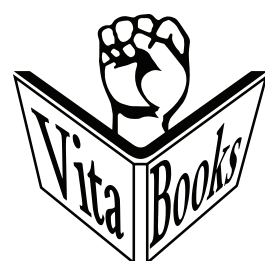


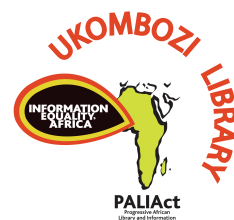


**KARIMI  
NDUTHU**

**“Change, Like death, is Inevitable”**



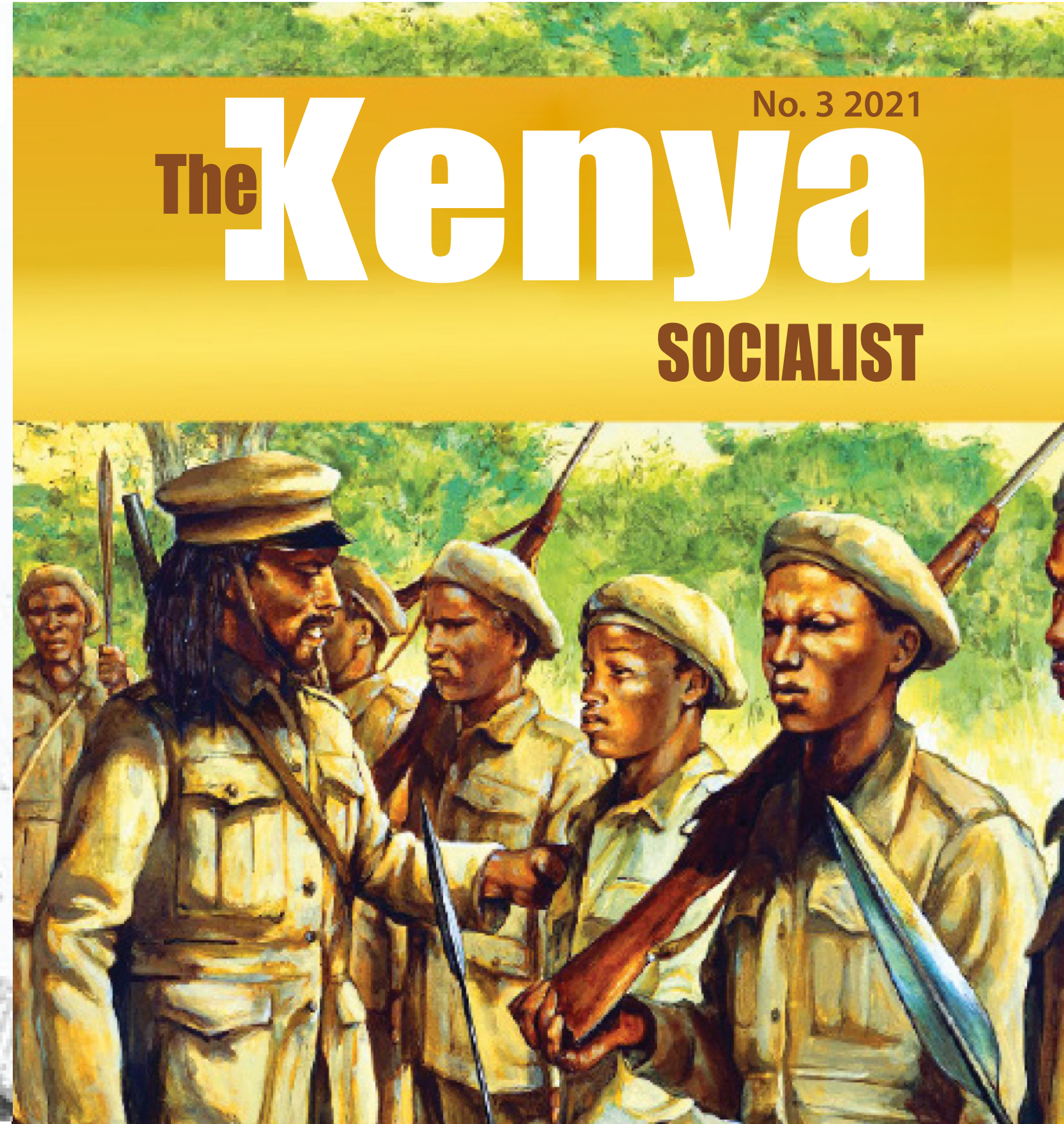
*Never Be Silent Simama Imara*



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No. 3 2021

# The **Kenya**

## **SOCIALIST**

**Repression & Resistance: 1948 - 1990**

**How did the country of Kenya become free...  
without the people of Kenya becoming free?**

**Liberating Minds: Mathare Forum on Repression & Resistance**

**Until Everyone is Free**





The Kenya Socialist is published by Vita Books, Nairobi, Kenya.  
Editors: Shiraz Durrani and Kimani Waweru  
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The Kenya Socialist aims to encourage free flow of information, knowledge and discussion which can lead to a better understanding of socialism. It will seek to:

- Promote socialist ideas, experiences and world outlook
- Increase awareness of classes, class contradictions and class struggles in Kenya, both historical and current
- Expose the damage done by capitalism and imperialism in Kenya and Africa
- Offer solidarity to working class, peasants and other working people and communities in their struggles for equality and justice
- Promote internationalism and work in solidarity with people in Africa and around the world in their resistance to imperialism
- Make explicit the politics of information and communication as tools of repression and also of resistance in Kenya

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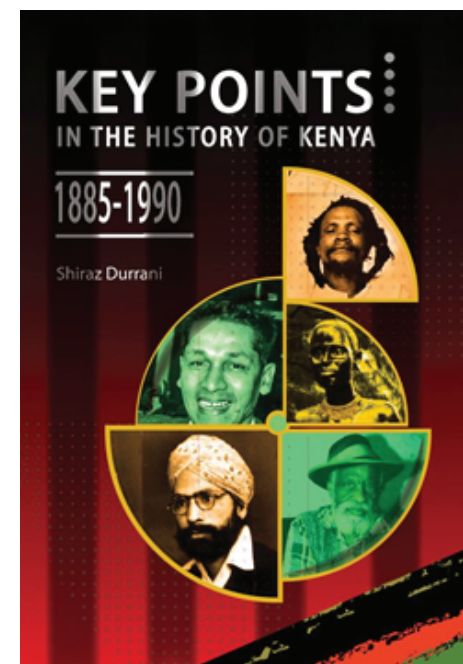
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## Durrani Shiraz: Key Points in the History of Kenya

1885 - 1990

ISBN 978-9914-9921-3-7



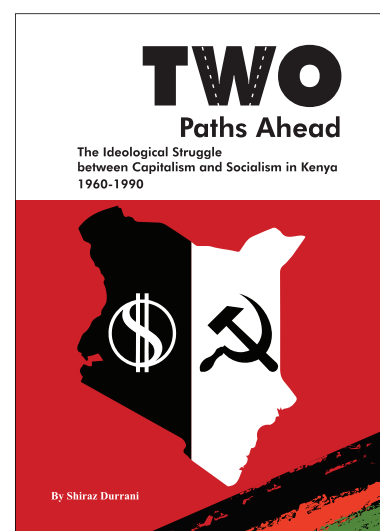
History never dies. It is embedded in people's memories when books are burnt and children are taught false histories, imagined by false historians from near and far — says the author in this book. This is the context in which Key Points in the History of Kenya, 1885-1990 is published. This, the 4th in the Kenya Resists Series from Vita Books, brings together presentations points from several conferences and meetings on the history of Kenya. It also includes short articles, some written recently, others from earlier books and articles by Shiraz Durrani. Key Points highlights many hidden facts about the history of Kenya. References are included for those who wish to explore the history further. While these books and facts are readily available in many history books, they are not easily available to all people in Kenya and in a form that meets their needs.

The book therefore aims to familiarise people with the history of Kenya. It seeks to keep people's struggles, sacrifices and history alive. The author hopes that it will be a weapon in the sense that Bertolt Brecht meant when he said: Hungry man, reach for the book: it is a weapon. That is the aim of the series, Kenya Resists too.



## Durrani, Shiraz: Two Paths Ahead: The Ideological Struggle between Capitalism and Socialism in Kenya, 1960-1990

ISBN 978-9966-133-12-0



The struggle between socialism and capitalism have been long bitter and violent. Capitalism went with the active support of USA and UK governments at the time of independence in 1963. Yet the original (1960) Kenya Africa Union (KANU) Party was in favour of socialism. It was President Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi who used violence to suppress those advocating socialism. They used their power to massacre, assassinate, exile, imprison and disappear

people and created a state of terror to silence their opponents. Capitalism became the unstated state policy. Thus imperialism won and the aims of Mau Mau were brutally suppressed. However, the desire for socialism never died. Resistance movements and opposition parties made socialism their aim, reflecting people's desire for justice, equality and empowerment.

