "grassroots" projects with civil servant regional coordinators responsible for establishing groups and raising donor funding for them. Meanwhile, elite-centred NGOs (sometimes also known as "briefcase" NGOs) have also multiplied. Almost always depending on good connections to the state, these raise donor funds—often in foreign exchange—ostensibly for worthy causes, only to directly embezzle them. In between these "types" there are of course a lot of hybrids, and most organisations have some dimension (however weak) of patronage politics or doubtful financial transactions.

Academic commentators writing on state-NGO relations have tended to generate conceptions referring to relations between the state and *all* NGOs. For example John Clark (1991: 74) predicts that this relation will in general be conflictual, since NGOs seek to empower the poor and powerless, who then come into conflict with the state. However, viewing NGOs not as a single category but as a diverse group characterised by different and often conflicting socio-political alignments or projects, enables us to hypothesise the likelihood of a more differentiated picture. Some NGOs, for example the elite-centred ones, share the alignment and the project of the state-based elite, namely that of personal accumulation. At the other end of the continuum there are some people's organisations which have questioned state authority in relatively unambiguous ways, and which the state has prevented from registering or has deregistered. In between, where the bulk of organisations are situated, relations are probably generally more complex. Even in the case of most genuine people's organisations, despite state suspicions it is in state interests that they be harnessed into a role of supplementing state

activity. This involves some state accommodation, and thus presumably a corresponding threat to the autonomy of the organisation.

**The problem**

Although the very general points above are now clear to most students of the local-level development scene in Tanzania, there is still insufficient information on what is happening on the ground to enable us to say very much concrete about the precise type of new institutional order which is emerging in the country. It may be accepted, for example, that NGOs/CDAs are a heterogenous group with ambivalent effects, but this tells us little about what the concrete balance on the ground is between the various kinds of organisations listed above. We currently know little or nothing even of the current density of CDAs, their typical areas of concentration, their modes of organisation and the constituencies they represent, or the broader implications of such characteristics. If we know in general that they correspond to higher levels of socio-economic activism, and that they will probably be linked to external patrons of one kind or another, we know little of the relative significance of these two factors for forms and relations of power in the local arena. In fact, we are in any event ignorant of the local role which political parties, including the state party, are playing today, and what the consequences of the new institutional order are for elite legitimacy and domination.

These questions are all the more interesting since Tanzania has entered a period not only in which the economic forms of statism have unravelled, but also the political ones. After the great change of 1989 in eastern Europe pressures for the introduction of multiparty democracy welled up in Tanzania also. Recognising the inevitability of a political as well as economic adjustment, and to head off the possibility of a movement toward democratisation being led by forces hostile to the state, the government early in 1992 initiated a process of political reform from above. Amongst the elements of this reform was a freedom for opposition parties to organise and a separation of state and state party (CCM) at various levels. These include a separation between CCM and other social organisations, whereby the latter are theoretically free to order their own affairs as they please. First and foremost this applied to the trade unions and the cooperatives, but it was clearly also meant to apply to party supervision of local development activities.

These reforms have been accompanied by other political developments in Tanzania. Amongst the most important of these has been growing conflict around issues of race, religion and the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar. It is impossible in a few sentences to do justice to these issues, but a very brief treatment of each is necessary. Race has become a salient issue as a result of a favourable popular response to agitation by an unregistered opposition party which links the rise of rampant forms of economic injustice to the "privileged" position occupied by Asians. Such rhetoric has of course deep historical roots in east Africa, and has frequently been an explicit or veiled element of official discourse. It is also shared in a less strident manner by the other opposition parties, specifically in relation to the issue of privatisation of state economic property. The issue of religion partly cross-cuts this, but has become prominent mainly as a result of a generally heightened political role being played by Muslims during the Mwinyi Presidency, and an apparent escalation in the

demands being put forward by organised Islamic elements. This relates in a fairly direct way to the third issue of Tanganyika/Zanzibar relations. The latter itself has a religious element, and the issue of the maturation of an Islamic political constituency overlaps with what is seen as increasing *de facto* claims for sovereignty by Zanzibar, especially as these concern relations with other Islamic countries. Of course, neither Muslims and Zanzibar on the one hand or Tanganyika and Christians on the other are themselves homogeneous political constituencies, and political pluralism has meant that divisions within as well as between them have become aired publicly. And, of course, all these divisions and conflicts are likely to be reflected in the NGO/CDA phenomenon.

Beside the inter-relation between the growing weight of NGO/CDA activity, political pluralisation and the local institutional order, another set of interesting issues is that of intra- and inter- NGO/CDA relations. This issue has not been investigated much anywhere, let alone in Tanzania. Knowledge of the relations of these organisations to their own memberships, the relations between their members and the rest of the local population and the relation at local level between different kinds of community development groups would be both interesting in its own right and throw additional light on the issues outlined above.

The project which this paper reports on is a study of the above issues in 10 districts in Tanzania, including one in Zanzibar[2]. These were selected purposively with a view to producing a balanced national picture. Hence some urban as well as rural and better-off as well as poor districts were chosen. This sample was then further corrected to achieve a balance between areas where it was believed that there were high, moderate and low respective NGO/CDA presences. The research in each district itself had three main components. Firstly, a mapping was carried out of the main development actors in the district and their relations with each other. Secondly, a preliminary characterisation of the new institutional order was carried out on the basis of extensive interviews with a series of informed local observers (professionals, government officials, leaders of religious organisations, traditional leaders, etc.). Thirdly a sample of local NGOs/CDAs was drawn up for closer attention.

**General profile of the districts**

*Ilala*

Ilala is the smallest, most urbanised and most central of Dar es Salaam Region's three districts. It covers the heart of Dar es Salaam and houses the main administrative, commercial and industrial activities of the city. Within it are found the State House, a number of ministries and other central government offices, the main business centres of the city including its main market (Kariakoo), large tourist hotels such as the Kilimanjaro, Agip, Twiga and New Africa, the Pugu Road industrial area and the nodal communication points—Dar es Salaam's harbour, international airport and two main railway stations.

Ilala has a historical importance for both Dar es Salaam and Tanzania, since it is the oldest African part of the city and was the historical centre of urban

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[2] In fact, because Zanzibar districts are very small, a region was chosen.

opposition to colonialism. A majority of its population belong to the Wazaramo ethnic group, which claims to originate in Dar es Salaam and the immediately surrounding area. A majority are also Muslims, although no figures on this are available. A majority of the city's Asian population also live in Ilala.

In 1988 Ilala had a total population of 333,708 persons (sex ratio (M:F) 106.9). There were around 76,000 households with an average size of 4.4 persons. In Upanga East ward, where there is a high concentration of Asian households, this figure rises to 13. In all, Ilala comprises 18 wards, 14 of which are urban, 3 rural and one mixed.

Ilala is often referred to as a middle income area, but its occupational structure does not bear this out. Of those aged 15 years and above in 1988, 18,729 or 8.9 percent were in managerial or professional occupations. This compares with 9.9 percent for Dar es Salaam Region as a whole. However there are slightly higher than average concentrations of industrial workers (17,917 or 8.5 percent, as against 8.1 percent for Dar Region generally) and lower than average numbers of "cultivators". Nonetheless, the latter still outnumber industrial workers (there were a total of 23,677 "cultivators" and "mixed farmers", accounting for 11.2 percent of those aged 15 and above) (all information URT, 1990a)[3]. Given the limited range of occupational categories employed by the census enumerators in 1988, it comes as little surprise to find that the largest single "occupational" group recorded in Ilala were those categorised as "not employed". This accounted for 38.1 percent of all those aged 15 and above, and fully 61.4 percent of all women. Presumably most of these were engaged in informal sector activities, only one of which ("small-scale trading") appears in the list used by enumerators.

The over-5 years Kiswahili literacy rate for the district was 71.4 percent. 77.9 percent of males were literate, compared with 64.5 percent of females. 82.5 percent of households had access to internal or external piped water, compared to 86.1 percent of Dar Region households. 39.8 percent of households had access to electricity, as against 34.2 percent of Dar Region households (URT, 1990a).

*Hai*

Hai is one among four districts in Kilimanjaro Region. The district, to the north east of Moshi town, covers most of the southern slopes of Mt Kilimanjaro. To its north lies the Republic of Kenya. The district is traditionally one of the centres of coffee production in Tanzania. Coffee still covers most of its physical area, interplanted as it has always been with banana and supplemented with the produce of stall-fed cattle. Indeed, roughly 80 percent of households still grow coffee. Coffee production is supported through the local Lyamungo Agricultural Research Centre. Other crops grown include beans, maize, wheat and millet. There are also a multitude of small businesses, including trading in local brews, shopkeeping, bars and guest houses and trades such as tailoring, etc. In recent years there has been considerable investment in "zero-grazing"-based dairying, which has grown correspondingly in significance. This will be returned to below. Zero-grazing has always been the main form of livestock keeping in Hai because

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[3] According to the office of the District Agricultural Officer there were 7,812 farms in the district including 177 large ones, and 9 villages were dependent on agriculture. Production is mainly of fruit, vegetables and dairy products for the Dar es Salaam market. Coconuts, cashew nuts and cotton are also grown.

of its traditionally acute land shortage—a problem rampant not only in Hai but in the whole Kilimanjaro Region.

The traditional inhabitants of the district are the Wachagga people, known throughout Tanzania for their business prowess. Although people have migrated into Hai from Same, Arusha and Tanga, the Chagga remain dominant in all respects. The district is predominantly Christian.

In 1988 Hai had a population of 196,901 inhabitants (91 per square kilometre). The district has a marked pattern of male out-migration, and a consequent low (M:F) sex ratio (94.6 in 1988). However, for particular age groups the sex ratio is very low indeed, as Table 1 below illustrates:

Table 1. *Sex ratio (M:F), Hai District (Moshi Urban District), 1988*

| Years | 20-24 | 25-29 | 30-34 | 35-39 | 40-44 | 45-49 | 50-54 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ratio | 72.4 | 79.2 | 74.9 | 81.4 | 91.0 | 97.1 | 92.8 |
| | (86.5) | (98.0) | (111.5) | (115.2) | (160.1) | (149.2) | (171.7) |

*Source:* URT (1990b)

Figures have also been included in this table for Moshi Urban District since they indicate a pattern of circular migration common to the Kilimanjaro area. Young men tend to leave Hai and other parts of Kilimanjaro to pursue opportunities elsewhere in the country. Most return eventually to Hai. But if successful, they make their main investments in businesses in Moshi town, where they also establish a house and may settle permanently. Some implications of this pattern will be explored below.

The largest single occupational group in Hai recorded in the 1988 census was, unsurprisingly, that of "cultivators". These comprised 47,013 persons, or 43.8 percent of the total (49.1 percent of men and 39.1 percent of women). In addition a further 11,506 persons (10.7 percent) were categorised as "mixed cultivators". Women outnumbered men in this category, but not greatly. Professional and managerial employment accounted for only 3.9 percent of the population. After "cultivation", the largest single occupational group recorded was again those described as "not employed" (31.9 percent of all persons aged 15 and over, comprising 21.4 percent of all men and 41.1 percent of all women).

Literacy in Hai is fairly high by rural Tanzanian standards. The over-5 years Kiswahili literacy rate in 1988 was 65.9 percent. The rate for males was 68.8 percent and for females 63.2 percent. 33.9 percent of households have access to piped water and 6.9 percent have access to electricity (all figures URT, 1990b).

*Pemba South*

Pemba South Region is part of Zanzibar. It consists of two administrative districts, namely Chake Chake and Mkoani. In 1988 the region's population was 127,640 persons, at a very high density of 312 persons per square kilometre. The annual population growth is 3.7 percent for Chake Chake town and 2.5 percent

for Mkoani. In Chake Chake town, Pemba's main seaport, are to be found a concentration of government offices and of commercial activities. Detailed occupational statistics from the 1988 census are still unavailable for Pemba, but it is believed that over 80 percent of the region's labour force earn their living from agriculture and fishing. The major cash crop grown is cloves, although as in the case of coffee in Hai, there is a long-term trend for production to decline. Other cash crops grown on a smaller scale include cardamon and chillis. The main food crops grown are rice, cassava and banana.

Historically, Pemba South has been one of Tanzania's more underdeveloped regions. Figures for 1988 are not available, but in 1978 the over-5 Kiswahili literacy rate was only 39.4 percent. For males it was 49.3 percent, for females just 29.9 percent. But at the same time 44 percent of households had access to piped water and 13.9 to electricity. Within these figures there was a huge discrepancy between the urban and rural division of the region, with the relatively high urban figures explicable in terms of Chake Chake town's status (URT, 1982a,b). It is unlikely that there has been any improvement with respect to any of these indicators since 1978. Indeed, the likelihood is rather that they have deteriorated.

An important and unusual dimension of the situation in Pemba South is the presence of a strong political opposition force, apparently organised both within and outside CCM. This dates back until at least 1988. That year serious demonstrations occurred on the islands, directed at the then Zanzibari president, Idris Abdul Wakir. In May 1988, after these demonstrations, Mr Wakir alleged a coup had been planned against him and sacked his chief minister Seif Shariff Hamad, amongst others. A year later Mr Hamad was arrested under the union National Security Act and it was not until 1992 that he was brought to trial on charges of being in possession of state documents. Since released, he has played a prominent role in the Zanzibar wing of the opposition Civic United Front (CUF). The latter incorporates Mr Hamad's *Kamahuru* movement, which has a high degree of support in Pemba South.


**The local development space**

The local development space will be described in each district first with regard to current provision of services formerly largely monopolised by the state (education and health). This will be followed by descriptions of the levels and nature of external donor, NGO and CDA presence in each. Finally the overall politics of each development space will be discussed.

*Ilala*

Several actors are today present in Ilala in the provision of the formerly mainly public-provided services. These include central and local government (Dar es Salaam City Council), NGOs of different descriptions and private business organisations.

Relative to other parts of coastal Tanzania, there is a relative abundance of education services and providers in Ilala. In 1992 the district had 6 nursery schools, 26 primary schools, 14 secondary schools, a technical college, a business college, an adult education college and a major branch of the University of Dar es Salaam (Muhimbili University College of Medicine).

The nursery schools were all private institutions. Some were run by Asian community groups, others by religious NGOs and the remainder by private individuals. With one exception (which was NGO-run), the primary schools were all public institutions, run by the city council. Of the secondary schools, 8 were public and 6 were private. The public secondary schools, like the technical and business colleges, were run by central government through the ministry of education. Half of the six private secondary schools were run by Islamic organisations and two by Asian ones. The other was an "international school" basically catering for expatriates. The adult education college and Muhimbili College are semi-autonomous parastatals.