Many studies on Kenya focus on personalities or 'tribes' or race as driver of events, ignoring the all important class and ideological positions of leaders and their Parties. Two Paths Ahead reproduces and gives a brief commentary on the documents from the opposing sides in the battles between capitalism and socialism — the original Kenya African National Union (KANU), its successor, KANU-B, and the Kenya People's Union (KPU) on economy land, labour, and social policy. It also touches upon the demands of the organisers of the 1982 Coup and traces the political stand of key leaders as proponents of capitalism or socialism. Also covered are some of the policies of the underground December Twelve Movement Mwakenya. The final section reproduces some of the documents on this ideological struggle. The book exposes the hidden hand of imperialism in the country's rush to capitalism. It fills a gap in understanding the real contradictions that divide Kenya to this day.

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# Editorial Essay: History as a Guide to Action

The Kenya Socialist (TKS), in common with other organisations and individuals in Kenya and around the world, has faced disruption because of coronavirus and mismanagement by governments under rules of capitalism. However, we are now continuing the publication with two special issues on Repression and Resistance in Kenya. This issue, No. 3, is devoted mainly to an extended article by Shiraz Durrani and Kimani Waweru, under the title, Kenya: Repression and Resistance: from Colony to Neo-colony, 1948–1990. It was first published in the 2nd edition (2021) of The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism. Issue no. 4 of The Kenya Socialist will carry illustrations on the same theme.

This article is followed by a brief report on the Mathare Forum on Liberating Minds: Reflections on Repression and Resistance (in Kenya), held at the Mathare Social Justice Centre on October 26, 2019. The final section looks at the Sheng' Podcast, Until Every One is Free, being podcast in seven episodes.

These articles have a common thread running through them. They all seek to record Kenya's history based on facts, not on colonial and imperialist propaganda. The need is for the history to be told afresh from the perspective of working people of Kenya, not from that of colonisers, imperialists or the ruling elite. All the three items in this issue of TKS do this admirably.

The article by Durrani and Kimani, as noted above, was first published in The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism. It was then felt that not many Kenyans, not only individuals but institutions also, would be able to access the Encyclopedia, which sells for about UK £800 — roughly 121,000 Kenya shillings.

The Editors of TKS then decided to reproduce the article in the magazine which is available free of charge at its website. This is still not totally satisfactory, for although mobile usage is available to more people in Kenya than in many other countries in Africa, this is

mostly for texting and banking purposes. It does not allow people to access such articles and journals. A number of ways are being explored by Vita Books to overcome this shortcoming, details will be included in future issues of TKS.

But the article has another interesting story to tell. The article provided material for a paper by Shiraz Durrani which was accepted for presentation at the 3rd Biennial Conference of the African Studies Association of Africa held at the United States International University-Africa, Nairobi, Kenya from October 24-26, 2019. That paper was entitled The Other Kenya: Resistance to Colonialism, Capitalism and Imperialism in Kenya, 1945-1985.

However, the author withdrew the paper in protest at the fact that people from Kenya, not affiliated to an institution and without sponsorship, could not attend the Conference. His point was that since his paper was about Kenya, the main audience should also be people of Kenya, especially as this important Conference was being held in Nairobi. He wanted, at least his session, to be a public event, open to all and to be held in a central Nairobi location. When this was not possible, he withdrew from the Conference and decided instead to present the paper to a Kenyan working class audience. This was at the Mathare Social Justice Centre where it was open to all and where the participants were from Mathare - a working class area. This then became the Mathare Forum whose deliberations were videoed and made available to a wider audience. The episode highlighted the contradiction between academics talking to themselves and a public meeting where workers are the main participants. Thus, who is the real audience for information about Africa is an issue that needs to be highlighted. An interesting point at the Forum was that, as the conference was about to start, lights went off, a regular occurrence in Mathare. Undaunted, the background work of the youth ensured that replacement sources of power were provided. Emergency lights in the room were made available and videoing of the session continued. The PowerPoint presentation had to be replaced by

## Singh, Makhan: History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement to 1952 (Reprint) ISBN 978-9914-7875-2-2

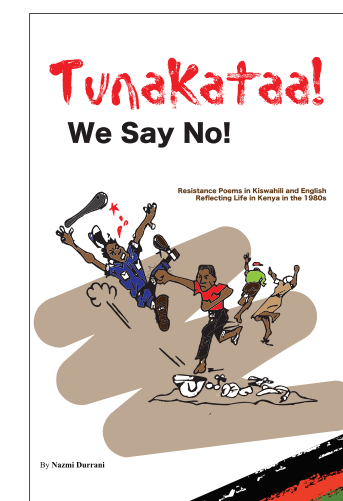


From the start the trade union movement played a crucial part in political struggle for the freedom in Kenya. Makhan Singh, the author of this scholarly book, has for a long time been one of the most formidable figures in the growth of Kenya's trade unions. In this careful and readable study, authentically based on personal knowledge and a deep study of all available documentary sources, he has outlined the growth of labour protest from the forgotten heroes of this long struggle are given their rightful place and the book adds important new perspectives to the history of the nationalist movement in Kenya 2020 Reprint "Makhan Singh dedicated this book 'To all those who struggled, suffered and sacrificed for the cause of Kenya's national and trade union

movements'. Yet it is these very people, including Makhan Singh himself, whose suffering and sacrifices have yet to be recognised by history. The injustices they suffered, and continue to suffer, need to be righted if there is to be peace in Kenya. It is for this reason that the life, work and writings of Makhan Singh have an enduring relevance today. Vita Books need to be congratulated for reprinting these important documents from Kenya's past. They are essential readings for Kenya's future" - Willy Mutunga, Chief Justice & President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, 2011-2016. (Foreword to the Reprint)

## Nazmi Durrani - Tunakataa! We Say No! Poems of Resistance

ISBN 978-9966-955-88-3



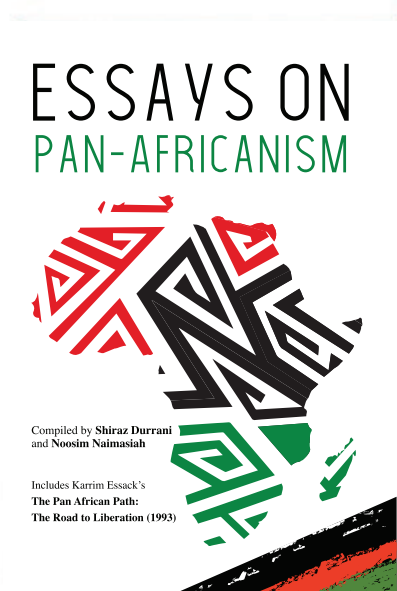
The poems depict peasant and worker resistance in Kenya in the 1980s to the oppressive Moi-KANU government. Here is the voice of people saying 'no' to capitalism and emperialism. The poems, in Kiswahili and English, are as relevant today as they were in the 1980s. They are as relevant in Kenya as they are in the rest of Africa struggling against capitalism and imperialism.



## Forthcoming Publications From Vita Books

Compiled by Shiraz Durrani & Noosim Naimasiah

Includes Karrim Essack's *The Pan African Path: The Road to Liberation* (1993) 978-9914-9875-0-8



"This volume contains essays on Pan-Africanism written by Pan-Africanist intellectuals at various times. It incorporates a book compiled by Karim Essack and published as long ago as 1993. Writings on Pan-Africanism never become dated for the desire of global Africans for Freedom continues burning, sometimes dimming into a flicker, at other times shining bright but never snuffed out, however strong the winds. The journey of the Pan-African Thought began over a century and half ago spearheaded by African-Americans and

African-Caribbean. The birth of the Pan-African Thought was an important turning point in the struggle for African Freedom whose dramatic expression on the world stage was the Haitian Revolution led by the great Black revolutionary Toussaint Louverture over three centuries ago. Just as the Haitian Revolution was part of the long human struggle for freedom, so is the Pan-African Thought part of the ubiquitous human conversation on national liberation and social emancipation, rarely acknowledged as such by the dominant Euro-centric discourse which is blinded by the pigment of the skin and dipped in the blood of capitalist plunder and pillage...It is my hope that the publication of this book will trigger a debate on *New Pan-Africanism* in this region"

- Prof. Issa Shivji, Emeritus Professor of Public Law and First Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Professor of Pan-African Studies, University of Dar es Salaam.

showing the slides on the laptop. Handout notes kept ready for such an emergency filled in, to some extent, the lack of the screen presentation.