The major new dimension of education provision in Ilala is a growth in the involvement of Islamic organisations. With regard to secondary education, this is significant for a number of reasons—most obviously because Muslims have historically only very rarely owned schools in Tanzania. Indeed, they have used this as grounds for campaigning against proposals that the state hand back to their original Christian and Asian owners secondary schools which were nationalised in the 1960s and 70s. (Having promised in 1992 that these would be handed back, the government reversed this decision under pressure from Islamic organisations.)

A second aspect of Islamic educational involvement is religious education programmes provided through Ilala's growing number of mosques. This aspect is hardly new, but appears to have become more widespread and better organised in recent years. Programmes, taught mainly in Arabic, begin at pre-school age, are quite intensive and take up to 8 years to complete.

The health sector has always been relatively well-developed in Ilala. This reflects the district's central location, and the fact that resident in it are large concentrations of well-resourced groups such as Asians. Tanzania's national referral hospital, Muhimbili, is situated in the district as is the civil servant's hospital on Ocean Road (currently being turned into a specialist hospital for tumour and cancer patients). Beside this, one public district hospital, six private hospitals, seven (parastatal) workplace dispensaries, 21 government dispensaries and 56 private dispensaries are located in Ilala. The public district hospital is used intensively, with 176,011 out-patient and 15354 in-patient attendances in 1991.

However, the most notable trend in health provision in Ilala is the rise of private provision. Of the six private hospitals, four are owned by Asian organisations and two by Islamic ones. While most of the Asian community-owned hospitals have been around some time, the two Islamic organisation-owned ones were both opened in the second half of the 1980s. It was not possible to analyse the ownership of the 56 private dispensaries. However, according to the District Medical Officer these were all opened in the 1980s, again mostly in the second half of the decade.

An important feature of the private hospitals and dispensaries is that they disclose little information on their operations. A discussion with the Chief Medical Administrator of the city council revealed that all efforts by the council to keep even a simple inventory of the private health facilities in the city had failed—only a fraction of the forms distributed to various health facilities to give

basic operational data were returned. The District Medical Officer corroborated this. He had only been able to establish the number of facilities operating in the district after repeated enquiries and a threat to cut off vaccination supplies. Vaccine, provided in bulk free of charge from the district hospital, was a crucial component of the Maternal and Child Health programmes which formed an important and profitable part of the business strategies of these facilities.

Amongst the reasons cited by informants concerning why the private facilities were reluctant to provide information were the nature of the personnel these facilities employed and also their tax situation. It appears that, on cost-savings grounds, the private dispensaries usually employ non-qualified personnel, mostly ex-Standard 7 students with a few weeks' "Red Cross" training in first aid. Furthermore, disclosure of basic operational statistics such as patient numbers and drugs supplied would enable tax officials to ascertain the facilities' true income and therefore demand higher tax.

There is a large concentration of donors and registered NGOs of all descriptions based in Ilala. However, a majority are only physically based in the district, in the sense that because of Ilala's central location they have their head offices there. We shall not concern ourselves with such NGOs here, but rather look at those NGOs which have local activities.

International and northern donors and several northern NGOs (NNGOs) directly run or participate in projects in the district. Amongst the active international and northern donors are UNICEF and DANIDA which support child health activities including the distribution of powdered milk, child immunization programmes and health education for mothers. Amongst the NNGOs are Plan International, which has successfully run projects providing clean water to Buguruni and Vingunguti wards (previously the site of serious water-borne infections). However it is more common for international, northern or other external NGOs to work through local branches or local counterpart NGOs/CDA groups. For example, the Tanzania Red Cross Association, a chapter of the International Red Cross Association, operates a Mother and Child Health clinic in the district.

Most religious-based NGOs in Ilala have this same status. International Christian organisations like the YMCA and YWCA operate hostels in Ilala through their national counterparts, while there are clusters of CDA projects with a base in the international churches, such as those around the Roman Catholic Msimbazi Community Centre. However, as in the case of education and to a lesser extent health, amongst the most notable recent trends has been an increase in Islamic religious NGOs, and CDAs associated with them. Probably the most important aspect of this is a tendency for the growing number of mosques to register themselves as Development Trust Funds and sponsor localised mosque-centred charitable and social activities (see below). Another aspect is for Islamic NGOs to be formed to provide social services outside the context of the mosque. Into this category fall NGOs such as Allah Karim running dispensaries and others such as the Union Islamic Association (UIA) , the Al-haramain Association and Al-muntzir running schools and other educational facilities (including teacher training colleges) inside and outside the district. A few words will be said about one of these organisations, the UIA.

The UIA's formal objective is to enhance the education and, more generally, the development of Muslim communities. Its membership is open to all Muslims in

the district, while its leadership is drawn from the clergy and influential local Muslim personalities. These community "elders' essentially function as patrons, and the membership as clients. Apart from running the secondary school and issuing scholarships to it for poor parents, the association distributes free food to the poor during Ramadhan and free clothing throughout the year. This food and clothing is distributed through the mosques. The UIA's funds come from members' donations, gifts from prominent Muslims in the district and donations from Islamic countries abroad. The latter also supported mosque-based projects.

Nationally-based secular organisations with local activities in Ilala ranged from the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA) at one end of the spectrum to Mission for the Needy at the other. Mission for the Needy is a good example of the category of elite-centred or "briefcase" NGOs described earlier. Registered in 1986 with the mission of assisting "those in need of help, grassroot (sic) women and youth" (TANGO, 1990: 29), the mission was hit by a series of scandals in 1991 when a founder member provided extremely detailed information appearing to indicate systematic misuse of funds by one of its highest officials. Much of these funds came from important donors such as NORAD, DANIDA, UNDP, etc. The mission was later cleared of any wrong doing by a government inquiry, which however seems to have failed to convince public opinion.

Founded in 1987, TAMWA by contrast can claim to promote some degree of genuine grassroots empowerment. The organisation's membership is restricted to women journalists and has about 30 Dar es Salaam-based members. Although its Ilala office is responsible for its activities nation-wide, TAMWA also has several important projects in the district. Firstly, a media training course lasting about three months is organised four times a year for girls finishing secondary education. The number of students who can be absorbed on such courses is small (seven) but a majority of these come from the neighbourhood. Secondly, a women's library and documentation centre is provided, open to women from the district. This has over 100 books, 50 magazines and 300 other publications dealing with women's issues. Thirdly and most significantly a TAMWA "mobilisation unit" organises regular public workshops in local social halls in the district on issues such as maternal mortality and morbidity, women and AIDS, women and rape, etc. Furthermore it carries out campaigns in the district and the city at large in schools, clinics and workplaces on issues such as schoolgirl pregnancy and sexual harassment. TAMWA also provides counselling and legal services for rape victims (nine women from Ilala availed themselves of such services in 1991). TAMWA's income is derived partly from receipts from its own desk-top publishing unit, sales of a quarterly bilingual magazine *Sauti ya Siti* (Voice of Women) and occasional cultural events. Other sources of funds are membership fees and donors. As in the case of UIA, information on the precise balance between these is not available.

One relatively unusual feature of the institutional map in Ilala was that there was no District Development Trust, which are multitudinous nationally. This is probably because these are basically hometown/district associations and there is little migration from Ilala, since it is probably the most urbanised district in the country.

CDAs in Tanzania encompass all collective activities carried out by community groups, as opposed to private companies or individuals. They thus include business ventures undertaken on a community (meaning, in practice,

cooperative) basis, as well as more conventional infrastructural development initiatives. Indeed, in the late 1980s and early 1990s CDA has become pretty much identified with local-level cooperative business ventures, and Ilala is no exception to this pattern[4] . Structured CDAs are administratively regulated by District Community Development Departments/Offices (*Idara ya Maendeleo na Ustawi wa Jamii*). In 1992 there were 56 CDA groups registered with the Ilala office. It is of course possible that many more such groups exist in the district without registering, which is not a requirement for operation (and would not be enforceable even if it was). On the other hand, most groups undertaking activities of a kind more ambitious than *upatu* require some start-up resources, or at least technical assistance, and this proves an incentive to register. Most of the registered groups were established in the 1980s.

According to the Community Development Officer responsible for Ilala, CDA groups there mostly had a membership between 10 and 50, on average around 20. The official stated that he personally insisted on such relatively small memberships because experience had shown that larger groups experience management and accountability difficulty problems. In any event, total membership of CDA groups in Ilala was therefore around 1120, or approximately 3.3 per thousand of the population. As will be seen, this figure is very low compared to Hai and Pemba South.

Table 2 describes the results of a random one-in-three sample of registered CDA groups in Ilala in 1992.


Table 2. *Membership composition by gender and activities of CDA groups in Ilala, 1992*


| Name | Membership Gender | Activities |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Tumaini | female | sale of charcaol, paraffin, etc. |
| 2. Mapambano Utete | male | carpentry |
| 3. Tujitadhi | female | sale of foodstuffs in a market |
| 4. Anglicana | female | church group owning a "boutique" and running a nursery school |
| 5. Maedeleo | female | dressmaking |
| 6. Nani kama Mama | mixed | operates a "boutique" |
| 7. Kumekuche | female | dressmaking |
| 8. UWT, AISCO | female | runs a small hotel at a workplace |
| 9. Shime Tie and Dye | female | operates a "boutique" |
| 10. Wawza Mboga | female | sells fruit and vegetables in a market |
| 11. Kikukoni Ferry | female | sells fish in a market |
| 12. Juhudi | female | operates a grocery store |
| 13. Muungan | mixed | traditional dancing troupe |
| 14. Assemblies of God | mixed | church group carrying out farming |

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[4] It was also partly, but not wholy, the case that village-level "self-help" groups which in the 1970s were associated with the CCM women's organisation, UWT, were organised around business projects. But it was never clear with these groups whether it was UWT or the women themselves who owned the businesses concerned. In many cases women were simply paid (or unpaid) employees, and the projects collapsed as soon as compulsion was withdrawn. See Madsen (1984).

| | | activities |
|---|---|---|
| 15. Muungan | female | farming |
| 16. Titegemee Farmers | female | farming |
| 17. Titegemee | male | wood carving |
| 18. Vijna wa Kikristo | mixed | church choir also operating a hotel |

*Source:* Ilala District Community Development Office records, interviews

The table indicates that the great majority of CDA groups are organised by and for women. Some groups appear to be of poor women, others of better-off ones engaged in more "upmarket" economic activites ("boutiques", etc.). In all cases, however the purpose is to enhance the women's economic independence.

*Hai*

By rural Tanzanian standards Hai is well-provided with education and health facilities. There are 36 nursery schools in the district, all of them privately owned and 139 primary schools, all of them publicly owned. Eleven secondary schools are located there too, three of them public and eight private. With the exception of Kibohehe Secondary School, which is run by an Islamic community organisation, the private secondary schools were all initiated by the Kilimanjaro Native Cooperative Union (KNCU) (e.g. Lyamungo Secondary School) or the Northern Diocese of the Lutheran Church (the latter in the 1970s and 80s) and are all run by the Lutherans today. Representatives of the local churches regularly contact individual Dar es Salaam-based Hai businessmen in order to solicit contributions from them for school maintenance, etc. The district also has a teachers' centre at Mbwera. There are two hospitals, at Kibongoto and Nkwarungo. Kibongoto is a referral hospital for tuberculosis, which means that central government is the main actor in its management. There are further two health centres, 26 public dispensaries and eight private ones. The private dispensaries are all run by the Roman catholic and Lutheran churches.

An important recent trend on the education/health front has been a mushrooming of day care centres and feeding posts, public and private. Their objective is the eradication of child malnutrition, and many have been set up as a result of a local UNICEF-organised campaign. There are currently (1993) 114 such centres/posts in Hai, of which the Lutheran and Roman catholic churches run 48 and the state-sponsored Islamic organisation BAKWATA five. The issue of these centres will be returned to below.

Hai has a very long and impressive tradition of voluntary collective activity. From the 1930s until the early- to mid-1970s, the development of the district's economy was in effect managed by the KNCU and the Kilimanjaro District Council. This situation came to an end with the local government reform of 1972 and the banning of cooperatives in 1976. The KNCU not only ran the local coffee industry but established the research institutions at Lyamungo and Masoka, founded secondary schools (see above), provided school fees for promising students whose families were too poor to pay them and was linked to a chain of consumer cooperative shops providing farm inputs and consumer goods to the peasantry.

Cooperative shops initially disappeared in Hai following the demise of KNCU, but reappeared as village cooperative stores during the chronic consumer goods

shortages of the early 1980s. The formation of such stores ensured that villages got a specified allocation of goods through the state-run Regional Trading Corporation. Eight of the ten such stores operating in 1993 were founded between 1980 and 1983.

Amongst northern and internationally-linked NGOs in Hai, the most important other than KNCU have always been, and remain now, the Lutheran and Roman catholic churches. Of course, these are now firmly under local control, but their status as development actors is dependent on their international connections. Besides their involvement with the education and health sectors, the churches sponsor around a quarter of all the CDA activity in the district.

The 1980s, especially their second half, were marked by an "invasion" of Hai by NNGOs and bilateral and multilateral donors seeking to support CDAs of various kinds. The leading bilaterals comprise the various Nordic aid agencies and the government of New Zealand. Amongst the multilaterals present are UNICEF and the FAO. Private NNGOs include the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, World Vision International and Svillup 2,000. One national NGO, the Community Development Trust Fund (CDTF) is also present in a big way. Like the churches, it supports around one quarter of all CDA activity in Hai. It has also "adopted", on a patronage basis, one entire village. It is believed that this is the home village of some of the NGO's high ranking officials.

The phenomenon of District Development Trusts as urban-based Tanzanian versions of "hometown associations" has aleady been discussed. In Hai (as well as a number of other areas) an interesting variant of this type of organisation is present. This is the District Development Fund, or rather a series of District Development Funds dedicated to different social sectors. These organisations are of interest because they explicitly and openly straddle "hometown association" and shadow local government roles.

The Hai Education Trust Fund, for example, in effect functions as a local education authority, but outside of the restrictive framework of district-level central and local government administration and with the participation of members of the national elite with roots in Hai but who are based outside it. It has made itself responsible for the repair of existing classrooms and teachers' houses and the building of new ones, as well as the purchase of school equipment for the district's primary schools. It is further constructing a new district secondary school and a teachers' centre. The former set of tasks are nominally reserved for central government; the latter are also supposed to be carried out by central government, but the presence of non-state actors is also tolerated.