But it is not only the facts of history that are dealt with in the three articles. It is equally important that these facts become part of common knowledge among people of all ages and in all parts of Kenya. April Zhu and Stoneface (2021) are involved in yet another pioneering project under the title, *Until Every One is Free* which brings history to people. They discuss these issues in the third item in this issue, but it is instructive to listen to their commentary on history, Kenya and colonialism:

*April: You know what this reminds me of. During the Holocaust, Nazi Germany put millions of Jews in concentration camps, where they were made to do hard labor, and executed. But everyone knows this story. Not just Jews themselves, everyone around the world, even us two sitting here in Nairobi.*

*Stoneface: Yes. That page of the book was not torn out, because those in power wanted to—and could—tell that story. Those who won WWII, they defeated the Germans, so they could freely tell the story of the terrible things that the Germans had done.*

*April: So then what about Kenya? Why was the Mau Mau page of the book torn out? Why doesn't every single Kenyan know about the fact that the British tortured and executed and detained thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of Africans?*

*Stoneface: And, more importantly, the fact that that page was torn out, what does that tell us about those in power in Kenya?*

*April: Because it's not even just about the fact that hundreds of thousands of people were detained, screened, tortured, forced to do hard labor... it's about the fact that this history was erased. The fact that, Stoneface, even though you're done with school, it wasn't until a few weeks ago that you learned about the camps.*

*Stoneface: Yeah, this was not something that we were taught in school.*

*April: We can call this sanitizing history. Life is messy and complicated. But what gets called "history"—what is archived, what is documented, what is taught in schools—history is always written by whomever is in power. And often they sanitize history. Like pouring Jik on it and just rubbing it until it even burns off the color.*

*Stoneface: Yes exactly. So much of the history that we're taught in schools is actually based on a curriculum from the perspective of those in power. We learned a "sanitized" version of Mau Mau, but definitely we didn't learn about the mass detention camps. But! The thing about sanitized history is that...it has holes.*

*April: ....what do you mean?*

*Stoneface: If you go to Kimathi Road in town, you see that statue of Dedan Kimathi. He was one of the Mau Mau Generals, he commanded the fighters in Mt. Kenya.*

*April: Ah, yes, I've seen that statue. He's carrying an automatic rifle, he has these long dreadlocks. The way he's put on a high podium, cast in bronze—he looks like a hero.*

*Stoneface: He is a hero. But, here's the thing. We too often forget that the government could not have set up these detention camps without the Home Guard.*

*April: That's fair. For example, in Algeria, the French were not able to recruit a "Home Guard"-type group of loyal Algerians. What sets apart Kenya's independence struggle from other countries' is that in Kenya there was a Home Guard. This prevented Mau Mau from spreading; it meant that Mau Mau had to fight a guerrilla war from the forest.*

The podcast was based on another project of Vita Books which saw the publication of a number of books on the history of Kenya. Again, these books are not accessible to majority of Kenyans because of format, language or cost. Nor are they in school, college or university syllabus. How then can this history be taken to the people? The team behind the podcast found the



perfect solution, using material from this and other sources, they wrote a script that summarised the key point of history, turned it into the podcast in Sheng’ and made it available to those who had not been made aware of their history. Thus the history written in books and presented in journals gets used as source material for communicating with a working class audience in a language and in a form that they use.

Historians have failed to answer the fundamental question that people of Kenya need answered. The question rarely, if ever, gets even asked. The team behind the podcast have broken the silence about the elephant in the room and ask: How did the country of Kenya become free...without the people of Kenya becoming free?

The question needs to be answered not only to understand the past, but to guide today’s actions by those struggling to repair the damage done in the past by enemies of working people. History needs to show not only the past but also indicate future action. What Marx said about philosophers applies to historians too: The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways. The point, however, is to change it. And change implies struggle, something that the participants of the Mathare Forum and the young audience of the podcast understand very well. They are in tune with the title of the podcast: Until Everyone is Free.

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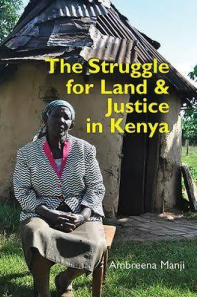
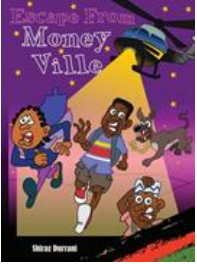
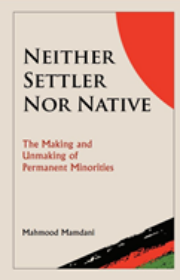
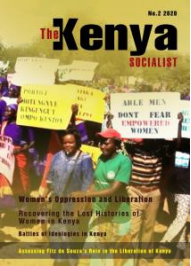
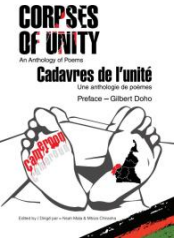
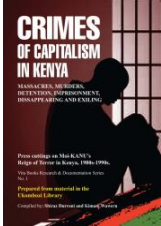
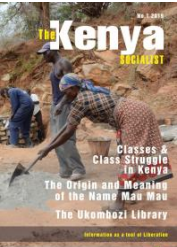
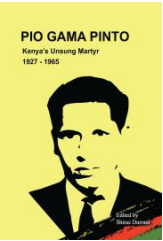
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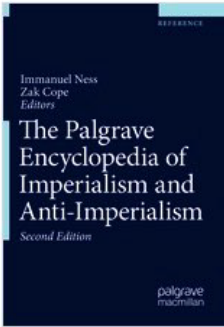


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Kenya: Repression and Resistance from Colony to Neo-colony, 1948–1990

Shiraz Durrani and Kimani Waweru  
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Immanuel Ness and Zak Cope. The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism. 1007/978-3-319-91206-6\_9-1



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# The Colonial Period: 1948–1963

## Repression

The scope of this article is limited to the period 1948–1990. This does not imply that there was no repression or resistance before and after this period. Indeed, British colonialism had to use severe repressive measures to suppress people's resistance in Kenya long before this period. The Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission of Kenya (2013) records the methods used by the invaders to suppress resistance:

The conquest of state and territory for British settlement and exploitation in Kenya was achieved through colonial violence. To force Africans into submission, the colonial administration in Kenya conducted 'punitive expeditions' in the 1890s against what they called 'recalcitrant tribes'. There were military expeditions against the Nandi in 1901, 1905, and 1906, against the Embu in 1905, against the Abagusii in 1904, 1908, and 1914, against the Kipsigis in 1905 and against the Abagishu and Kabras in 1907 ... Practically everywhere in Kenya, as was the case in the rest of Africa, the imposition of colonial rule was resisted. Such resistance inevitably provoked military retaliation from the colonial powers. Better armed and employing crack shot mercenaries, colonial powers imposed their rule by violence and/or military expeditions. This was particularly the case between 1895 and 1914; a phase of pacification of 'recalcitrant tribes' fighting for the preservation of their political, cultural and economic independence. The period was thus characterized by an unimaginable degree of human rights abuses against defenceless Africans. The military expeditions were accompanied by crimes such as theft, rape, death and destruction of property by the colonial soldiers or their associates. Such actions defy the view that the British colonialist used humane and gentle methods to impose their rule in Kenya.

This then is the background to the period covered in this article. There were clear economic reasons that drove colonialism and imperialism to invade large parts of the world. Woddis (1960, p. 1) sums up:

The history of Africa's relations with the West has been a history of robbery – robbery of African manpower, its mineral and agricultural resources, and its land. Even though direct slavery no longer exists, labour, resources and land remain the three dynamic issues over which the struggle for the future of Africa is being fought out. The form of this struggle, it is true, is a political fight for national independence; but the abolition of foreign control of labour, resources and land is the substance for which this independence is being sought.

Thus labor, resources, and land were the central aspects of the contradiction between Britain and Kenyans. These formed the reason for colonial exploitation and repression, which in turn led people to resist. The demands of the people were for land and freedom – hence the Kenya Land and Freedom Army, with the term "army" indicating the method of achieving land and freedom. The strategic importance of Kenya for Britain after the Second World War is summed up by Sik (1974, p. 21):

After World War II the importance of Kenya for the British imperialists was increasing. Having lost a whole series of strategic bases in the Near and Middle East (India, Egypt, Palestine), they found Kenya most fitted to be developed into a strategic base. To attain this aim they had to build roads and airfields, to develop agriculture and industry, and these projects needed – in addition to capital – the assistance of the settlers who aspired to independence and the more intense utilization of the cheap (and in part free) labour of African millions... Accordingly the post-war policy of Britain was directed towards increased economic development of the colonies, by breaking the resistance of Africans and silencing their demands, by forcing them to serve meekly the united interests of monopoly capitalists and settlers.

The control over land, labor, and natural resources fuelled the industrial revolution in Europe at the expense of Africa. The contradiction between colonialism and the people of Kenya is well summarized by Laski (1954, p. 7):

## Selected Books Available at the Ukombozi Library





[Dedan Kimathi] We are fighting for all land stolen from us by the Crown through its Orders in Council of 1915, according to which Africans have been evicted from the Kenya Highlands.... The British government must grant Kenya full independence under African leadership and hand over all land previously alienated for distribution to the landless. We will fight until we achieve freedom or until the last of our warriors has shed his last drop of blood.

April: Land and Freedom.

Stoneface: Exactly. The Mau Mau fought for Land and Freedom. Now, take a look at the Kenyan people today. I'm not talking about the elite, I'm talking about wananchi. Do we have land and freedom? Even look at some of those same same Mau Mau fighters who are still alive today in 2020. Did they get land and freedom?

April: ...No.

Stoneface: So. You had asked why the Mau Mau page of the book was torn out. Those who tore out the page of Mau Mau—maybe the reason they tore out those chapters is because, if we read those pages, we would understand that the Mau Mau never got their land and freedom.

That the war was never won—

April: That the war was never won.....

Stoneface: That the war is still going on. That maybe, Kenya is still a colony. And that would tell us all we need to know about who the new rulers are.

April: Eheh. That independence is not the same as decolonization. That....Kenya is still ruled by an elite. That... the nation of Kenya became “free” without the people of Kenya getting free.

## The Mau Mau made their own weapons

There was an “Engineers Group” whose job it was to obtain arms, ammunition, material for manufacture of homemade weapons. Later in the war, when General China was caught by the British and detained, in his interrogation, he reported how many weapons they had: 14 automatic rifles, 361 rifles/shotguns, 4 grenades, 1 Bren gun, 23 revolvers/pistols. And 1,230 homemade weapons.

Where did these come from? How did they get to the forests? Some came from police station raids, or picked off of killed home guard. But almost all were

routed through Nairobi. Through the headquarters in Mathare.

And Pinto was a key coordinator. Pinto had contacts with illegal South Asian gun-traders who secretly sold firearms and ammunition to Mau Mau. Pinto coordinated with the Muhimu to transport people and supplies, sent information back and forth, and raise money for the fighters in the forests and towns... When money was collected in sacks, it was taken to trusted people. Pinto was one of those trusted people.

Stoneface: If you go to Kimathi Road in town, you see that statue of Dedan Kimathi. He was one of the Mau Mau Generals, he commanded the fighters in Mt. Kenya.

April: Ah, yes, I've seen that statue. He's carrying an automatic rifle, he has these long dreads. The way he's put on a high podium, cast in bronze—he looks like a hero.

Stoneface: He is a hero. But, here's the thing. We too often forget that the government could not have set up these detention camps without the Home Guard.

April: That's fair. For example, in Algeria, the French were not able to recruit a “Home Guard”-type group of loyal Algerians. What sets apart Kenya's independence struggle from other countries' is that in Kenya there was a Home Guard. This prevented Mau Mau from spreading; it meant that Mau Mau had to fight a guerrilla war from the forest.

The climate of much of the territory [Kenya] is excellent for agriculture, and it is free from tropical diseases. These conditions, however, have encouraged the settlement of Europeans who have invaded the healthy areas and alienated the land formally owned and tilled by Africans. The African population must now either perish or work for starvation wages on the farms they and their parents owned for countless generations. In addition they are compelled to pay a Poll Tax to sustain the Administration which has deprived them of their land.

Thus, the so-called land question was also linked to other issues, such as land ownership, particularly of the most productive land, the enforced movement of peasants from their land to work as cheap labor in colonial plantations and industries, as well as government policies on taxation. The reality of land grabbing by the colonial authorities in Kenya is examined by Woddis ( 1960, pp. 2–3):

In Kenya, some 4,000 white farmers have been given the monopoly of 16,500 square miles of the White Highlands, which are estimated to contain no less than thirty per cent of all the good land in Kenya.

Then in July 1920, the British Government declared Kenya a “colony.” Singh ( 1969, p. 9) explains the reasons for this:

This was aimed at ensuring that the British could deal with the land and labour of African people as they thought fit. It was to guarantee that the land taken away from the African people and given to settlers would remain settlers' land and that the forced labour system prevailing in Kenya could be further tightened. Secondly a conspiracy began to be organised to make Kenya a “White Man's Country” and to establish a white settlers' government. Thus the African people were being turned from a “protected people” into a slave people.

The overall contradiction in Kenyan society during the entire colonial period has been summed up by Singh ( 1969, pp. xi–xii):

There was now a fierce struggle between two great forces. On the one hand were the British rulers, helped by settlers and other employers. They were determined to perpetuate for ever their complete

domination over the African people and exploit the human and natural resources of Kenya for the benefit of imperialism and colonial interests. On the other hand were the African and other freedom-loving people. They were bent upon resisting, attacking and defeating the imperialist colonial rule and its consequences – land robbery, forced labour, low wages, long working hours, compulsory registration system, racial segregation, colour bar, oppressive laws and such other practices. The basic contradiction was the main driving force throughout the colonial period in Kenya and has influenced the historical development in Kenya.

The struggle over land had implications for the entire economic, political, and social life of people. Koinange and Oneko ( 1952, pp. 10–11) examine some of these related aspects of colonial policies:

‘Colonial development’ which seeks merely to produce more food and raw material for export, without reference to African needs, will fail. Cheap colonial food that relies on cheap colonial labour is not a contribution to development. Wages are already very low ... The lives and destinies of more than five million Africans are controlled arbitrarily by 29,000 Europeans in general, and 3,000 European Settlers in particular. This arbitrary rule by a small minority raises many questions ... Believing in full democracy, we aim at a common roll for all the peoples of Kenya, to eliminate racial, religious and colour discrimination ... With these discriminations, there are others: so that in education, health, and many other aspects of life, the Africans of Kenya are placed in a position of relentless inferiority. They, alone of the inhabitants of Kenya, have to carry passes which control and restrict their freedom of movement.

The scene was thus set for violent clashes between British colonialism and the people of Kenya.

## Resistance

In the early period, resistance to colonialism was led by peasants from different nationalities. As these were defeated by colonial bullets and atrocities, there was a need for a qualitative leap in resistance to this superior firepower. This was provided by a combination of people power, trade unions, and armed resistance, each working in unison with the

other. Capitalism and colonialism had consolidated class structures, and the working class now joined other forces to resist colonial repression. Maxon and Ofcansky ( 2000, p. 167) explain the class basis of Kenyan history:

On the whole, those who joined the armed struggle against colonialism and European supremacy were the poor and landless, while those who were wealthy, called loyalists, supported the colonial government.

Trade-union activities, such as strikes, were then added to peasant resistance to create a new level of resistance guided by a clear ideology and a stronger organization. Thus, the strength of the working class added the missing element to confront colonialism. The three aspects of this united front against colonialism were the peasants and people's militancy, the trade unions, and the armed resistance by Mau Mau.

The first aspect of this new people power was the united action of millions of people. That was the advantage that people had over the occupying colonial forces, but it was not merely a matter of numbers. It was how this numerical advantage was used in combination with other advantages, such as the radical trade-union movement, the working-class ideologies that supported the liberation of people, and the organizational structures developed by people over many decades. Singh ( 1969, p. 4) shows how it was people's resistance that led the anti-colonial movement in Kenya:

In order to struggle against foreign occupation of the country, against seizure of African lands and against forced labour, the African people, wherever possible, resorted to armed harassing of the British authorities, attacks upon labourers building the railway, and boycott of work for settlers and other employers. All this resistance was sporadic but secretly organised. At times it used the tribal organisation with sanction or tacit consent of a patriotic chief. At other times it was organised by secret tribal groups in spite of opposition from stooge chiefs.

Colonialism came with a number of methods to subjugate people, the primary one being armed repression. This was reinforced by attempts to control people's world outlook and thinking, using

mass media and educational and religious systems to create thinking friendly to colonialism. One of its highly effective methods was to create disunity among people based on "tribes," religion, region, ethnicity, and gender, among others. Yet another method was to destroy people's awareness of their history and, in particular, history of people's resistance – not only in Kenya but throughout the world where imperialism faced resistance. In this and other ways, colonialism created a dependency mentality among people, killing their creativity and self-confidence by destroying their culture and lifestyle while also depriving them of means of survival.

In this situation of multiple attacks on people, resistance in Kenya was also multidimensional. Independent schools were set up to give knowledge and mental tools to Kenyans to face colonialism. Cultural activities such as songs and dance reflected local and national pride; publishing of newspapers and other means of social communications allowed people to talk to people, often using nationality languages to bypass colonial censorship; independent church organizations reflected local conditions and needs. Unity among workers of all nationalities was forged in cities, towns, and plantations where workers from all nationalities came together and charted joint resistance. These methods were then linked to the armed resistance under Mau Mau which then created a national, multidimensional armed resistance force. Some aspects of this resistance are examined below.

## Trade Unions

The introduction of capitalism in Kenya consolidated and sharpened class relations, class divisions, and class consciousness and struggles. The people who had cultivated land for generations were displaced from their land and became landless "squatters" or were forced into selling their labor on lands now "owned" by settlers and plantations owned by multinationals. Other people were forced from the countryside into towns and cities where they found employment in industries, domestic service, or government departments. At the same time, the construction of railways and roads strengthened class consciousness among workers as they organized and struggled for better working conditions. The formation of trade

# Selection from Transcript

## No. 1: Wapi Uhuru?

### Freedom.

Dec 12, 1963. Independence Arena. The Union Jack was lowered. At 12:01, the flag of Independent Kenya was hoisted up to replace it. A new flag. A free country. Free at last.