Set up in 1988, the Fund's revenue base was secured when Hai district council itself passed a bye-law levying on all taxpayers an annual contribution of Tsh 50 to the fund. The Fund also secures contributions (with varying degrees of compulsion) from parents, from primary and regional cooperative societies-- presumably themselves raised from crop cesses—from locally-based parastatal enterprises and from elite patrons. The most important of these is Reginald Mengi, the managing director of the large Dar es Salaam-based private company IPP. Mengi personally contributed desks, corrugated iron sheets and Tsh 600,000 (USD 1,250) to the rehabilitation of Mbwara Teachers' Centre. CCM also seems to

play a role in mobilising resources for the Fund, since every Ten House Cell leader in Hai is responsible for providing one school desk a year to it.

On the other hand the party plays no formal role in the management of the Fund, although some of the latter's leaders play important roles in the party. Essentially, the Fund's management is in the hands of the local elite (District officials, councillors, leading parents, religious leaders and business figures). Meanwhile its functional management is in the hands of the District Education Officer and his staff.

Externally, the Fund has secured the support of the Danish Volunteer Service. The Danes work under the auspices of the Fund on the construction and rehabilitation of primary schools. They also themselves solicit contributions to the Fund from overseas well-wishers.

The Development Trust Funds in Hai thus work as a form of privatised local government. As well as the Education Trust Fund, which covers the whole district, there are also a series of apparently district-based Rural Roads Trust Funds. At local level these reproduce the organisational and financial structure of the Education Trust Fund. The Hai road funds have successfully built local roads between Sadal Masama and Mula, Samatu and Maina, Kware and Kashashi and others. They receive direct support from ILO as well, as interestingly, from central government.

In connection with the UNICEF-run Day Care Centres/Feeding Posts a third form of local development trust fund has also been established. These are the Village Health Funds. As in the other cases, existing government and party structures have been used to set up these funds, which then operate independently of them. In those Hai villages where UNICEF operates, bye-laws were passed obliging every able-bodied villager aged 18 years and over to pay Tsh 200 per annum toward the wages of village health workers and towards a village drugs fund. Management of the Funds involves village councils 'for blessings only'.

Aside from UNICEF, which directly runs a majority of the day care centres/feeding posts, all the other donors and NGOs listed above basically patronise registered or unregistered CDAs. Local and central government also give a certain amount of support, but this is generally confined to the 41 registered CDAs. Of the latter, about 75 percent receive significant external support from one or more of all these sources. It is very rare for a CDA group to operate with only marginal or even no external support. Only one group in the sample fell into this category.

In 1993 the registered CDA groups in Hai had a total membership of around 3,300 (about 17 persons per 1,000). Two thirds of all the groups were women-only and these tended to be far larger than the all-male ones (women comprised 94 percent of the total membership). Most of the men's groups were created for youths. As in Ilala, almost without exception these groups are basically income-generating cooperatives of some kind, although they may also carry out other social development functions. Women playing a prominent role in these groups cited the basis of their popularity to be the poor resource situation of women of all strata vis-à-vis men (men were said to retain almost all household income) and the high level of child deprivation in Hai. This was said to be reflected in this

well-off district's paradoxically high child malnutrition rate (no actual figure was available). This in turn was attributed to men either investing all available household income in businesses in town, or squandering it on personal gratification, particularly drinking *mbege* (a local brew). The child malnutrition argument seems to be the basis on which UNICEF is so involved in the area, and on which donor and NNGO funding has been attracted to the zero-grazing projects (see below).

The growth of CDA groups in Hai has tended to go hand-in-hand with the phenomenon mentioned above of the increasing significance of zero-grazing, or rather relatively capital-intensive zero-grazing—and a related growth in raising dairy-cattle. Within the sample described were four groups involved in zero-grazing to one extent or another.

The oldest of these groups had been founded in 1986, the most recent in 1990. Membership ranged between 25 and 700. All were involved in milk collection and sale and grass collection and sale, but other activities were also conducted including milk treatment and packaging, butter and cheese making, production of cooking oils, supplying artificial insemination and other dairy cattle inputs, transport, retailing, tailoring, and running a kindergarten. Annual expenditures varied between Tsh 150,000 (USD 428) and Tsh 30m (USD 85,700). One made a profit of Tsh 17.2 m (USD 49,000) in 1992. The assets of another group included a milk treatment plant costing Tsh 8m (USD 22,850). Three of the groups had permanent employees, in two cases several.

The bulk of the assets of both the wealthy and the less wealthy zero-grazing groups came from donations. The poorest (and most recently-founded) group had received Tsh 65,000 (USD 186) from UNICEF and building materials from the businessman husband of the group's chairwoman. The largest had been donated a four wheel drive vehicle, cranes, a milk cooler and a solar heating system by FAO. FAO was also a major donor for the next largest, along with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, and to the third largest, this time along with DANIDA and others. However, membership fees and contributions were also an important source of funds in all of the groups. In some cases members had to contribute up to Tsh 10,000 (USD 29), on top of an entry fee of Tsh 1,000 (USD 3). Clearly, only a small section of women could be in a position to make such contributions (in 1991 GNP per capita in Tanzania was only USD 100, according to the World Bank (1993)[5] .

Leadership of these groups was in the hands of literate and dynamic women. Indeed, all had Grade A Teachers (Form IV leavers with two years teacher training) as their secretaries or in some other administrative role. In one case this teacher had been seconded to the group secretaryship by the school which was her regular employer. Equally critically, as far as securing donations was concerned, their leaders had connections to local business, local political, national bureaucratic and national political elites (see below).

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[5] Other estimates however put per capita GNP much higher. *Profile* gives a figure of USD 265 and the UN Purchasing Parity Guide USD 540, for example (Cooksey, 1993).

*Pemba South*

In the early 1980s the economic crisis in Zanzibar became so severe that central government abandoned the attempt to directly provide social services. In 1986 local government was (re)introduced for each electoral constituency on the islands. These were essentially envisaged as machineries for undertaking and coordinating local development activities, and were allowed to levy certain taxes and retain a certain proportion (25 percent) of licence fees they collected. Simultaneously the Zanzibar government announced that it would promote the formation of local cooperative or CDA groups, whereby people could work collectively to improve their lot. It was these which local government was envisaged as coordinating. Since 1986, most local governments on the islands have in fact failed to carry out much themselves in the way of development activities. For example, roads in Pemba South are in a sorry state. That from Chake Chake to Mkoani is very poor as a result of lack of maintenance, only one of the roads from the colonial period has been rehabilitated and most of the region's feeder roads are impassable. Insofar as development activities have occurred they have formally at least been the result of initiatives by other actors.

Pemba South in 1993 had a total of six nursery schools/kindergartens, 10 primary and middle schools and 4 secondary schools. Two of the nursery schools/kindergartens are private, one owned by an individual and one run by the army. All the other schools are public. Two further primary schools and a vocational training college are under construction. Seven schools have recently been extended, mostly in Mkoani District and mainly through the help of the Mkoani District Development Fund (MDDF).

The region's health facilities comprise 2 hospitals, a cottage hospital and 18 dispensaries. All of these are publicly owned and run, except one dispensary run by the Seventh Day Adventists since 1992 and one built in 1990 by the African Islamic Relief Agency (AIRA), and run publicly but with ongoing support from AIRA. Most of these dispensaries have been built since 1986 as a result of CDA. But CDA has been supported financially and materially by government and CCM officials, and in Mkoani by MDDF.

Beside the Seventh Day Adventists, the only other explicitly foreign-connected NGO in Pemba South is the African Muslims Agency. This NGO, based in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, has operated on the islands for a few years, but only came to Pemba in 1992. In the year that has followed it has constructed twenty wells and two mosques and has four wells and four mosques under construction. In an interview with an official of the organisation, it was stated that the organisation was interested in building new mosques rather than rehabilitating old ones since this allowed its "signature" to be more clearly visible. The organisation also plans to build Koranic schools. So far none have been completed, but two travelling teachers have been appointed. The agency is also involved in distributing food and clothing to the poor, rice and meat to the population generally during the two Idd festivals each year, and religious books. Beside this it provides help to around 100 orphans aged up to 12 years. Since March 1993 these have been receiving Tsh 6000 (USD 17) a month each.

Operating in the region are three NGOs based on the islands themselves. One of these, the AIRA, has already been mentioned. Beside building and continuing to

support a dispensary this has constructed and rehabilitated several mosques and Koranic schools. It also distributes religious books.

The other two local NGOs are both District Development Trusts—the MDDF in Mkoani and the Wawi Development Fund. The latter covers Wawi parliamentary constituency only.

The MDDF was established in 1987 at the initiative of the Hon. Salim Ahmed Salim, then MP for Mkoani. Dr Salim remains the MDDF's chairman. As already noted, MDDF has helped extend a number of schools and build a number of dispensaries. It has also helped in well construction and has purchased a water pump for the area. Sources of funds include donations from overseas (origin unknown) and from mainland-based businessmen, and contributions from government and party officials. The latter is essentially state money in various forms. MDDF's character is much more typical of traditional district development trusts than of development trust funds such as exist in Hai. Although there is a strong relation to the state, the Mkaoni fund does not fully integrate local state officials into its own operations and nor does it have a statutory local revenue base. In fact it also seems less broadly based, even in elite terms.

The Wawi Fund was established in 1990 by the constituency's MP. Its main objective is to provide soft loans to prospective and actual individual "entrepreneurs". In practice this has mostly meant women petty traders. Approximately Tsh 300,000 (USD 860) had been lent over three years. The sources of the Wawi fund are not known, but appear not to include state money. Indeed, unlike the MDDF, which operates with local and Zanzibar party and government blessing, the Wawi Fund is viewed with suspicion in state circles. No party or government figures were consulted in regard to or incorporated into the Fund and local leaders feel that it is has been designed to erode their power and credibility. This is all the more sensitive since Wawi is an area dominated by the opposition.

More than elsewhere, Pemba South has seen a remarkable upsurge of CDA groups since 1984. These are again based almost entirely around economic activities, in this case mainly agriculture, and to a lesser extent fishing, sewing, carpentry and trading. In 1993 there were around 150 registered and many unregistered cooperative-based CDAs. Again assuming a typical size of 20 persons, this corresponds to a density of upwards of 18 persons per thousand. The term "remarkable" is an appropriate one since—unlike in Hai—historically there is no real precedent for such activity on Pemba.

In Ilala, Hai and Pemba, there are two distinct reasons that can be identified for the rise of organised CDAs. However, in most cases their effects are intertwined. But the separation between them is probably clearest on Pemba. To use an economic vocabulary, one reason is demand (for services, from citizens) while the other is supply (of resources, from donors of various descriptions). In Pemba, prior to about 1989–90, cooperatives were formed mainly spontaneously on the basis of a common realisation that only a collective mobilisation of resources and efforts would enable people to undertake activities that might have a more economically sustainable character than their individual efforts. Financial patronage for such efforts was at this time quite limited. On the other hand, since 1990 the establishment of cooperative groups has been mainly based on the

expectation that there were good chances of getting financial assistance for anything that resembled such an activity.

A random sample of eight CDA groups from Chake Chake District was examined. Of these, all were income-generating activities and only one had been established prior to 1989-90. Their average membership was just over 14, varying from seven persons to 23. Unlike in Ilala and Hai, a majority of the groups (five) were made up wholly or mainly of men. Two of these were fishing cooperatives and a third an agricultural cooperative of former fishermen. A fourth was a farming cooperative and the last a commercial travel and tours agency (see below). All of the women's cooperatives were ones combining farming with either sewing or selling prepared food.

All except one of the CDAs had received external resources. These normally took the form of equipment of some kind, in certain cases supplemented by a cash grant or loan. In one case (the travel and tours agency) only a loan had been received, in another only cash. Most farming cooperatives received equipment grants of hoes and pangas for each member plus one or two more substantial items (in one case, four cows and four ploughs). A number of farming groups were also given land —up to 34 acres in one instance. Cash grants/donations were normally around Tsh 100,000 (USD 286), but one group received in addition Tsh 500,000 (USD 1429) from a Swiss private individual, after intercession from a leading figure in *Kamahuru*. Grants/donations were normally in the name of the President of Zanzibar or the Chief Minister, or their offices (this distinction was usually not apparent—and not intended to be apparent—to the recipients). However, four of the seven groups who had received external assistance appeared seriously aggrieved that they had not received more. Other grievances mainly concerned the inability of some groups to find a market for what they had been encouraged to produce. Three of the groups had leaderships with Form IV or higher education, and two of these appeared amongst the most viable. The others, probably in higher proportions than Ilala or Hai, seem to have drawn most of their members from the poor. One of the groups, the travel and tours agency was unmistakably an elite venture. It was the only one that was capitalised, owning two tour minibuses, a tour boat, a fishing boat and a truck for construction work. These had been bought by the 14 members of the cooperative, which had also received a government loan of an unspecified amount. Amongst the members of this cooperative were Dr Salim and the MP for Mkoani, Hon. Sheha Mohammed Sheha.

**A Privatisation of Local Government?**

The most surprising phenomenon turned up by this research is the emergence of apparently genuinely locally-rooted organisations in Hai providing or aiming to provide a comprehensive set of social services across a number of sectors. The Trust Funds involved, which seem to have all but displaced the local state, have as their central features the integration of local state-based and private elites in leadership roles, and the marriage of state (taxation) and private (donation) forms of revenue-raising.

Insufficient is known about these institutions to properly evaluate their practical achievements. Nor is it known how widespread they are in Tanzania today (they were certainly not present in Ilala or Pemba South). But a few words may be said

about their political content. Basically they seem to involve the local elite establishing some kind of functioning local government for itself, which would otherwise be absent, through harnessing state resources (including legal resources) to private initiative. In the same process, state services are reorganised independent of the state and new and exisiting sources of revenue for them are merged.

The unknown factor in all is is whether local accountability is really enhanced. Possibly a distinction can be drawn here between local and popular accountability. Certainly a section of the local population become centrally involved in formal decision-making in a manner previously absent. But this section is confined to the non-state elite and the leadership of the Funds seems non-accountable to those whom they raise revenue from in the form of taxes, cesses, etc. On the other hand, the Funds may still be "popular" in a more general sense, since the needs they respond to—for better schools, roads, dispenseries, etc—are not specific to the elite, while the Funds themselves seem to meet them in more efficient ways than hitherto.

An interesting aspect of the whole process is the manner in which the central and local states, at district level, have been so willing to in effect surrender their powers to the Funds. This indicates a degree of flexibility not traditionally associated with the Tanzanian state at any level. Presumably it also indicates the extent to which the local state was becoming politically and economically marginalised in the period prior to the Funds' creation. In the words of one local observer, "since the government wanted to have... sustainable programme(s), it was therefore necessary to incorporate the *wananchi* (citizens)"—or at least the more influential of them.