It was a happy moment, but very brief. Because this....this was not freedom. Maybe Kenya was a free country. But the people of Kenya... They had the freedom to be hungry. Freedom to remain landless. Freedom to remain jobless. Freedom to remain uneducated. Freedom to live in poverty.

Only two years after independence, Kenya began killing its own freedom fighters. In 1965—less than two years from that time when the new Kenyan flag was raised up at Independence Arena—Kenya killed its first freedom fighter.

## The man they killed, he understood too much.

He understood that your oppressors will not stop oppressing you if you ask nicely, that the only way British colonizers would leave is through organized violence—so he routed weapons to the Mau Mau forest fighters.

He understood that stolen land was the root of colonization—so he fought, both before and after independence, to take it back from elites.

He understood that colonization was not just economic control, but also mental control—so he supported small, radical newspapers in vernacular languages so that Africans could speak for themselves, to each other.

He understood that the struggles of Kenyans was the same as that in India, or in Angola, or in South Africa, or in the U.S.—so he created bridges of solidarity across all continents.

In other words, this man understood what freedom was. And he understood how to get it.

The British colonizers detained him for many years. They put him away on Manda Island. But...the new rulers of Kenya? They did not detain him. They assassinated him.

## That man was Pio Gama Pinto.

### Episode 2: Mau Mau Ally

How the nation of Kenya became "free" without the people of Kenya getting free.

The British were getting very, very worried. The resistance was becoming more and more difficult to control, especially because it was coming from all directions: trade unions, criminal groups, official organizations like the KAU, The governor sent a telegram to Britain, which said: "The movement has many heads. We are dealing with a hydra."

But remember earlier, we mentioned that this was not a pure military war. It was a mass movement. The British bombed and fought the forest fighters in Mt. Kenya and Aberdares. But they also had to suppress what was a growing grassroots movement both upcountry and in the city. In Nairobi, taxi drivers helped spread messages. Gang members and black marketeers helped move money, supplies, and weapons from Nairobi to the forest. Nubians in Kibra hid Mau Mau fighters during raids. Even in Nyanza. Some "hard-core detainees" were kept on Mageta Islands and Sayusi Islands. Some managed to escape, and nearby Luos sheltered, fed, and clothed them, and got them safely back into the forest. It was all hands on deck.



# Until Everyone is Free

- Episode 1. Wapi Uhuru?
- Episode 2. Mau Mau Ally
- Episode 3: Land Justice Advocate
- Episode 4: Radical Journalist
- Episode 5: Trade Unionist
- Episode 6: Political Mastermind
- Episode 7: Martyr

# From the producers

“Until Everyone Is Free” is a Sheng’ podcast/radio show about Pio Gama Pinto: socialist, political detainee, Member of Parliament, and martyr.

Over several episodes, host Stoneface Bombaa, producer April Zhu, and reporter Felix Omondi tell the story of this forgotten freedom fighter to answer one important question: How did the country of Kenya become free... without the people of Kenya getting free?

The Mau Mau War has gone down in history—not only in Kenya as a key part of the anti-colonial independence struggle—but in the world. Mau Mau freedom fighters and the mass movement that backed them decided that constitutional, non-violent methods were useless in defeating a violent colonial regime. The only answer was organized violence. Against impossible odds, they did that.

Although the Mau Mau are heralded today as Kenya’s freedom fighters, their history has been sanitized. In this episode, host Stoneface Bombaa narrates and discusses the unsanitized history of Mau Mau and asks the question, if it were us back in the 1950s, where would we stand? Would we play it safe? Or, like Pio Gama Pinto, would we decide to go all in and support this radical, radical movement?

unions became the defining feature of this period. The development of the working class was given a boost by people taking up employment for subsistence and to pay taxes such as the hut tax and the poll tax. Indeed, the colonial tax system was designed to force people to take up employment in order to provide cheap labor to capitalist institutions.

The trade-union movement provided other requirements for resisting capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism: a committed leadership, guided not by personal greed but a clear ideological vision in the interest of the working class. Taken as a whole, the crucial factors of leadership, ideology, and organization made the trade-union movement a formidable force to combat colonialism. The trade-union movement understood that the economic interests of the working class could only be safeguarded if it, at the same time, protected their political interests. For this reason, it became active in politics and influenced the ideological direction of the progressive forces generally but in particular Mau Mau. Gupta ( 1981, 50) provides a brief overview of the trade-union movement:

# Labour movement

organised effort on the part of wage earners to fight for their social and economic betterment – in Kenya had manifested itself in several directions. In a short span of 40–50 years of colonial conditions, it had acquired maturity and its own structure. It had grown as a response to growing capitalist exploitative institutions in Kenya. Kenyan trade unions have been bargaining with capitalism. In the context of Kenya the settlers represented the capitalist class. The Kenyan workers have fought to raise their standards of living, to organise a struggle for democratic rights and to end the domination of European settlers.

The struggle of the working class in Kenya thus included the political struggle for independence. The input from South-Asian Kenyans, in terms of links with working-class struggles from India, provided valuable lessons in class struggles. Gupta ( 1981, p. 56) traces some aspects of this history and the links with India:

Ever since its origin the trade-union movement in Kenya had a sharply pronounced anti-colonial

character; it developed in the struggle for national independence, for political rights and freedom. During the absence of political parties, workers’ organisations were the only mass organisations representing and defending the interest of the broad masses. Struggle for the rights of the workers tended to be the struggle against the foreign capitalists who controlled the means of production.

For many years it was difficult to separate the trade-union movement from political struggle against colonialism. During the post second world war period, particularly during emergency (1952–61) many trade-union functionaries developed into prominent political leaders and later became high ranking statesmen of Kenya.

The trade-union movement in Kenya had a long history of struggles. It had used its main weapon – strikes – very effectively. Some of the first strikes took place as early as 1900, as documented by Singh ( 1969). That history points to yet other factors that Britain feared: the trade unions had no room for the divisive “tribal” or regional policies instigated by Britain. Workers were spread throughout the country, and the railway system helped to unite and organize the working class countrywide. Plantation and other rural workers not only provided a strong link with the peasants but helped to overcome the urban-rural split that colonialism sought to use as yet another divisive factor against the people. It was this unity that the British feared. It was a force that could not be isolated, divided, and destroyed by colonialism.

A brief survey of earlier trade-union activities from Durrani ( 2018a, pp. 89–90) provides a background to the later advances made by the working class:

# 1921

The Kenyan workers demonstrated their strength in 1921 by forming the first politico trade-union organization, the East African Association (EAA), under the leadership of a telephone operator, Harry Thuku. EAA organized the resistance of plantation workers to fight against the employers’ proposal to

reduce wages.

## 1930s

In the 1930s, the trade-union movement among the African workers took a new turn. Under the leadership of Makhan Singh, a Marxist, an Asian worker union was set up in 1934 on East African level – the Labour Trade Union of East Africa (LTUEA). Ever since the inception of LTUEA, Makhan Singh attempted to unite African and Asian workers.

## 1937

Various strikes led by LTUEA took place, including one for 62 days in April. A settlement was reached with employers agreeing to a wage increase of between 15% and 22%, an 8-h week, and reinstatement of all workers.

## 1939

Realizing the importance of labor organization, the KCA was cooperating with the Labour Trade Union of East Africa. African workers joined the Union in large numbers. In 1939, Makhan Singh celebrated May Day. This was the first time that a workers' meeting was held on the workers' day. The most significant development in Kenya trade-union movement was the August 1939 Mombasa strike. The strike began with the municipality workers for higher wages and quickly spread to electricity, docks, and post and telegraph workers in the town. Nearly 6000 African and Asian workers stopped work. The strike was sponsored by the LTUEA and supported by KCA (Kikuyu Central Association). The LTUEA and the KCA held a solidarity meeting of Asian and African workers in Nairobi. To break the strike, the government used all the high-handed methods. One hundred and fifty workers were arrested. However, the strike was a success and ended in workers' favor.

A new situation developed after 1947 under increasing activities by the trade-union movement. There was a general strike in Mombasa on 13 January 1947 when over 15,000 workers took part and led to the formation of the African Workers' Union, later renamed the African Workers' Federation.

Following the Mombasa strike, there were strikes in other towns. The colonial government was fast losing its control over events and people. It reacted by arresting the trade-union leaders. In 1951, the working class replied by staging a boycott of colonial buses and foreign beer in protest against colonial repression. The stage was set for the period of armed resistance.