**The new politics of patronage and brokerage**

Much of the more recent literature on NGOs (and, by implication, CDAs) in Africa has stressed their actual or potential contributions not only to development management, but also to fostering general social and political accountability and "good governance". The latter are extremely important issues which should not be belittled, and they will be returned to in the concluding section. But preliminary impressions generated by the research described here suggest that a more immediately pertinent issue for most of the actors themselves is that of patronage. This in turn has important political dimensions.

There are a series of different patronage and sub-patronage relations embedded in the new local level development space in Tanzania. First of all there is the patronage of local communities as a whole by outsiders, with regard to the provision of *social* development. As this research shows, "voluntary development" in Tanzania is practically co-extensive with economic development. While a number of NGOs (mainly the District Development Trusts and the religious ones) concern themselves with social development, almost none of the CDAs do. (Moreover, almost all of the District Development Trusts and religious NGOs are also involved to one degree or another in supporting economic development activities by CDA groups.) The prioritisation of economic development by actors in the lower social strata presumably relates to the situation of acute economic need which the great majority has felt since at least the late 1970s. But, on the basis of the data described above, even the better-off

sections of at least rural Tanzanian society seem to see voluntary collective action and business activity as identical, and there are elite-oriented CDAs as well as elite-oriented NGOs. Social development—schools, health facilities, wells, community halls, etc.—tends today to be seen as something which can and should be provided by hometown/ home district organisations of migrants who have made good, Tanzanian or foreign NGOs, religious organisations, foreign bilateral or multilateral donors or, of course, the state. Although such assumptions have roots in some features of Tanzanian society which go beyond the last twenty years, these should not be exaggerated. As the discussion of Hai showed, social development in Tanzania was until the 1970s identified not with the state and outsiders at all, but with organisations such as the KNCU which were (albeit highly bureaucratised) people's organisations.

A second aspect of patronage concerns the linkage between CDA groups and other development actors, as well as to particular individuals. This relationship is a two-way one. Many—but not all—CDA groups seek external assistance for their projects as a shortcut to growth and profitability. On the other hand, there are plenty of would-be patrons around anxious to enlarge their own circle of (CDA group) clients. Mostly the patron's motive here is political—either in the narrow sense of gaining votes, or in the broad one of enhancing status and influence. Such status and influence is usually, but not necessarily, in regard to the clients themselves, or to the broader local community. For some international organisations, or at least their local representatives, it may be for their domestic audiences too or instead.

Most of the literature on patronage distinguishes between patronage and brokerage, although the distinction is in practice rarely watertight. A broker is someone whose main role is to establish a link between a group of clients and a patron. In this sense, brokers are themselves both clients (of more senior patrons) and minor patrons (of the clients they provide links for). The leaders of CDA groups are brokers insofar as they provide the group with contacts.

Both these latter dimensions of patronage reappear in relation to African-based NGOs. These act themselves not only as patrons (of CDA groups), but also as clients, usually of foreign organisations, but sometimes of the state elite or, more usually, of individuals in it. Their "competitiveness" as clients normally depends upon their ability to function as brokers.

It is worth pointing out that NGOs are not the only brokers, or even necessarily the most effective ones. Individual politicians have traditionally occupied this role in most of Africa (and not just Africa, of course), although probably to a lesser extent in Tanzania than elsewhere. Whatever the historical situation, they are certainly playing this role now. Because of the opportunities open to politicians for accumulation, they may also have the resources to act as patrons in their own right.

The situation in Ilala, Hai and Pemba South with regard to patronage of communities as a whole, in "social development" terms, has already largely been indicated. In all three areas, religious groups play a major role in this respect. In Hai this has always been the case, but in Ilala and Pemba South it is a trend of the last few years. Moreover, it is mainly associated not with the traditional European churches but with Islam. Interestingly, the form of patronage adopted by the Islamic organisations closely resembles that of the traditional Christian

churches in their evangelical phase. The provision of social facilities is directly accompanied by building places of worship, proselytising and also by cruder patronage techniques such as giving away free food and clothing. Presumably areas such as Ilala and Pemba South rather than Hai have been targeted, since here the populations have been predominantly Muslim since colonial times. In the case of Ilala, the scale of patronage involved is quite spectacular. Moreover, it has allowed certain of the individual patrons involved to present themselves as political representatives of the community and to negotiate on this basis with Dar es Salaam City Council.

Some of the broader, local-level political implications of this trend will be explored later. But it is worthwhile underlining that, as a mode of patronage, it is also linked to (elements of) the Tanzanian state itself playing a new brokerage role. Although some Islamic NGO funding is locally derived, much of it comes from rival Islamic states such as Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, Sudan, Iran, etc. This was "accessed", and Tanzania was "accessed" for these states, by the ascendent Zanzibar-linked section of the political elite.

In Hai and Pemba South, two other sorts of "community" patron are also present. In Hai, it is UNICEF that plays this role, through its provision of large numbers of feeding centres. Granted UNICEF cannot be everywhere, but its presence in Hai as opposed to other areas needs explanation, or at least it needs explanation in terms besides those of the district's malnutrition problem. Presumably it was persuaded to target Hai by a broker of some kind.

District Development Trusts/Trust Funds represent the other sort of community patron. In the case of Hai, as has been argued, they also represent a form of privatised local governement. But on Pemba South they much more closely resemble the Islamic NGOs. However, unlike the former, at least one of
them patronises specific individuals in the community also. The two Pemba Trusts represent different, and almost certainly rival, groups. The MDDF was not only founded by Dr Salim, who continues to act as its Chairman, but its Trustees' Committee comprises the district's Zanzibar House of Representatives MP, its national MP, the District Commissioner, the District CCM chair, the Secretary General of the CCM Youth Organisation as well as the politically well-connected 'hometown' figures of the General Manager of the National Insurance Corporation and the General Manager of Bizanje (the Zanzibar state export corporation). On the other hand, the Wawi Development Fund seems to be under the control of some of the Pemba South business community. Its Trustees' Committee consists of local business people and some professionals. The Wawi Fund, as indicated, is regarded as oppositional by the local state elite.

An examination of the CDA groups discloses a somewhat different pattern of patronage. Mainly as a result of the single party system, until the late 1980s it was difficult for such groups to emerge except as part of, or at least patronised by, CCM or one of its "mass organisations"—normally the national women's organisation UWT (see footnote 4). This relation was almost always a formal one, and CCM branch officers used to report them as part of party mobilisation activity.

The separation of party and state since 1992 has meant, in the case of registered CDA groups, formal political non-alignment and being "supervised" by local government rather than the party. Supervision is in the hand of District

Community Development Officers, but these are more technical experts than patrons. Thus, if groups want a patron, they have to seek a new one. Of course, this may involve confirming a pre-existing relation in some cases.

It appears that in Ilala there were relatively few CDA groups even before this separation. Moreover, they do not seem to have been able to mobilise powerful patrons before or since, nor does it seem that there has been a major scramble by potential patrons to mobilise them. City councillors seem to be closely involved with the groups, but the city's business and political elite's primary patronage investments seem to be concentrated much more on the NGOs on the one hand, and still in CCM on the other. For example, in 1992 Dar es Salaam women organised in UWT were collectively promised group loans and individual building plots by the president. In any case, a local elite hardly exists separately from the national elite, whose patronage resources are almost certainly primarily invested in the "hometown" sphere, the "deprivational" effects on Ilala of which have already been touched on.

In Hai, two of the three zero-grazing groups who were willing to disclose information on their patrons revealed that an interest had been taken in them by the wives of the current president and vice-president of the republic. Others who had taken an interest included local businessmen, the local MP , and ex-MP who became the Tanzanian High Commissioner in Zimbabwe (thus opening up what is know locally as the "Harare connection[6]"), the wife of an ex-minister and the wife of the ex-president! All these connections were basically mobilised by the local businessmen—some of them presumably of national importance who were themselves linked by marriage etc. to the CDA group officials. At the same time, it was also an attractive proposition for politicians to be identified with the large and thriving Hai-based projects.

The presence in Hai of so many "high quality" donors is also not accidental, being mediated by some of the same chains of connection just described. A strong business community has merged with politicians to chart out a development path for the district which grasps all the opportunities of the new international and national climate. Influential people in high positions respond to this agenda, and in doing so influence NGOs and donors to channel resources to Hai. Of course, this is not the only part of the story in Hai. Another part is the emergence of women's groups and their domination of the district's development agenda. These groups originate in collective responses to the tendency for men to monopolise household income and channel it into businesses in urban areas.

In contrast to Ilala and as in Hai, there has been a great expansion of CDA activity in Pemba South in the last few years. But this is not characterised by patronage relations of the kind found in Hai. Whereas in Hai CDA group formation has been initiated locally, even if does not have an unambiguously local focus, in Pemba South it has by and large been initiated by the state and by CCM. The Zanzibar government's return to the politics of an earlier era has been motivated by the strength of the political opposition on Pemba, where it is anticipated by observers that CCM would win only two constituencies in the event of an election. The government has responded to this in a variety ways, but

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[6] Through personal relations developed by the High Commissioner with officials at the New Zealand High Commission in Harare, certain CDA groups in Hai came to receive assistance directly from the government of New Zealand.

central to its strategy has been a tactic of showering money and resources on areas where political competition is fiercest. In these areas CDA groups have been formed from above, or mainly stimulated to appear, in order to receive state resources and money. For example, when taking a day to tour one CCM Branch in Chake Chake District in August 1992, the President of Zanzibar donated Tsh 5.5m (USD 15,700) in cash and kind to various projects. Meanwhile in neighbouring areas where CCM is either not under challenge, or where the opposition dominates and has "captured" CCM branches, CDA groups which have formed receive little or nothing. The central role played by money, as opposed to equipment, in the donations made in Pemba is also worth underlining. It is also worth pointing out that insofar as an opposition patronage strategy was detectable in Pemba, it did not actually differ that much from the state's. Basically, cash was provided to individuals or groups through the intercession of *Kamahuru* notables. On the other hand, the state seems to have prevented the opposition gaining access to the mass of CDA groups, thus restricting the extent of patronage they could exercise. Of course, there were aspects to the opposition's strategy other than patronage politics, but these cannot be explored here.


**A new civil society?**

As stated earlier, much of the literature on the recent rise of NGOs in Africa, and voluntary development initiatives more generally, suggests that they contribute to increased democratisation. They are said to do this in a number of ways. Firstly, they empower their own members, said to usually be those traditionally excluded from economic and political benefits, especially the poor. Secondly, in forming a mass of organisations between the state and the citizen, the power of the state is balanced and the "shelter" which citizens can find from an arbitrary state is increased. Thirdly, they propagate participatory methods of organisation which can lead to the generation of a political culture of increased accountability. The data described above bears out some of this picture, but also shows it to be very incomplete. In reality the NGO/CDA group phenomenon has no single or unambiguous meaning as far as questions of "civil society" and politics are concerned.

The issue of who is empowered and how by the developments described is a complex one. With regard to CDA groups, it would appear that the majority who are involved in their activities in Ilala and Hai are women, and in Pemba South men. Little unfortunately is known of their social composition, but extrapolating from the activities they were carrying out and from what was known about membership contribution levels, it would appear that it was the poor who were mainly but not exclusively involved in all three areas. However in Pemba South there was also one exclusively elite-based CDA group, while in Hai—in the successful zero-grazing projects at least—better-off women can at the least be said to be strongly represented.

The precise degree to which economic empowerment was taking place through the projects, and how this was internally distributed, is rather hard to gauge. The picture generally seems to be that the mass of CDA groups are involved in collective extensions of personal economic survival activities. This seemed to be true especially in Ilala and Pemba South. On the other hand, in Hai, some of the groups had visibly accumulated, sometimes on a truly spectacular scale.

Although it is a novel phenomenon for women in Hai to be able to do this, the households these women came from are probably ones which were relatively well-off already.

This relates to a further dimension of inequality/empowerment, namely the regional one. Of the three areas examined so far, CDA groups were clearly most strongly rooted in Hai. Hai has been undergoing a severe economic recession for well over a decade now, as a consequence of the crisis of the coffee industry. But it is still considerably better off than most rural areas in Tanzania, and is even comparable with Ilala on a certain counts (e.g. female literacy). On the other hand, there was also a surprising level of CDA group activity on Pemba.

With regard to political dimensions of empowerment through CDA group organisation, it is clear that in Ilala and Hai there was a stronger element of group self-organisation than in Pemba South. This was again most evident in Hai. The extent to which the CDA group experience in Pemba can be said to be empowering at all in this sense is open to doubt. Some of the groups there which had been assembled to receive money and equipment from the state, basically for electoral purposes, were apparently producing goods for which there was no market. More generally it seemed that a dependency culture had been created, with frequent complaints from group members that they ought to be receiving more. How this relates to more general issues of the promotion of societal accountability will be examined below.

Bilateral donors and international and national NGOs can be found primarily in Tanzania in two roles. The first of these is directly filling the gap in social service provision either lately vacated by the state or never filled in the first place. The second is as patrons of CDA groups. Provision of education, health facilities and clean water to populations that have not had access to them can be said to be empowering in the general sense that recipients' capacities are enhanced insofar as they are fitter and better educated. But the *mode of provision* of these services observed here does not appear to be especially empowering to the recipients. The latter's involvement seems to have been generally passive, as it has traditionally been in relation to the state. This was just as much the case with the Development Trusts as it was the other donors/ NGOs. But in the case of the Islamic NGOs the mode of provision was explicitly charitable, with non-religious education being supplied through scholarships, and social services being supplemented by free food and clothing. Again, the consequence is likely to be a dependency culture. This was also observed by the author in Same district, where DANIDA supports a number of women's projects on much the same basis. One could argue that if anyone or anything is being "empowered" in this process it is the NGOs themselves. Indeed, while this is clearly not the aim as far as DANIDA is concerned, it is part of a not particularly hidden agenda for the Islamic NGOs and also for Development Trusts such as those on Pemba.

As far as the donors/NGOs which are (also) supporting CDA groups are concerned, the situation is rather different. These are usually engaged in a genuine transfer of power, namely to the CDA groups themselves and the persons these represent (an exception is obviously the Zanzibar state-created groups). As has been seen however, CDA groups will not be the only ones to benefit in power terms from this process. Furthermore, NGOs in this role tend to reinforce other aspects of the existing power situation. For example, despite the fact that certain social indicators (e.g. the literacy rate) indicate that Pemba South

is twice as badly off as Hai, one finds a concentration of NGOs in Hai and not Pemba. This is partly because there is a viable existing base of such activities there already, and because the situation is to this extent a "promising" one. But the general effect is to reproduce or even enlarge existing inequalities (a sub-aspect of this process is that a division of labour also spontaneously emerges within NGOs themselves, with only the religious-based ones being found in the most backward areas).

Any consideration of the NGO/empowerment question should not neglect considering advocacy NGOs like TAMWA (see above). These play a crucial role with regard to those persons who they manage to come in contact with. But their own base, in the more progressive section of the urban middle-class, is a small one. This means that their capacity to intervene in an area like Ilala is also small, and that their overall social impact will unfortunately not be great.

The issue of the extent and ways to which state power is "balanced" by the great increase in private sector, NGO and CDA group presence is also a complex one. In general one can say that it has been balanced to a degree, but with important qualifications. Clearly with regard to economic activity and service provision Tanzania is a far more plural society than it was a decade ago. This is necessarily associated with a diminution of state power insofar as it was constituted in and through these areas. But the state is still playing the primary role in service provision, however ineffectively, even though the current privatisation programme suggests that this may not be the case for much longer. At present though, the alternative service providers are a fairly diverse and fragmented group, although of course the common thread of Islam runs through an increasing number of them. Some (e.g. the Development Trust Funds in Hai) are basically privatised state forms . Others (such as the Mkoani District Development Fund) turn out to be GONGOs. In neither case do their modes of provision seem to vary significantly from the state's, to the extent that they are likely to provide focuses of popular self-mobilisation. This also seems to be true of the non-DDT/DTF NGOs, who moreover are characterised by strong efforts to stay on cordial terms with the state. However, the DDT/DTF phenomenom does appear to genuinely signify that the private bourgeoisie is assuming a far more prominent role in local affairs than hitherto, as well as an acceptance on the part of the state that it cannot operate locally against or independent of it.

A heightened political role for the private bourgeoisie is also one of the emergent properties of NGOs assuming patronage over CDA groups. This link is tending to overshadow patronage as it was excercised by the local state, although the latter remains linked to it in a number of ways. So too are members of the national state elite, indicating *inter alia* the close links between business and state elites themselves. As in the case of the bilateral and multilateral donors and international NGOs there is little evidence of local business elites attempting to consciously *monopolise* the political benefits they acquire. Some such attempts are evident amongst certain religious NGOs, however.

In conclusion, this paper will look at the question of whether a tendency toward greater social and political accountability is implied by the developments described. The answer is generally a qualified yes, though not necessarily for the reasons proponents of the NGO—democratisation thesis have generally maintained. There is also an important range of exceptions, whose examination clarifies the general picture.

A few words have already been said about the Mkoani District Development Fund. This is an extreme case of non-accountability and the reproduction of non-accountability, but it is also part of a more general phenomenon. Not only is this fund run exclusively by the economic and political elite of Pemba South, but its chief patron and chairman continues to closely supervise its activities even though, as OAU Secretary General, he is based in Addis Ababa. All minutes of the fund's meetings have to be sent to Addis for his approval. But more to the point is that the fund's relation to ordinary people is simply that of providing basically public services to the population at large. A patronage relation is present but it is an extremely diffuse and to this extent one-sided one. There is no organised client group, only a general situation of clientage. At the other end of the spectrum is the situation in Hai. Here client groups became organised in advance and independently of patrons, and the patron/client relation is a negotiated one—even if it is often negotiated by brokers rather than with ordinary people themselves. To this extent donors and NGOs can be to some extent held responsible for their actions, and a culture of accountability develops. It is necessary to note that this is basically marked by the nature and content of the patronage relation, though. The "civil society" that the CDA groups constitute is one organised around issues of resource allocation, and in which those in power are held accountable mainly as patrons or brokers.

Just as with the incorporation of local business elites into a (privatised) local government, this is a major advance as far as democratic politics in Tanzania is concerned, for what it replaces is a situation where there was practically no form of public accountability. Moreover, it is associated with a growth in other forms of popular accountability, promoted by amongst others the independent press and an increasingly self-assertive parliament. In some cases, a political voice is being found by long-silent organisations with strong links to CDAs. For example, the Roman catholic Bishop J Lebulu issued a statement in May 1993 criticising the country's leadership for its corruption and immorality and calling on all catholics to expose corrupt leadership wherever it is found (*Family Mirror,* May 1993).

How the growing assertion of freedom of political criticism on the national stage relates to the rise of a limited form of popular accountability remains to be explored. The former is mainly based on an opening from above by the state and the emergence of a new national political scene whose chief features are the demise of *ujamaa* and a Presidency associated with a transformation of the traditional Christian/Muslim and Zanzibar/Mainland balances of power. But the limited form of popular accountability described here seems to have a tendency to go beyond calls for more patronage, and is in any case difficult to keep insulated from an increasingly vibrant national politics.

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# Ethnicity, Patronage and Class in a Local Arena: "High" and "Low" politics in Kiambu, Kenya, 1982–92

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Kiambu, the home district of Kenya's first President Jomo Kenyatta and many of the powerful elite which gathered around him, ended the 1970s as the country's most politically central and influential area. By 1993 it was one of its most marginal, at least in terms of the politics of the ruling party, KANU (Kenyan African National Union). Basically, this change in Kiambu's significance reflected a gradual but decisively radical reconstitution of the nature of the dominant national political coalition during the Second Republic. But Kiambu was not simply "left out" of politics during the decade after 1982. An effort—ultimately unsuccessful—was made by the centre to retain dominance in Kiambu while breaking its national political and economic influence. Hence its politics was amongst the liveliest in the country, as the presidency of Daniel Arap Moi systematically intervened in local processes in order to dislocate or neutralise existing forces and alliances and attempt to reconstitute new ones. In relation to these systematic efforts to reconstitute Kiambu politics from above, various political instruments and actors were discarded or reshaped and others introduced. Further, different local groupings competed to take advantage of this process or subvert it in various ways. Towards the end of the process a completely new politics emerged in Kiambu, with a novel class content and party form, but not the ones anticipated. This paper attempts to trace the different "high" and "low" political processes involved in these events and reflect on what they tell us generally about politics in Kenya.

## Prologue I: Identities and alignments in rural Kenyan politics in 1992

As part of a more general investigation of the relation between multipartyism and development politics, I conducted fieldwork in a number of areas of rural Kenya in 1993 in which I attempted to establish the main determinants of local voting patterns in the recently held multiparty elections. Part of this fieldwork was in Kiambu, where it was an extension of my earlier research. But perhaps a better introduction to the general nature of current political identities and alignments in Kenya is provided by briefly looking at three other areas: Siaya in Nyanza Province, Taita Taveta in Coast Province and Elgeyo Marakwet in the Rift Valley.

### Siaya: the "Odinga religion"

Siaya, on the eastern shore of Lake Victoria, is the heart of Kenya's Luoland. Organisations like Ping Owacho, the Kavirondo Taxpayers' Welfare Association and Kisumu Native Chamber of Commerce of the 1920s, the Luo Unions from the 1930s, and the Luo Thrift & Trading Corporation of the 1940s and 50s all combined to form a distinct Luo ethnic identity which at the same time became a

major component of anti-colonial politics. Luos, Kenya's second largest ethnic group, also came to play major roles in the education sector and in the state bureaucracy more generally. But apart from a brief interlude in the 1950s and 60s, Siaya remained extremely underdeveloped. Even today, its principal economic importance is as a labour reserve. According to the 1979 Kenyan Census it had the highest out-migration rate of any district in Kenya. Maize growing and cattle keeping predominate, but there are very few large farms or herds. Siaya's major fortunes appear to have been made in trade, especially retail trade (Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo, 1988: 80–81).

Luo politics in the 1950s and 60s polarised between Tom Mboya, standing for western-style meritocracy and individual achievement, and Oginga Odinga, described by Parkin (1978: 214) as standing for "the collective defence of the Luo community through both corporatist radical thought and Luo conservatism". Odinga, who had been vice-president, was by 1966 forced to pursue these goals outside KANU. Their vehicle, the Kenya People's Union (KPU) acquired strong support amongst the Luo but was banned in 1969. Odinga has been in the national political wilderness ever since. Mboya was meanwhile assassinated, an event in which the state was itself implicated. These two events created a distance between the Luo and the government; the latter also indirectly created a distance between the Luo and the Kikuyu.

Residents of Siaya commonly express the sentiment that Luos made a great contribution to the anti-colonial struggle, but have never been properly rewarded. They also claim that since the demise of Mboya and the eclipse of Odinga, most Luo areas have been deprived of state sponsored development interventions. As Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo wrote in 1988, Siaya is infused with feelings of "subjection to political domination" (ibid: 82), whether this domination was by Kenyatta or Moi.

These feelings are transmuted into an uncritical admiration for and quasi-religious faith in the man who has come to personify Luoland's own "persistence" in the face of "persecution", Oginga Odinga. The basic social services which are present in Siaya are popularly attributed to Odinga's efforts while vice-president. The provincial public hospital located in Kisumu is known locally as "Russia', and stories abound of Odinga's initiation of it with Soviet funds. His Soviet connections are also said to be the basis for many of the overseas scholarships which allowed Luos to achieve prominence in the education sector. Further, the building in 1980 of a major textile factory (KICOMI) in Kisumu is attributed to the brief period when Odinga was reabsorbed into the KANU leadership.

Though ousted nationally, being almost continuously based outside KANU and even being detained or placed under house arrest by both Kenyatta and Moi, Odinga has continued to dominate local-level politics in Siaya—and Luoland more generally—since the banning of the KPU in 1969. With the exception of the rigged elections of 1988, all those who won on KANU tickets during the 1970s and 80s were his "annointees". Odinga annoints candidates while attending local gatherings, where he makes a speech which concludes with an appeal to those attending to "greet" a certain person, who then is officially adopted. His advice is followed to the letter and his annointees win elections without difficulty.

In 1991–92 Odinga became involved in the foundation of the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD). Later in 1992 he became leader of one of its two factions, FORD–Kenya. Siaya became FORD–Kenya territory. Odinga's approach to the multiparty election did not differ much from that of earlier times. On this occasion he openly instructed FORD–Kenya supporters in Siaya to nominate specific candidates. How far this approach differed from Kenyatta's and Moi's own practices of "moulding" (see below) is open to question.

Better off people interviewed in Siaya talked about Odinga's role in protests against "forced terracing by the white man" and his sacrifice of a teaching career to politicise the people against colonial rule. They tended to then proceed to argue that he had been consistently identified with the advocacy of "just causes"—and not only or even mainly Luo ones, up to and including becoming Kenya's "father of political liberalisation". As a result, he deserved to be rewarded with the presidency. But ordinary people tended to put the matter in more basic terms. While also complaining about Luoland's history of external domination, there was little or no talk of national issues or Odinga's national role. Odinga and FORD–Kenya were seen as instruments for creating a "Presidency at home", i.e. one in and for Luoland.

*The* majimbo *factor in Taita Taveta and Elgeyo Marakwet*

Taita Taveta district straddles plain and mountain areas on Kenya's south-eastern border with Tanzania. Although not especially well-off, it has a varied resource base, with some export and commercial food cropping (maize, beans and vegetables) in the high- and medium-potential upland areas and other food-crop production and livestock on the plains. Mombasa is a major market for both foodstuffs and labour, although there is also heavy legal and non-legal cross-border trade. The area is inhabited by members of the relatively small Taita and Taveta ethnic groups.

From the outset of KANU's rise to political prominence in colonial Kenya, the Taita and Taveta were numbered amongst its supporters. Despite being small tribes, they were never part of the coalition of Rift Valley and coastal groups which became identified with the politics of *majimbo*, or federalism as it was then defined. The latter was promoted by an alliance of white settlers wishing to retain a major role in the politics of an independent Kenya, and several of the country's minority ethnic groups arguing that their interests and identities would be swallowed in a Kenya dominated by an alliance of Kikuyu and Luo, as embodied in KANU. *Majimbo* was implicit in the constitution bequeathed to KANU by the British in 1963, and also became the platform of a distinct party, KADU, which however amalgamated with KANU (Kenya African Democratic Union) soon after independence. The terms of this amalgamation were that the removal of the *majimbo* principle from the constitution was traded for an enhanced role in the KANU state for certain of the smaller ethnic groups. This was implicitly reasserted under the Second Republic. However, the Taita and Taveta have never been especially close to the centre of power.

In the months before the multiparty elections, and especially before the split in FORD, it seemed very likely that KANU would lose power in Kenya. As a result a steady trickle of KANU MPs, particularly those out of favour with the KANU leadership, left the party and joined the opposition—presumably often after having made a deal that they would receive an opposition party nomination.

This occurred in Taita Taveta also. Opposition party candidates in the district also included certain senior government officials in a similar position.

Despite being "beheaded" in Taita Taveta, KANU retained power there with surprising ease. Two reasons stood out in discussions with local people. The first, and probably most important in Taita Taveta, was the "development record" of the defectors from KANU. People were concerned that those in the opposition had done little to advance development in the district when in KANU, and had instead used their positions for self-enrichment. "Enhancing development" basically meant providing tangible social benefits and opportunities for economic advancement to individuals and groups in the area. The election of the defectors on a new ticket was seen as likely to reproduce the area's relative marginalisation.

KANU was viewed with much less hostility than the individuals who had represented it. This was partly because the government made efforts to continue to cultivate the area even after its leading local representatives had jumped ship. There was famine during the election period and foodstuffs were distributed in the name of KANU. Of course, the opposition parties were not in a position to compete on this front. One immediate interpretation amongst women group members was that "if KANU could demonstrate the ability to feed them now, the party could do better things when in power".

While there have sometimes been Taita MPs in Taita Taveta, there have never been Taveta ones. The Taveta have instead traditionally been represented by Kamba politicians. With these abandoning KANU (at least locally), a Greek sisal plantation owner was nominated as KANU candidate for one constituency, in opposition to a former Cabinet minister. The local campaign—which the Greek won—revolved to a large extent around the fact that while both were substantial landowners, only the Greek had transferred ownership of part of his estate to landless squatters.

A second reason was that KANU representatives were able to call upon the area's historical identification with the party, through thick and thin. Unlike in Siaya, the issue of the area's problems was thus seen as separate from that of confidence or lack of confidence in KANU. On the other hand, support for KANU was now partly expressed amongst the Taita and Taveta in the form of a popular *majimbo*ism. At least some people felt that the opposition parties were "founded by large up-country ethnic groups to dominate the smaller ones". In particular, voting for Moi in the presidential election was seen as an appropriate response. Such evoked "historical" interests cemented relations between Taita Taveta and KANU and fenced off the opposition from the electorate.