## The Mau Mau Armed Resistance

The earlier anti-colonial struggles by peasants, the nationalities, the general people's resistance, the nationalist struggles, and trade-union activism ultimately led to armed resistance under Mau Mau. However, this transition did not happen overnight. These different strands of resistance fed the overall resistance and taught lessons that then became resistance strategy. Soon after the Second World War, the hopes of peaceful removal of colonialism from Kenya began to fade. The revolutionary line of armed, organized people's war began to emerge by around 1948. The lessons of the past struggles were clear to the politically aware workers: the contradiction with colonialism and imperialism could not be resolved without an organized, armed confrontation. This realization began to be put into practice gradually as the subjective and objective conditions developed. It was becoming clear that, in the meantime, intense working-class struggles under Makhan Singh and Fred Kubai had developed ideas and experiences of working-class struggles and organizations which added to the anti-capitalist arsenal at the disposal of working people. Soldiers returning after the Second World War, the resistance in India and other places, as well as the examples of revolutions from USSR and China added to people's knowledge and understanding of the need and strategies for resistance.

It is important to see what the aims of Mau Mau were. Barnett (Barnett and Njama 1966, p. 199) sums these up:

The secular aspects of Mau Mau ideology was revealed most clearly in the oft-repeated demands of the Movement for higher wages, increased educational opportunities, removal of the colour-bar..., return of the alienated lands and independence under an all-African government.

# Until Everyone is Free

How did the country of Kenya become free...  
Without the people of Kenya becoming free?

## Episode 1 (Trailer) Wapi Uhuru?

## Episode 2 Mau Mau Ally

## Episode 3 Land Justice Advocate

## Episode 4 Radical Journalist

Available at:

<https://untileverypod.com/>.

[Accessed: 06-09-2021].





SHIRAZ DURRANI ON REPRESSION IN KENYA

### Shiraz Durrani On Repression in Kenya

Available at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANIrYiuIG0s&list=PLxN1mpvGS-m0rHL\\_sbTV-y0FsABTRzFnt&index=1&t=28s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ANIrYiuIG0s&list=PLxN1mpvGS-m0rHL_sbTV-y0FsABTRzFnt&index=1&t=28s)

These aims thus encompassed the demands for independence as well as the class demands for land for the peasants and higher wages for the working class.

At the same time, social and political activists had decided that the formation of a strong resistance organization was necessary to meet the new challenges of fighting colonialism. Thus was born Mau Mau. The name came later, but its organization, ideology, vision, and strategies were all decided by the conditions of the time. Its struggle was against a foreign power that had captured people's land, labor, and resources and, in the process, had created an unequal and unjust system under capitalism in order to maintain its power to exploit, to oppress, and to govern without the people's authority.

A study of the differing forms of organization of Mau Mau at different times reveals that changing conditions at different stages of the struggle gave rise to corresponding changes in its organization. The changes were also reflected in a refinement of strategies and tactics so as to better reflect changing conditions. Thus, the organization of the revolutionary movement was different in its early years (i.e., before October 1952) from that which evolved after 1952. Further changes meant that the organization was different again by 1955 and also by 1960.

At a political level, new organizational structures began to emerge. After about 8 months of armed warfare, during which valuable military and guerrilla warfare experience had been gained, it was decided to call a representative meeting of the various units. The meeting was held in August 1953 near the Mwathe River and came to be known as the Mwathe Conference. After an exchange of ideas and long discussions, it was decided to form the Kenya Defence Council as the highest military and political organ of the armed struggle. The Mwathe Conference then elected the leadership of the Kenya Defence Council and organized the fighting forces into eight armies. Kimathi was elected the President of the Kenya Defence Council, with Gen. Macharia Kimemia as Vice-President, Gen. Kahiua-Itina as the Treasurer, and Brig. Gathitu as Secretary.

Changing needs at a later time led to the formation of the Kenya Parliament. A meeting of the Kenya

Defence Council was held in February 1954. Eight hundred delegates attended the meeting, and after intensive discussions, a decision was taken to replace the Kenya Defence Council by a new body – the Kenya Parliament. This was a change of fundamental importance. The Kenya Parliament was the first legitimate African government of Kenya. Its aims were to separate political and military aspects of the struggle, making the former paramount, to emphasize the national character of the freedom movement, to ensure the representation of all Kenyan nationalities, and to assume authority over liberated and semi-liberated areas and people. Militarily, it established its authority over all fighting units and prepared a new military offensive. It also formulated a foreign policy and sent representatives to foreign governments. Twelve members were elected to the Kenya Parliament, and Kimathi was elected the first Prime Minister. Their first loyalty was to the Kenya Parliament and not to their former armies. Macharia Kimemia was elected as Field Marshal. Kimathi was now free to devote his full attention to the political sphere and to the affairs of Kenya Parliament. In addition, all the 33 districts of Kenya were represented in the Kenya Parliament, thus making it a national body.

In the early years, new cadres were recruited and given political education in preparation for a time when they would become fully active in the resistance. Prospective members were placed under observation, then given the first oath, that of unity. They were then set specific tasks to test their commitment and provided with opportunities for practice. At the same time, they were placed in an underground cell structure and assigned to work at a democratic level in legal organizations. Many of these became part of the Mau Mau intelligence-gathering network.

The guerrilla forces established their own hospitals as well as factories for the manufacture of armaments and other necessities such as clothing. As the armed struggle advanced after 1952, Mau Mau forces liberated more areas. They maintained a large administrative machinery, which had jurisdiction over vast areas with hundreds of thousands of people for whose economy, welfare, education, health, and security they were responsible.

## Achievements of Mau Mau

Mau Mau has been given a negative interpretation by imperialism. Its achievements are either ignored or misrepresented. The following section looks at some aspects of its work that mark it out as a pioneer in Africa as well as a strong anti-imperialist force.

## Anti-imperialist Ideology

Three strands of Mau Mau's ideological stand were anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, and a proletarian-world outlook in the struggle against capitalism. They thus represented the unity of workers and peasants and all those who were not allied to the colonialists. This stand was derived from peasants' anti-colonial struggles and from the trade-union movement and working-class struggles in the liberation struggle as well as from the nationalist forces resisting colonialism through political organizations over a long period.

Different aspects of the ideology became dominant at different times, and freedom fighters responded differently at different times depending on the particular needs of each period. Just as at the political level, different organizational structures were created in response to specific needs, so at the ideological level, different perspectives came to prominence in keeping with the specific contradictions and needs in the struggle at the specific times.

As time went on, there was a gradual shift in the struggle from an anti-colonial phase to an anti-neo-colonial one. This change in ideology reflected a change in the material condition at the time. In the period leading to independence and the period after independence, imperialism, the main force that Mau Mau fought, changed from colonialism to neo-colonialism. In keeping with this change, Mau Mau also changed its political and military priorities. The class stand of Mau Mau was clear right from the beginning. The enemy was not seen in terms of the color of their skin, as the colonialist propaganda had insisted and, in effect, encouraged. Indeed, black homeguard collaborators were prime target of revolutionary wrath. Kimathi explained in a letter he wrote from his headquarters in Nyandarwa in 1953, "the poor are the Mau Mau." Poverty can be stopped, he explained, "but not by bombs and weapons from

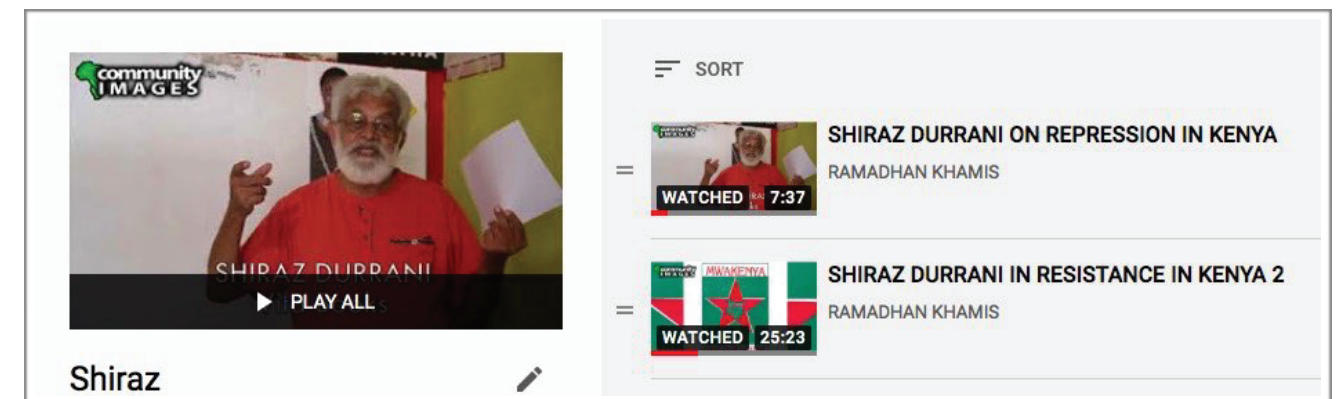
the imperialists. Only the revolutionary justice of the struggles of the poor could end poverty for Kenyans" as Kimathi stated in his letter to the Nairobi newspaper, Habari za Dunia (Odinga 1968). Thus the movement was not against European people or Black people but against colonialism and capitalism. It is also clear that Kimathi and the movement were taking a definite class stand.