Elgeyo Marakwet district lies at the centre of the western escarpment of Kenya's Rift Valley. About three quarters of the district is medium- or high-potential land at an altitude of over 1000 meters. The remainder is more marginal, but by no means arid. The district is inhabited by two Kalenjin communities, the Keiyo and the Marakwet, who are quite similar culturally and institutionally. The communities are divided into clans and lineages which occupy territories which run vertically from the valley floor to the highlands. Farm holdings are mostly small by Rift Valley standards, rarely exceeding five hectares, but there is no landlessness. Most households are engaged in a combination of maize production and livestock keeping.

Elgeyo Marakwet developed visibly during the Second Republic, presumably as a result of its close links with the presidency, which has been occupied by a Kalenjin. For example, between 1979 and 1983 alone an office of the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) was established in Iten, along with 24 stores. Four cooperative stores were also built. 26 new cattle dips were built, bringing the total to 96 and a further 49 were under construction. The number of primary schools rose from 150 to 210, and the number of secondary schools from 13 to 23 (all figures from Republic of Kenya, 1984a). The District Development Plan also reported that over the same period 90 women's groups had been started in the area, of which 62 percent had benefited from government grants. However, only 10 groups were actually engaged in identifiable economic projects (ibid: 43).

According to Throup (1987a: 54) the Kieyo and Marakwet have always been amongst the Kalenjin (sub-)ethnic groups most identified with Moi. In 1992 all political factions in the district indeed swore loyalty to the president. Indeed, their differences were really over ensuring that they were recognised as his "most" loyal constituency. In other words, political competition in the district revolved around the issue of providing Moi with an acknowledged "subaltern" elite. The factions tended to be led by prominent businessmen, big farmers and other notables, and the main bases on which they attempted to mobilise support were appeals to (sub-)ethnic Keiyo and Marakwet identities. The "Keiyo faction" was led by one of the country's most powerful figures, Nicholas Biwott, and the main rallying cry of the "Marakwet faction" was that Biwott had distanced the latter from state power.

The multiparty elections of late 1992 provided a basis for the plastering over of these differences. Although the Marakwets continued to complain about Keyio dominance, as Kalenjin they were obliged to vote for Moi. The rationale for this was precisely the same as the Luo masses" rationale for supporting Odinga. A Moi presidency was a "presidency at home". The difference was that in the case of the Kalenjin, the meaning of a "presidency at home" was—at least initially—one which would "protect their acquisitions", which have been made mostly under the Second Republic and often directly at the expense of other groups.

From the outset of the (re)introduction of multipartyism (the end of 1991), it became clear that the local elites were articulating both a new meaning for a "presidency at home" and for *majimbo*. Federalism was now talked of in terms of confining ethnic groups to their "home" districts. In essence, this meant expelling from the Rift Valley those Kikuyu who had been settled there first by the British and later by Kenyatta. Many of these Kikuyu had accumulated on a grand scale, and in certain areas (notably, but not only, Nakuru) they were a physical majority of the population. Hence a "presidency at home" would be one in which Kalenjin could acquire property on a very substantial scale. This rhetoric formed an important background to the dynamic which the so-called "tribal land clashes" took on throughout 1992 and 1993.


**Prologue II: Politics and development institutions in Kenya**

At least since independence, local politics and local development have been inseparable in Kenya. A key role in this relationship is provided by the

institution of *harambee* (literally, pulling together). *Harambee* has its roots in traditional resource-pooling activities amongst the Kenyan peasantry. However, its official recognition and institutionalisation dates from Kenyatta's use of the term in 1963 to denote local collective voluntary initiatives in social development projects. Henceforth, communities mobilised themselves and their resources in *harambee* efforts to build local schools, health clinics, wells, cattle dips and, later, village polytechnics. *Harambee* efforts seem to have been especially great in those areas where and at those times when peasant surpluses were largest. But usually they were still made in the expectation that the state would meet the running costs of what was constructed by villagers themselves. Often too they involved forced contributions of one kind or another.

The political significance of *harambee* is is that throughout the independence period it has been a means by which politicians could establish constituencies amongst participants in particular projects. This they did by being themselves instrumental in the initiation of projects and/or demonstrating their prowess as political brokers by getting the state to accept financial responsibility for them.
Of course there were other gainers too, notably the communities as a whole which benefited from the projects, local civil servants who could advance their career as "development agents", and local elites who could often siphon off a part of the contributions for their own use.

Recent years have seen three general changes affecting the structure and politics of development activity. Firstly, there have been significant modifications in the nature of what counts as a *harambee* project. One aspect of this, as Ngau (1987) argues, is that there has been a tendency for ever more grandiose district-level projects such as sports stadiums—for which local-level benefits are small—to be presented as *harambee* ones, and for contributions to be demanded for them. Another aspect is that it is has become not unusual for *harambees* to be called for relatively mundane matters, for example to pay a family's or group of families' health or education expenses. A final aspect is that there has been a tendency for permanent self-help groups (usually women's groups with economic objectives) to mushroom, some of which acquire *harambee*-type support from politicians and the state.

A second general trend is that there has been a substantial growth in the presence of (foreign) NGOs, which act as additional potential patrons to the activities and groups described, and create new opportunities for political brokerage. Interviews with informed observers indicated that local political incursions into the operations of NGOs tend to be relatively limited, however. Indeed, their status as non-political donors was precisely what made them somewhat suspect to the Kenyan state. A more significant political dimension of NGOs was usually that of their location (see Kiondo, this volume).

In 1983 a government initiative entitled "District Focus for Rural Development" (DFRD) was introduced, ostensibly to democratise, decentralise and make the state-funded element of development planning more equitable and efficient. But despite formal provision for project proposals to be initiated at sub-location level and "floated up" to the district level, the state was to control official development allocations to districts, and District Development Committees— chaired by the District Commissioner and containing a mixture of administrative officers, development professionals and local politicians—were to make the allocations. In fact, in Kiambu at least, making proposals about projects and decisions about

their implementation is basically the preserve of the sub-chief and his allies. Ordinary people are rarely if ever consulted over a project. Similarly, at the location level the chief is the decision-maker except where there is a strong local councillor, in which case he is. The same is true at the divisional level with the Divisional Officer, except where there is a politically-connected MP. Political jostling on various scales is exhibited at the (highest) district level. Here the most politically powerful individuals control the distribution of resources. A common complaint is that they divert them to those areas either where they have their largest support, or are trying hardest to attract it.

Although legally required to work through the DFRD institutions, most voluntary groups and initiatives have no relation to them. In other words, the institution of *harambee* continues to by-pass centralised control. Naturally, this does not mean that it is not centrally influenced.


**Prologue III: "High politics" in the Kenyatta state and the early Moi years**

At independence, Kenya inherited a combination of a highly authoritarian state, in which the centre could exercise detailed local control over all aspects of affairs through the system of provincial administration, partly counter-balanced by a fairly active civic and party realm. The first five years of the First Republic saw a sharply increased emphasis on the use of the provincial administration and major efforts to wind down or demobilise the civic realm—including that aspect of it represented by KANU. The party began the period as a mass one in which a variety of ideological and ethno-regional interests coexisted, but ended it as a highly factionalised organisation with no mass content, in which ideological differences had been forcibly suppressed and in which a rather narrow ethno-regional grouping had gained a dominant position with regard to powerful positions. This ethno-regional grouping was Kiambu-based. Beside Kenyatta himself, the other main Kiambu power brokers were Mbiyu Koinange (Minister of State in the Office of the President and Kenyatta's brother-in-law), James Gichuru (Minister of Defence), Njoroge Mungai (Minister of Foreign Affairs and one-time personal physician to Kenyatta), Charles Njonjo (Attorney General) and Isaiah Mathenge, Charles Koinange and Eliud Mahihu (all Provincial Commissioners who were related to Kenyatta via kinship) (Ochieng and Karimi, 1981). The other Kikuyu constituencies of Nyeri and Murang'a were incorporated in a clearly subordinate role within the inner circle, while other allies of Kenyatta stood outside it completely. The powers of the Vice President (Moi) for example, were steadily reduced.

Within this scenario however, Kenyatta exercised power relatively cautiously and pragmatically. A stable group of elected and civil servant technocrats were closely involved in the formulation and even enunciation of policy, while the provincial administration took control of the party. With certain obvious exceptions, civil society organisations were allowed some degree of autonomy and those opposed to Kenyatta were persecuted only within certain limits. The elite generally preferred to consolidate its interests economically, with the help of state institutions. The Kiambu politicians in the process accumulated land and company directorships, and the means to embark on careers as capitalist entrepreneurs in their own right. They also provided these, and the consequent opportunity to reward supporters with employment, to their clients. Subaltern

groups within the elite, like the Nyeri and Murang'a accumulated mainly from the residue of Kiambu gains.

In the context of the concentration of power in Kiambu, the absence of party politics and the limited nature of other political channels, ethno-regional organisations provided a major focus of activity. However, only the Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association (GEMA) was allowed to assume an explicitly political character, because inner court members played a leading role in it.
Yet even GEMA only began to occupy an important role in the country's affairs when the organisation's leading lights, alarmed by Kenyatta's approaching demise, sought to have the constitutional provision on succession changed. A move to change the constitution in order to block a succession by the incumbent Vice President was initiated in 1976 but shelved by Kenyatta on the advice of Njonjo. Furthermore, divisions within the Kiambu hierarchy itself neutralised its effectiveness. Nonetheless it left an indelible impression on Moi, and the politics of the Second Republic need to be understood in this context.

It appears that from the outset Moi held the GEMA clique responsible for the obstacles he encountered in gaining experience for high office, not to mention in assuming it. Punishing the GEMA factionalists and managing the deteriorating economy were Moi's main challenge, but he lacked both the confidence and the established clientele to do so alone. The immediate option was to rely upon certain members of the Kikuyu elite to manage day to day affairs while in the meantime charting a course of legitimising his leadership. From the elite he took on board Charles Njonjo (as Attorney General) and Mwai Kibaki (as Vice President), neither of whom had been closely identified with GEMA. He also recruited to his side Joseph Kamotho and G G Kariuki, to create a nascent Kikuyu clientele. This new clique's task was to assist in accessing some of the less receptive GEMA strongholds. *Harambee* fund drives were the main forum in this regard. The drives became fora for Moi to make populist pronouncements aimed at winning over the Kikuyu poor, while also demonstrating his largesse. Amongst the pronouncements which became policy were ones promising free primary education and state sponsored milk programmes for primary schools. These raised considerable expectations amongst the poor, but over time became increasingly difficult for the state to afford. Their failure eventually had serious implications, with disillusionment and disenchantment setting in.

Moi also began to court the support of the numerically very strong Luo and Luhya ethnic groups in order to expand his base. These welcomed the promise of equality of political and economic opportunity denied them under Kenyatta. Aware that Kikuyu domination and corruption were synonymous for these groups, he further enunciated an anti-corruption campaign. A change of faces in the police and provincial administration followed. The new faces which replaced Kikuyu ones were Luo, Luhya and above all Kalenjin.

As Moi's popularity rose, and more particularly in the wake of the failed Air Force coup of 1982, Moi began to move to marginalise or discard his remaining Kikuyu allies. It was at this point that really systematic intervention from above was initiated in Kiambu politics.

## Kiambu

It was no accident that the bulk of Kenya's post-independence political elite came from Kiambu. For Kiambu was not only the site or base of many of the key tensions and forces which drove the independence movement, but also for that part of the African elite which stood outside and opposed to it, and which nevertheless managed through it to entrench its leading economic position within the country.

Commodity production was generalised at a very early stage in Kiambu. As early as the late 1920s the district was producing food crops (Irish potatoes and wheat) for the Nairobi market in large quantities, as well as wattle. In 1942 its District Commissioner wrote: "Kiambu eats maize and rice but grows very little of either. The supply comes from elsewhere and is paid for in cash obtained in Nairobi by the sale of firewood, charcoal, potatoes, eggs etc., which the Nairobi people need, and things that people in other parts need too—labour, wattle and timber" (quoted in Kitching, 1980: 111–12). Much of this production was carried out by a group of what David Throup (1987b) has called "proto-capitalist" farmers. However, another considerable element of it was in the hands of clan heads and/or chiefs, who also dominated trade. Not only European settlers, but also the latter had been clearing former dependents and/or tenants from their land from 1905 onwards. Indeed, it was they who this same District Commissioner had in mind when he had written the previous year that "hundreds, possibly even thousands of acres have changed hands by "irredeemable sale" during the past 10 to 15 years and most of this has gone into the hands of a few people" (quoted in Furedi, 1989: 6).

In the late 1940s thousands of landless Kiambu Kikuyu who had been squatting on European farms in the Rift Valley were evicted and returned to the district, where they added to the already considerable numbers of landless and agitated for a land redistribution. This protest eventually subsided, but in the early 1950s another arose in reaction to an intensification of colonial agricultural regulations. This proved more persistent and united most of the peasantry behind the "proto-capitalists" and against the chiefs and colonial administration. In the context of the intensifying Mau Mau conflict, new land laws were meanwhile passed which consolidated the legal position (and thereby access to bank loans) of all propertied groups in the district—although they probably at least temporarily also slowed down the differentiation process. Furthermore, from the early 1950s collaborators were allowed to grow the then highly lucrative leaf crops of coffee and tea.

On the one hand, the concentration of the tensions of the colonial situation in Central Province and the Kikuyu diaspora meant that Kikuyu would play a dominant role in any nationalist movement. On the other hand, the related concentration of capitalist growth in Kiambu meant that in any independence settlement in which "reconciliation" was emphasised, the Kiambu elite would be those best placed to benefit. It was not a coincidence that the leadership of the nationalist movement fell to a member of the Kiambu elite who had not been co-opted, and that on becoming leader he should pursue a "reconciliatist" policy.

Throughout the Kenyatta state Kiambu could boast of being at the forefront of economic progress in Kenya. The independence period saw the generalisation of coffee, and to a lesser extent tea, to smaller farmers and major expansions in both

milk and horticultural production. By 1979 a significant proportion of the district was under tomatoes and carrots and there were 70,000 grade cattle producing around 15 m litres of milk a year (Republic of Kenya, 1984b). Manufacturing had also been established in three of the district's towns—Thika, Ruiru and Limuru. The district had also acquired a relatively developed infrastructure with, for example, almost 500 miles of tarmac road and 97 government secondary schools (0.14 per thousand residents, as opposed to 0.02 in Siaya and 0.08 in Taita Taveta and Elgeyo Marakwet (Republic of Kenya, 1984a,b,c,d). Ironically Gatundu, Kenyatta's own bailiwick, was one of the least developed parts of the district. Kenyatta's personal dominance there inhibited the rise of other patrons with an interest in attracting resources to the area, which was instead principally characterised by the appropriation of state resources for personal enrichment by his close relatives.

While the early years of the Kenyatta state saw a partial relief of the district's relative over-population through the promotion of substantial settlement schemes (mainly in the Rift Valley), the late 1970s and 1980s witnessed its intensification. Non-Kikuyu migrated into the district in large numbers to find manufacturing employment, while wealthy Kenyans from Nairobi bought up considerable tracts of Kiambu land for settlement or speculative purposes. According to the 1979 Census, the district had the highest population growth rate in the country, well over 4 percent per annum. The population at this time was already 686,000. From the onset of the land clashes in 1991 the relative over-population problem worsened further, as—repeating the events of 1947—thousands of Kiambu Kikuyu displaced from the Rift Valley were forced to resettle in the district. It seems likely that this once again had a radicalising effect on local politics.

Administratively, the district today comprises seven divisions, 29 locations and 143 sub-locations. The divisions are also parliamentary constituencies. These are Kiambaa, Gatundu, Thika/Juja, Kikuyu, Lari, Githunguri and Limuru. In the 1970s these were represented by the core Kenyatta-era elite. Kenyatta himself sat for Gatundu. Mbiyu Koinange, the President's closest ally, adviser and confidant, held the Kiambaa constituency and Gichuru held Limuru. Dagoretti, which was then still part of Kiambu, was held by Njoroge Mungai.

The district has always been a major centre for voluntary development initiatives and groups. In 1992 there were 1200 registered women's groups alone in Kiambu (probably not all of these were active). Almost all were communal labour groups, credit unions or groups engaged in income-generating activities such as basket-making, trading in food crops, and rearing and selling of livestock. A few groups had built houses or social halls, and even shops and offices for rent. Some of the non-women's groups were involved in water or cattle dip projects, but a clear majority were school development committees. These activities have always been permeated by politics, but as local political competition has become fiercer in recent years the local development administration which is supposed to supervise them "has become sandwiched in political warfare with little compromise" (interview with chief in Kikuyu).

## Kiambu politics in the Second Republic

It has already been noted that the period 1979–82 saw Moi exclude the hard core GEMA politicians from the inner circles of power. In 1983 he repeated this exercise with the major remaining Kikuyu political giant, Charles Njonjo– who as noted had helped Moi to power four years before. However, this time the exercise was accompanied by the beginning of a general attempt to reconstitute the local-level political landscape in Central Province, and particularly in Kiambu. The latter until this time remained dominated by GEMA. For example, when Mbiyu Koinange stood down from representing Kiambaa in 1979, his seat was inherited by Njenga Karume– another close associate of Kenyatta and leading figure in GEMA.

In his efforts to break up the powerful existing political networks in Kiambu, Moi used both the provincial administration and a revitalised KANU. Throughout the country, but especially in Central Province, district branches were revived and local party officials made full-time employees. Onto the scene came KANU district chairmen with direct access to the president. Some existing MPs and even cabinet ministers read the signs and themselves managed to become district chairmen, but a more common situation was for relatively forgotten figures from the past (including former freedom fighters), or for relative unknowns to be drafted into this role.

At this level, the reconstitution of KANU from above can be best summed up as a strategy of "personality disengagement and recycling'. As part of a more general national scheme of simultaneously playing off ethnic groups against each other while sharply upgrading some at the expense of others, individual politicians were played off against each other in the same manner. Amongst other things, politicians were adopted—or re-adopted—and then explicitly moulded for specific and usually destructive missions. Having accomplished this they would then be dropped. Sometimes, "dropping" took the drastic form of being simultaneously stripped of all positions and being expelled from KANU, on the basis of decisions by the also revitalised party disciplinary committee. In general though, both they and the politicians whose bases they destroyed stood good chances of being recycled at a later date, to perform other missions. The incentive of remaining in the game was that when "engaged" they were in position to accumulate on a grand scale. Opportunities for "engaged" politicians to accumulate in this scenario were significantly amplified because the means which was adopted for their promotion was to give them access to state funds and resources in order to develop clienteles.

After the 1983 general election, the first individual to be promoted in Kiambu was Arthur Magugu from Githunguri. The state's support for Magugu in Kiambu was similar to that already described as having been provided from 1979 to Joseph Kamotho and G G Kariuki in Central Province generally. Funding was made available for Magugu to organise/initiate a series of major *harambees* in his constituency. These were personally attended by the president, whose "own" contributions were important. Magugu's mission was to establish a major personal base and hence displace Karume as the district's political king-pin. Karume meanwhile found it very difficult to organise as many or as impressive *harambees* himself.

Magugu ultimately proved ineffective in breaking down the power either of Karume or of the Kenyatta family in Kiambu, however. It became clear that this process had to be tackled directly as well as indirectly. The period 1983–85 therefore saw a series of direct presidential interventions. These took the form of a stepping-up of his personal visits to self-help projects, and a use of these to order land-buying companies to sub-divide their land into individual units and, relatedly, to campaign against local instances of corruption. The issue of those who set up land-buying companies refusing to distribute purchased land to those who had paid for it was locally a hot one, and indeed several legal cases relating to it are still pending.

Of greater importance for patronage purposes was a campaign against corruption in the cooperative society leaderships. Here the role of politicians with respect to cooperative groups was targeted. Politicians used their presence on committees of particular cooperatives both to accumulate at the expense of peasants and to entrench local clienteles. Lamb (1974) dates this process in nearby Murang'a to the period of intense KANU/KPU struggle of 1966–69. But now Moi issued a decree banning civil servants and full-time politicians from election to or campaigning for cooperative committee membership. According to a study by Hedlund (1988) of a coffee cooperative in Nyeri, this decree was extremely popular with small-scale coffee farmers. Tellingly though it was to be rescinded in 1986, presumably to entrench a new generation of local politicians.

While having had some destructive success, particularly at the lower levels, Moi however still lacked a major client of his own in the district. From the mid-1980s he began to promote a former Vice Chancellor of the University of Nairobi, Josephat Karanja. Karanja was launched at a bye-election in Mathare Valley, Nairobi caused by the the incumbent MP fleeing to Sweden after the bank which he owned suddenly collapsed[1]. Karanja was an old arch-rival of Magugu, whose seat he had already contested twice. His target was both Karume and the failed Magugu himself.

The 1988 elections were to prove a turning point in national politics in Kenya. In an effort to weaken all current and potential opposition elements in KANU and to establish a swathe of members of parliament personally dependent on the Presidency *mlolongo* (queue voting) was introduced. Some of those whose loyalty was considered doubtful were "defeated" by candidates with shorter queues. In Kiambu, Ngengi Muigai—a nephew of Kenyatta's—was rigged out of the family's "own" Gatundu seat. In his place came a local businessman, Zachariah Gakunju, who had lost twice to Muigai in earlier elections. A client of Moi was also elected in Limuru.

After the election Mwai Kibaki was dropped as Vice President in favour of Karanja. This was to mark the beginning of the most intensive phase of the efforts of the presidency to reshape Kiambu politics. Under Karanja, hitherto totally unknown politicians with bountiful resources emerged in the district. *Harambees* were organised specifically for the purpose of "familiarising" them with their electorates. They carried donations from the president and/or his close associates and tended to devote their speeches to heaping praise upon him for supporting various voluntary initiatives and more generally for his "spirit of being mindful of other Kenyans". Another increasingly prevalent theme became the disloyalty,

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1 This was one of several Kikuyu-owned banks which collapsed at the time, an event which most Kikuyu at least saw as politically engineered.

treachery to the president and subjection to "foreign masters" of one's personal political opponents, and of civic organisations like the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) which had complained about the abuse of the electoral process in 1988. *Harambees* which the president himself attended became even more significant. National policy on all manner of issues was increasingly articulated through them. Ministers felt obliged to attend, since absence was read as a sign of disenchantment.

Correspondingly, the period between 1988 and 1992 was marked by frenetic development project planning—but little real development, as a majority of projects never got beyond the planning stage. Sometimes this was because genuine projects became sabotaged. The words "money has been poured" became a password for politicians envious of voluntary development initiatives sponsored by their rivals, who were routinely accused of using foreign money "to tarnish the development records of loyal politicians". More often it was because the politicians with whom they were associated were experiencing the marginalisation stage of their political cycle, or had in some cases been put into permanent cold storage by the KANU disciplinary committee. Conversely, many of these projects were probably never serious in the first place, but were increasingly put forward by members of the community for survival or accumulation purposes, in order to attract a share of the substantial funds which now seemed to be slushing around in Kiambu.

Karanja also embarked upon attempts to cleanse the local administration of persons associated with rival centres of power. Several senior officials at district level were removed, as were three chiefs in Githunguri who were close associates of Magugu. However, in general his penetration of the grassroots remained slight. Karume, Muigai and George Muhoho in Juja managed to restrict his base in their own bailiwicks, even though they had little formal power. As a result, Karanja was soon obliged to concentrate his attentions on Githunguri.

Moi had meanwhile been preparing possible substitutes for Karanja. Magugu was slowly "recycled" into the system but more significantly a virtually unknown government motor mechanic, Kuria Kanyingi from Limuru, was catapulted into political prominence. Kanyingi, whose political moulding had begun only in 1987 appears to have had a three-fold mission: to spearhead a campaign to remove the ineffective Karanja, to penetrate the grassroots—especially women's and other self-help groups—in a way Karanja had proved unable to do, and to destroy the apparently still highly resistant Kenyatta network.

*Harambees* associated with Kanyingi dwarfed all previous ones, numerically and in terms of how much money changed hands. In fact such large amounts were involved that, despite their destination in education, health, self-help, and other worthy projects, they became the subject of a certain local disapproval. Meanwhile, not only the usual mixture of worthy and not-so-worthy projects won official patronage, but certain breathtakingly novel initiatives saw the light of day. Most notably, women's "self-help" passenger road transport projects emerged in Limuru and Kikuyu. Women's groups in these divisions were encouraged to pool their resources in order to obtain deposits to buy buses. In 1989 groups of around 300 women each contributed Ksh 1000 (USD 33 each, or around USD 10,000 in all) to buy buses. Commercial bank loans were arranged to

cover the (very substantial) balances. The women were promised a share of the returns on a dividend basis.

The bus projects were run by Kanyingi himself and a caretaker committee of prominent KANU women loyal to him. This committee, and the groups it was linked to, became the means for orchestrating a slander campaign against Karanja. Not long after, Karanja (temporarily) withdrew from district-wide politics, describing himself as a victim of political thuggery. But Kanyingi achieved not only district-based but national fame, being invited to all corners of the country to assist in *harambee* projects.

The bus projects appear not to have been discussed at any of the local development institutions or fora. They were mentioned, somewhat sceptically, in the 1990 report of the ministry responsible for social services though (Republic of Kenya, 1990). This expressed the "hope of the ministry that the projects...will benefit the members" but went on to state that in "all the divisions (of Kiambu) politicians were found to have interfered with self-help groups, and as a result there were squabbles within the groups which took members" time to resolve" (ibid). This unusually strong statement intimated that while the ministry was unhappy with what was happening it was not keen to intervene given the status of the players involved.

The inadvertent result of Kanyingi's intervention was to create an unprecedented degree of unity amongst his opponents. With different degrees of success Karanja, Muhoho and Karume allied to forestall efforts by Kanyingi and Magugu from attending *harambees* or reaching grassroots development organisations in their own bailiwicks. Most notably, Muhoho explicitly and successfully prevented a bus project being started in Juja. Conversely though, most of the development projects which he and his allies themselves initiated were denied state resources.

In time the bus projects themselves created more problems than benefits for the Kanyingi faction. It became known that the caretaker committee rarely deposited the buses' daily takings in the groups' bank accounts. Nor was interest on the loans repaid. Eventually and amidst recriminations the buses were ignominiously repossessed. Despite the generally much larger resources at their disposal, the areas where Kanyingi and Magugu were most active (Limuru and Githunguri, where their efforts to break Karanja were concentrated) did not have particularly impressive "development" results between 1988 and 1992. According to one local source, self-help groups proliferated during major political struggles, but then wound down again. Consequently many projects arose only to become stalled until the next "political season", when they were revived. Both politicians and group members shared responsibility for this. Politicians turned off funds when political competition was low in order to be able to make sure that there was still a project to mobilise support around later. Group members revived dead projects when they believed there was new money about (interview with Community Development Assistant, Githunguri). This tendency was not confined to these areas though. In 1992 it was noted that several water projects in Gatundu, incomplete since the 1983 election had once again become a focal point for both established and rising politicians (interview with District Social Development Officer, Gatundu).

Popular disillusionment with *harambee*, or rather the new forms of *harambee*, also seems to have grown in the period after 1988, and was expressed *inter alia* by the churches. A common observation was that the disbursement of state funds to *harambee*s on an ever-increasing scale did not in the least mean that pressure on ordinary citizens to contribute had diminished. Indeed, given the increased frequency of *harambee*s, the reverse was the case. Coercive methods were increasingly common. In Githunguri, contributions (which were not accounted for, and for which no receipts were issued) were organised through the sub-chiefs. Confiscation of property and denial of government services were practised in relation to those who failed to contribute.

The brief enthusiasm for Kanyingi also subsided with the resignation of Karanja as Vice President. His replacement by a figure who was even more explicitly "moulded" (and who claimed to be a Maasai) severed one of the last links between Kiambu and the state.


## Kiambu goes multiparty: 1991–92

During the Second Republic, explicit attempts to overturn the Kikuyu's previous ethno-regional domination at the level of national politics and the national economy were thus accompanied by systematic local-level efforts to destroy existing grassroots political networks and develop new ones. How far these local objectives in Kiambu were successful can be judged by what happened in the district in and after November 1991, in the wake of the repeal of Section 2A of the constitution, which had outlawed opposition parties. The first and most obvious political development was that Kiambu rapidly and almost unanimously embraced opposition politics. Hence, at least the effort to develop new KANU networks in the district can be regarded as a failure.

An official opposition first emerged in Kiambu through two routes. Firstly, a number of individuals who had been involved in "civic" but not party politics, mostly professionals, emerged to play a leading role. Outstanding amongst them were Paul Kibugi Muite, a prominent Nairobi-based human rights lawyer and Bedan Mbugua, the former editor of the NCCK magazine *Beyond*. Both of these individuals were to soon play important roles in FORD. The second route was for a large number of local politicians to detach themselves from KANU and join opposition parties. In Kiambu they mostly joined the Democratic Party (DP) of Mwai Kibaki, founded in January 1992. In Kiambaa constituency the sitting MP and client of the Kenyatta family, Njenga Karume did so, as did George Muhoho, a member of the Kenyatta family and MP for Juja/Thika.