As the enemy that Mau Mau faced came in three guises of colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism, so did people's struggle for liberation contain three aspects of resistance: anti-colonialism, anti-capitalism, and anti-imperialism. This resistance did not aim only at opposing the imperialist status quo: it was a proactive movement to create a society that was not capitalist and was opposed to imperialism. It was a socialist society based on principles of justice and equality for all that Mau Mau aspired to, not always by name, but certainly in their aspiration and aims. That such a prospect was attacked so vehemently by forces of neo-colonialism and imperialism indicates that they understood clearly that what people wanted was nothing less than the destruction of the very system of economic exploitation and social oppression. Their aim was to replace this with socialism – theory and practice.

## Organization

No struggle as large and facing a vastly superior military power as did Mau Mau could have existed without a strong organization. The organizational strength of the movement needs to be recognized. Edgerton (1990) provides a succulent summary of Mau Mau's organizational structure:

The Mau Mau movement was directed by what they usually called "Muhimu," or the Central Committee. The Central Committee consisted of 12 men, including Kubai and Kaggia, with Eliud Mutonyi as its chairman. When the police began to make arrests at oath-taking ceremonies, the Central Committee created another group, known as the "30 Committee," to direct oath-taking and to shield the true directorate from government detection. Under the direction of Fred Kubai, the 30 men on this committee were responsible for coordinating the activities of local leaders in the tribal reserves and townships. In addition, the leaders of Mau Mau were



Available at

[www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxN1mpvGS-m0rHL\\_sbTV-y0FsABTRzFnt](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxN1mpvGS-m0rHL_sbTV-y0FsABTRzFnt)

The Liberating Minds event was held at the Mathare Social Justice Centre, Nairobi on October 26, 2019. It was sponsored by the Social Justice Centre Working Group, the Ukombozi Library, the Revolutionary Socialist League and Vita Books. Collectively, they are a progressive group of organisations seeking social justice and are also active in the communications field.

The event was organised to mark the 3rd Biennial Conference of the African Studies Association of Africa (ASAA), held at the United States International University-Africa, Nairobi, from October 24-26, 2019. However, unlike at the ASAA Conference, the delegates and participants at the Mathare event were not from an academic community but real-life activists and intellectuals, rarely seen at academic conferences but who are often turned into specimen of development or poverty 'experts', examined under academic microscope in fulfilment of PhD and funding requirements.

The Mathare event was therefore ground-breaking in many ways: it was attended by local activists, intellectuals and people from working class. At the same time, the subject of discussion, 'Liberating Minds', rarely features in African or Western scholarship. The programme included topics such as repression in Kenya by imperialism under colonialism and neo-colonialism in the interest of entrenching capitalism. It also included repression by post-independence comprador governments of KANU under Presidents Jomo Kenyatta and Daniel arap Moi. It covered spontaneous, local and organised resistance by people, including Mau

Mau, the Kenya Peoples Union and the underground resistance movements, the December Twelve Movement and Mwakenya. Discussion then focused on police killings in Mathare and other working class areas where killing of youth by the police - the Watumumishi wa Wote ('the Servants of the People') is a daily occurrence.

Speakers included Shiraz Durrani who presented an illustrated talk on repression and repression in Kenya. The event was given an African context by presentations from Neziswa Titi from South Africa, also a delegate to the ASAA Conference who talked on 'The truth we know shall set us free'. Further presentations included introduction to the Thomas Sankara Political School in Nairobi by Maryanne Kasina and Antony Adoyo. The lively discussion indicated the wealth of information, knowledge, insight and perspectives among working class communities, hidden from the academic world, but evident to all those with an awareness and an understanding of working-class politics. The event was videoed by Khamis Ramadhan of Community Images, a pioneer of documenting repression and resistance in many parts of Africa.



# Liberating Minds: Reflections on Repression and Resistance: Mathare Forum

## October 26, 2019



Saturday October 26, 2019

Mathare Social Justice Centre Hall, Nairobi, Kenya

The following is the introductory text accompanying the video of the meeting

advised by what they called the KAU Study Circle, a kind of brain trust composed of four or five KAU members and an equal number of outsiders who were sympathetic to KAU's stated goals. These men prepared background research on policy matters that the Central Committee might need to address in Kenya, as well as international concerns, especially ways of attracting foreign support.

The formation of the Kenya Defence Council and of the Kenya Parliament indicates the importance that Mau Mau gave to organizations at national level. Its organizational structures at other levels have also been well documented, for example, by Barnett and Njama (1966) and Mathu (1974). Further evidence of Mau Mau's strong organizational structure is provided by Edgerton (1990):

No rebels fought from forest camps. The rebellion also depended on the support of sympathizers in the reserves, and in Nairobi and other towns. Until mid-1954, the Central Committee and its War Council still purchased weapons, organized food supplies, and recruited new fighters for the forest armies. Meanwhile, men and women in the Kikuyu, Embu, and Meru reserves continued to supply money, information, food, and weapons. Many risked their lives as often as those who fought in the forest. In fact, much of the actual fighting was done by men and women who lived in the reserves, and in Nairobi or smaller towns. Units from the forests often entered the reserves at night, and spent the day sleeping in the houses of sympathizers or hiding in a secluded area, before carrying out their raids and returning to camp. But others who had never entered the forests were sometimes called into action by a local leader, usually with the approval of higher Mau Mau authority. Sometimes they were ordered to kill a Kikuyu traitor, at other times to raid a Homeguard or police post for weapons.

## Strategy

The strategy that Mau Mau used against a militarily stronger enemy was crucial in its struggle. Mau Mau saw Kenyan peoples' contradiction with imperialism as an antagonistic one, which could not be resolved peacefully. It thus used the methods of armed struggle, guerrilla warfare, and people's struggle against imperialism. But it made a distinction between the three aspects of the enemy. Against

the colonial military forces, it used the method of guerrilla warfare and military battles (both offensive and defensive), which included attacks on military targets, on prisons to free captured guerrilla fighters, and on arsenals to procure arms.

The other "face" of the enemy was white Settlers, many of whom benefited from free or cheap land and had taken up arms against the people of Kenya. The Mau Mau movement used another method to deal with this threat. The Settlers' main concern was to protect "their" property on which their wealth depended. Indeed, their main aim in settling in Kenya was to appropriate, or acquire very cheaply, peasant land and labor and use it to produce wealth for themselves. The freedom fighters attacked them where it hurt most: the property itself. This served not only to threaten the very economic base of the Settlers; it also helped the guerrillas to procure food and rations they needed to continue their armed struggle, thus providing the material base for the armed revolution.

Mau Mau used yet another method against the third "face" of the enemy, the African homeguards. Considering that many had been forced either by economic reasons or through force or ignorance to become collaborators, many of those deemed capable of reforming were given advance warnings to stop betraying the cause of national liberation. Only when these were ignored was action taken against them, depending on the seriousness of their collaboration, but sanctioned by Mau Mau courts. In this way many who had initially sided with the enemy were won over to the nationalist side, and some of them then made important contributions to the anti-imperialist struggle. Many whose economic base was tied too strongly to imperialism refused to reform and had to be dealt with more severely in order that they did not pose a threat to the armed resistance forces.

Another tactic used against the collaborators involved information warfare aimed at demoralizing them. An example of this was spreading favorable news about guerrilla successes in enemy-held territory. Pinning large notices on trees and walls near schools, police stations, and social halls was one such way. It was not only the message of these posters that put fear in the enemy but the very fact that such notices could be placed in areas under colonial control. Despite the fact that strict security measures were taken by the colonial armed forces, the Mau Mau activists



managed to reach areas in the very heart of the city to pin these posters thus showing their strength and demoralizing enemy soldiers and civilians.

The democratic method involved the use of meetings, conferences, and congresses where free discussions could be held and ideas could be expressed without fear of persecution. After long discussions, decisions would be taken on basis of majority vote. Questions of leadership were settled through secret ballots, and elections were held at every level in so far as war conditions allowed.

Mau Mau's military strategy ensured that the military might of the greatest military power at the time was kept at bay for over 4 years.

## Infrastructure

There is no doubt that Mau Mau was well organized as a military and as a political organization. The colonialists were aware of their abilities, as they had discovered many examples of infrastructure in towns and forests even as the war of independence was going on. They deliberately chose to hide these facts and set out to destroy such evidence so as to continue their myth that Mau Mau was a primitive group of people who had nothing to do with the War of Liberation. Such structures included hospitals, libraries, social halls, as well as rules and regulations and records of civil and legal practice that guided the movement.