These groups and routes were not entirely distinct from each other. Muite had not been only a human rights lawyer, but had also legally represented Charles Njonjo several times. Njonjo threw his weight behind FORD Kenya, and his main surviving political ally amongst Kiambu KANU MPs—Kabibi Kinyanjui in Kikuyu constituency—also joined FORD Kenya. (Later, when Muite got the FORD Kenya nomination for Kikuyu, Kinyanjui re-emerged as the DP candidate.) On the whole however, the prominence of figures like Muite and Mbugua depended little on their possession of a marginalised patron, or lack of it. Kiambu politics rapidly became re-oriented from organisation around development projects to organisation around issues of the suppression of liberty and the "democratisation" of development. To a large extent, this meant Kikuyu

liberty and development, although articulation in explicitly ethnic terms was at this time rare.

Neither Muite nor Mbugua had any links with development projects in Kiambu, nor did they try to establish them. Muite's popularity rather lay precisely in the fact that he had played a leading role in the struggles which had brought about the return to multipartyism. A local clergyman, who had himself been involved with "development" in Kiambu during the Second Republic, informed me that development efforts would now have to wait until free and fair elections had been conducted (and presumably, as was widely believed at the time, had been won by the opposition). To underline the point, he added that "democratic leadership alone could be the foundation of sound economic development". Hence, insofar as "development" issues entered opposition discourse at this stage, it was in terms of apportioning responsibility for the district's economic decline. It was very noticeable that few voluntary organisations even approached the opposition for support, even though it became clear at quite an early stage that KANU would lose in Kiambu.

The bitterest complaints regarding the district's economic decline came from the coffee farmers. While it was acknowledged that world prices were steadily deteriorating, heaviest blame fell upon mismanagement by the Kenya Planters' Cooperative Union (KPCU). The latter was in turn linked to the dismissal of its GEMA-dominated leadership, and in particular its Managing Director from Meru. This occurred after an enquiry headed by a Kalenjin, and it resulted in the appointment of a number of inexperienced and ineffective Kalenjins to positions of responsibility in the industry. For some time before the advent of multipartyism there had been both open and subterranean protests by coffee farmers in Kiambu, mainly taking the form of the uprooting of bushes. The initial strength of DP in Kiambu was based on its articulation of the coffee issue.

But "development" in its Second Republic sense continued to be a feature of KANU politics in Kiambu, and—in an indirect way—of ex-KANU politics, that is the politics of persons defecting from KANU to the opposition parties. "Positively", KANU stepped up its patronage of local voluntary efforts. Residents of some areas observed that hardly a week passed without KANU holding a funds drive for a women's self-help project. The complementary traditional "supply-driven" election-time rise of voluntary groups in certain constituencies was also evident. For example, between July 1991 and June 1992, 31 new self-help groups were registered in Githunguri and about 50 in Limuru—far more than had been registered in 1989 or 1990. On the other hand, it was observable throughout Kiambu that attendance at KANU-organised *harambees* declined sharply. This reflected a combination of mass alienation and a tendency for elite members who were identified with the opposition being explicitly discouraged from attending.

Meanwhile, efforts by ex-KANU MPs to continue independently with a KANU-style development politics soon foundered on the rocks of the district and provincial administration. Projects which had been initiated by KANU defectors, like the Kirwa water project in Kikuyu, became stalled. The administration declined to issue permits for *harambees* in which opposition figures were involved, even where these were ostensibly organised in support of objectives identified with KANU (e.g. the payment of university student fees after the Kenya government ceded to a World Bank demand for cost-sharing in November

1991). In one vivid example, a family approached local DP officials to help them raise funds for their child to receive open heart surgery abroad. The provincial administration denied them a permit and requested that they search for other guests of honour, implying KANU ones.

Despite the local popularity of individuals like Muite and Mbugua, organisationally it was DP which made the running in Kiambu in the first six months or more of open political competition, especially amongst the local business and professional classes who had been such important beneficiaries of the Kenyatta state. A majority of DP's founder members not only in Kiambu but nationally were experienced but "disengaged" ex-KANU politicians—often from the Kenyatta era and with ties to GEMA. The Kenyatta family had a visible presence in the party and it was suspected that it provided the bulk of its finances. As indicated, there was a strong mobilisation around the coffee issue. This affected all classes of land-owning peasants, but was a particular concern for the traditionally better-off who tended to be more likely than others to farm coffee. Moreover, through its somewhat elitist organisational style, public presence and language, DP exuded a sense of being a vehicle of and for the elite.

Although enjoying a head start over DP by virtue of having been formed some months earlier, FORD's original support in the area was badly eroded by the formation of DP. Kibaki's party was the first of the opposition groups to identify itself—partly at least—with an ethnic group (the Kikuyu), and for a time this seemed to be enough to consolidate a popular base for it in Kiambu behind the dominant elites. Prior to its split, FORD was viewed with reservations by virtue of the fact that Odinga appeared to have the strongest claim to its leadership, and was even making such claims in what was perceived as ethnic terms.[2] However, in the middle of 1992 Kenneth Matiba reappeared on the Kenyan political scene and laid claim to the FORD leadership.

Matiba was a very prominent Kikuyu businessman from Murang'a who had become a cabinet minister under Moi after the fall of Njonjo, presumably under the patronage of Kibaki. In the long term his co-existence with Moi proved unstable, since their personal business interests became directly antagonistic. Matiba was eventually axed and a systematic effort was made to destroy him economically. Matiba then became personally closely identified with the organisation of the country's first public pro-multiparty demonstrations in 1990–91, which were forcibly suppressed and resulted in his detention. During his detention his health deteriorated severely and on his release stayed several months in London receiving treatment. Matiba's claim for the leadership of FORD, and his eventual split from it to form FORD Asili[3] , won the support of most of the Kikuyu figures who had remained within the organisation after the setting up of DP. Hence the stage was set for Kiambu to be the site of a four-way political contest, between DP, FORD Asili, FORD Kenya and KANU.


**The multiparty elections in Kiambu**

The multiparty elections in Kiambu proved to be a triumph, although not a complete one, for FORD Asili and a disaster for FORD Kenya, DP and KANU. Of

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2 He stated for example that in the 1960s he had given the Kikuyu the chance to lead, but that in the 1990s it was his turn, implying a turn for the Luo.
3 "Asili" is Kiswahili for "original".

a uniformly high turnout of 83.5 percent of registered voters[4] , Matiba received 86.7 percent of the presidential vote in the district; Kibaki received 7.6 percent and Odinga and Moi each between two and three percent. Even in the Kenyatta family bailiwick of Gatunda, Kibaki only won ten percent. In the parliamentary elections DP and FORD Kenya did somewhat better. FORD Asili candidates won 63.5 percent of the vote, DP 15.9 percent, FORD Kenya 16 percent and KANU 4.5 percent. FORD Asili won all but one of the seven parliamentary constituencies, and in addition won most local council seats. However, the voting pattern varied sharply from constituency to constituency. For FORD Kenya, Muite did exceptionally well to easily win Kikuyu constituency, but elsewhere the party came nowhere. DP's best performances were in Gatunda, where Ngengi Muigai won 36.2 percent of the vote, but still finished over 12,000 votes behind the FORD Asili candidate, and in Kiambaa where Njenga Karume won 24.4 percent of the vote but was still over 21,000 short of the FORD Asili winner. KANU's performance was even more dismal, with only two candidates in the seven seats gaining more than five percent of the vote (Magugu in Githunguri received 11.4 percent, Kanyingi in Limuru 6.3 percent) (all calculations based on results published in *Weekly Review*, 1 January, 1993).

From his return to Kenya, Matiba had begun to solicit support in Kiambu. While he could count on the backing of his home district (Murang'a), Nyeri was closed off to him by Kibaki, so Kiambu became his main campaign ground in Central Province. His supporters cited Matiba's house in Kiambu and his marriage in the district as evidence of his residence there. This was two things more than Kibaki could claim, despite the latter's strong link to the Kenyatta family, and established his *bona fides* for claiming that "a Matiba presidency would be a presidency at home".

However, the key to Matiba's success in Kiambu probably lay elsewhere. Matiba's popular appeal was clearly to Kiambu's working-class, poor peasants, the mass of informal sector operators and above all the unemployed, and based upon the sentiment articulated amongst these classes that only "men with courage" could force Moi out of power. This sentiment was itself based on the fact that many—possibly most of the informals—regularly suffered physically from harassment by the state (in the form of KANU Youth League and Nairobi City Council). Before his detention and on the campaign trail, Matiba clearly demonstrated courage. Several voters told me that they had previously intended to vote for Kibaki, but when Matiba visited the district and said—despite his serious illness—that he could and would physically confront Moi, they felt he showed qualities Kibaki lacked. Kibaki was indeed termed "yellow bellied" by these same groups. Matiba spelt out the specificities of a forceful removal of Moi and a turning upside-down of the Moi system, while Kibaki tended to dwell on the need to revitalise the coffee industry and run the economy according to more rational principles. Moreover, Kibaki was himself basically a man of the Moi system, only breaking from it openly at the last minute, while Matiba's whole trajectory had been based on his relative independence from it. In some parts of Kiambu, DP was popularly tagged "KANU-B". Matiba's tenaciousness and even fanaticism against Moi more clearly suited people's aspirations than DP's middle-of-the-road positions.

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4 According to the independent National Election Monitoring Unit (NEMU), registered voters in Kiambu were 80.5 percent of those eligible to vote. This was one of the highest district figures in the country, excluding the Rift Valley (NEMU, 1993: 105–10).

Towards the end of the election campaign the Matiba personality cult spread also to the Kiambu elite, or at least to some sections of it. But by this time it was too late for them to seize control of the FORD–Asili bandwagon. The "natural" political representatives of these groups had already taken the view that Matiba was a "lone rider" not fully recovered from his health problems and had registered as council or parliamentary candidates for DP. FORD-Asili's candidates meanwhile were unseasoned politicians drawn from the petty-traders and *matutu* operators who formed the Matiba "elite", plus a sprinkling of more experienced politicians who had failed to win nominations in other parties. A councillor in Lari indeed admitted to me that he saw an opportunity for a FORD–Asili nomination because few notables were interested in the party, compared to DP.

FORD Asili activists attached importance to the person of Matiba and not the policies of the party. Correspondingly, he called for voters supporting him in the presidential election to vote for FORD–Asili candidates in the parliamentary and local elections as (literally) extensions of himself. Matiba demanded electoral support for what he termed FORD–Asili's "three piece suit"– with himself presumably as the dinner jacket. Neither parliamentary nor local council candidates did much independent campaigning, but won their seats because the "three piece suit" became high fashion.

As indicated, the only place the suit was out of fashion was in Kikuyu constituency. Here FORD Kenya's presidential candidate (Odinga) won only 6.1 percent of the vote but its parliamentary candidate, Paul Muite, won 72 percent. Muite's fearless attitude towards the KANU leadership and his continuous harassment by the police, as in Matiba's case, became the basis for his political popularity and eventual success. Further, despite being in a different party, Muite was linked to Matiba through being his personal lawyer while the later was in detention.

Surprisingly, there was little hostility to KANU as such as opposed to Moi. Political discourse was concentrated on personalities, less on issues and hardly at all on parties. An opposition councillor in Limuru told me that KANU had good policies, but had been betrayed by Moi. Had Moi not been leader of KANU, the councillor would have remained a member since he was personally "not interested in politics"(!). A frequently heard sentiment, from all social groups, was that it was not KANU which was the issue, but KADU. According to this argument, Moi was and remained a KADU man, and his ascendency to the leadership of KANU was an ascent of KADU and its policy of *majimbo*. Versions of this argument were heard both from the elite, and the returned Kiambu diaspora, thrown off their land by Kalenjins and others enjoying the support of the state.

### Conclusion

Efforts to mobilise the Kikuyu along class lines have recurred since the 1940s. Since independence they have been identified at different times, in different ways and in different districts, with Bildad Kaggia, J M Kariuki and others. Apart from the successes of a series of radicals in the Nakuru North constituency, they have generally been easily isolated and suppressed. Matiba succeeded in mobilising the masses on a scale on which all others failed. Yet, under him, they were

mobilised not behind a class ideology but a basically ethnic one with class (and to a lesser extent, sub-ethnic) dimensions.

As noted, the effort to develop KANU networks in Kiambu which were completely independent of the "family" were a failure. Although the KANU vote held up best where there had been most investment in these networks (Githunguri and Limuru), even here the defeats were crushing. Of course, it is impossible to tell whether this was ever the major aim, or whether the main presidential mission in Kiambu during the Second Republic was the purely destructive one of eradicating the influence of the Kenyatta dynasty. If the latter was the case, then perhaps the period 1982–92 was a successful one for Moi in this district. One way or another, the dynasty was decisively trounced. Furthermore, if one can speak at all of FORD Asili networks in Kiambu today (1993), they are exceedingly weak ones. On the other hand, the basic ethnic division remains, and the possibility of the penetration of the district by a KANU under Kalenjin leadership seems more remote than ever.

If this discussion has underlined the fact that in 1992 ethnicity experienced a resurgence as the dominant factor in Kenyan politics, it has also shown that its dominance was qualified and cross-cut in various ways. Its principal qualification was that its dominance was comprehensive only at the level of the formation and perception of national political coalitions and entities. In other words, parties and coalitions of parties were constructed and defined as ethno-regional blocs. Conversely, the political followings of particular individuals were somewhat less explicitly ethnic, at least insofar as being a member of a particular ethnic group did not in the least guarantee that one was more likely to receive votes from members of this same group than a person in another party who was not. Thirdly, it was usually more the transgression of popular perceptions of the inter-ethnic "rules of the game", rather than the invocation of ethnic identities as such, which mobilised populations on ethnic lines. KANU's crime in Kiambu was not to be led by a Kalenjin, or even to attack the Kenyatta dynasty, but to practice *majimbo*-ism on the grand scale which it eventually did. Similarly, Odinga's crime was not to claim a place in the leadership of an anti-Moi coalition but (or so it was perceived) to claim exclusive leadership—on the basis of being a non-Kikuyu.

On the other hand, ethnicity was also cross-cut by other allegiances. Most obviously in Kiambu these were a matter of class, but even here they were complicated by issues of sub-ethnic identity and never expressed in terms of a class *project*. Far less significant were patron/client type allegiances. Matiba's popularity had little or nothing to do with his status as a patron, actual or potential. On the other hand, it remains open to question whether this was a structural feature of the situation or whether it was a conjunctural matter induced by the deliberate destruction from above of the main traditional patronage networks in the district.

The most obvious general conclusion about politics in Kiambu refers to its complexity. While at one level all that happened in Kiambu was that the attempt to destroy and remould patronage politics in the area was undermined by the effects of a parallel pursuit of *majimbo* in other spheres, categories of explanation independent of theories of patronage and ethnicity are necessary to understand the nature of what then followed.

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