## Politics of Information

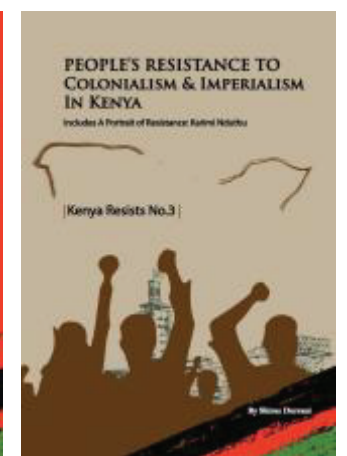
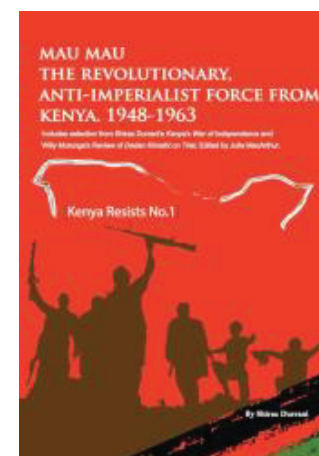
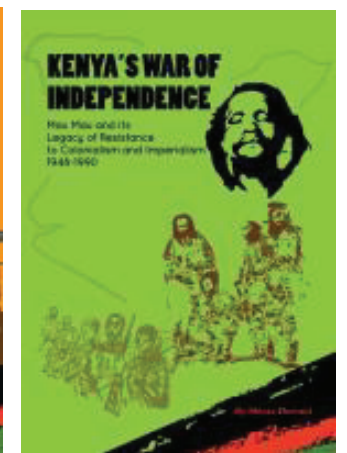
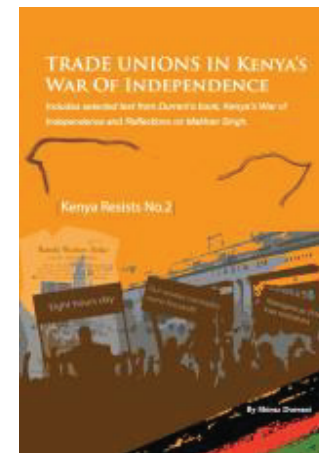
Mau Mau's information and communication strategy reflects different aspects of its overall work. Each of the elements of governance, such as ideology, organization, and strategy, required effective flow of information between different units and parts of the resistance movement. This flow was the lifeblood of the organization. This is essential in peacetime in any organization but was of particular significance in an underground movement facing a war situation against a heavily armed enemy. Survival depended on this life-giving process of flow of information and communication. And yet this was difficult to achieve in the war situation created by the imposition

of the state of emergency by British colonialism which relied not only on its military and political might but also on its experience of oppression in its other colonies, particularly India and Malaysia. The difficulties for Mau Mau were compounded by the absence of global networks such as the Internet and the imposition of information embargoes by colonialism. Thus experiences from the resistance forces in India and other countries were not easily available to the resistance organization. It was to prevent the availability of such information that the Kenya colonial government banned various progressive publications, including many from USSR, People's Republic of China, and India. That Mau Mau managed to develop sophisticated information policies and practices is a reflection of its strength as an advanced twentieth-century resistance movement.

## Leadership

All the aspects of governance, the actual conduct of warfare, the political aspects of Kenya Parliament, and other Mau Mau actions were not spontaneous acts happening in a political, social, and military vacuum. There was a guiding force behind them all. And that force was Mau Mau leadership, which is often ignored or minimized by historical studies. Mau Mau leadership needs to be seen in a dynamic level in all its aspects. It is not possible to see Mau Mau leadership in the sense that one sees the leader of a Western country personalized in the person of a president or a prime minister. True, Kimathi and other leaders did stand out. But the reality of fighting against the superpower of the day with limited resources dictated that a different model of leadership had to be found if the movement was to succeed. At the same time, the war of independence in Kenya was not directed by an organized political party as happened in Mozambique under FRELIMO or in Namibia under SWAPO. Such forces in Kenya were coming together to form a political-military organization before British colonial government preempted the development with its excessive use of force under the guise of an emergency. Of necessity, Kenya's war of independence was led and organized in a way that suited local conditions.

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worked tirelessly with people in the community to try to resolve their problems and overcome their challenges. The group was at the forefront of fighting for reforms and challenging unjust laws. RPP also partnered with the underground Mwakenya, and this sharpened its members ideologically. The national coordinator of Mwakenya, Karimi Nduthu, was also the Secretary General of RPP. Due to Nduthu's unwavering commitment to social justice, the enemy of the working people sent its agents to his residence in Riruta Satellite, a suburb of Nairobi, where they brutally murdered him on 24 March 1996. The assassination of Nduthu did not kill the spirit of RPP members. They continued their struggle by raising awareness among the masses at grassroot level and also organizing demonstrations against injustices by the state. The government kept arresting its members and charging them with illegal assembly. The sacrifice of Karimi Nduthu and the commitment of RPP members, together with other social movements, were not in vain as this, together with other developments, helped to force the regime to agree to the drafting of the new Constitution.

## Conclusion: Uhuru Bado [Not yet Independent]

The history of Kenya parallels trends in many other countries. The colonial government passes on power to a comprador class which it created and nurtured. This anti-people ruling elite then rejects the interests of people who had borne the brunt of fighting colonialism and imperialism. Working class and other people are then relegated to the margins of society by the new comprador ruling class. A "show-democracy" creates a number of political parties and a parliamentary system that represents the interests of the ruling class.

The crucial dividing line between the contending forces in Kenya is which class is in power and on whose behalf it rules. This class struggle is obscured by propaganda from the ruling classes. The contradiction between homeguards and Mau Mau was that the former sought superficial political change, while the latter demanded economic, political, and social transformation in the interest of the working class. That contradiction has not yet

been resolved. If the workers' forces are to continue the legacy of Mau Mau and fight for justice, equality, and socialism today, they will need to arm themselves with revolutionary ideology and organize themselves as an effective fighting force to confront imperialism and its local allies. Among their first tasks will be to liberate their minds from colonial and imperialist world outlook and to recognize that their liberation can be achieved only through a struggle against their class enemies.

## Mutunga ( 2017) sums up the current situation in Kenya:

The Kenyan elite, like many in Africa, has not identified or supported our national interests. They do not represent us patriotically in national relations with either the West or the East, preferring to build their own personal power bases among foreign interests, national and international cartels ...The bottom line is – This status quo MUST GO!

There can be no better way to understand Kenya's past than to study Pio Gama Pinto's analysis (Pinto 1963, quoted in Durrani, Shiraz, Ed. 2018b, p. 246) at the time of independence:

Kenya's Uhuru must not be transformed into freedom to exploit, or freedom to be hungry and live in ignorance. Uhuru must be Uhuru for the masses – uhuru from exploitation, from ignorance, disease and poverty ...The sacrifices of the hundreds of thousands of Kenya's freedom fighters must be honoured by the effective implementation of the policy - a democratic, African, socialist state in which the people have the right to be free from economic exploitation and the right to social equality.

Events have shown, however, that the aims of the Uhuru that Pinto and others died for have not been met even after 55 years of independence. The struggle that earlier generations, the radical trade-union movement and Mau Mau, waged continues.

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## Independence and Neo-colonialism: 1963–1990

By about 1956–1957, it became clear that colonialism was no longer sustainable in Kenya. The departure of British colonialism was a matter of time. In just a few years of warfare, Mau Mau had changed the balance of power. Kenya became independent on 12 December 1963. Now an African prime minister and an African government ruled the country. The old order had given way to the new. And that achievement was due entirely to Mau Mau.

And yet it was not the independence that those who participated in the war of independence had fought for. The changes were soon seen for what they were: the replacement of colonialism by neo-colonialism and the replacement of European Settlers by African "owners" of land. European Settlers remained, as did multinational corporations as the rulers behind the scene. Government policies were handed down by financial forces in London and New York. Policy "guidance" came from the IMF and the World Bank. The only aspect that did not change was the condition of the working class, and the situation of those who fought in the war of independence deteriorated. It was, in effect, independence for the ruling classes (black and white this time) to rule, kill, massacre, suppress, and loot as they pleased. And suppress, kill, and massacre they needed to do in order to remain in power as the people who had sacrificed all were not yet ready to hand over control to new masters with the same agenda. But the new masters were fully backed by the same imperialist powers which had engineered their coming to power.

## Repression by "Independent" Government

The British colonial government's legacy of impunity as it massacred, murdered, and tortured people at will was then bequeathed to the governments it set up after independence. The lesson that colonialism passed on to the comprador regime was that it was acceptable to eliminate and destroy people who oppose their policies. The TJRC Report ( 2013, Vol. IIA, p. 72) records the events of the time:

Kenyatta, having realized that he would not be able to meet the needs and expectations of all Kenyans, engaged in measures that would ensure political survival and self sustenance of his government. This lead to a strengthening of the role of the security agencies similar to the role they played during the colonial period, and particularly aimed at controlling, and suppressing dissent and organized political opposition. In brief, in the words of Charles Hornsby, 'the Independent State soon echoed its colonial parent's repressive attitudes to dissent'.

It was not only the Kenyatta government that used force to remain in power. The Moi-KANU government that followed it did the same, as TJRC Report ( 2013) says:

Political assassinations have occurred under each of the three successive governments since independence. The motives associated with these assassinations have varied, from getting rid of political competition, weeding out ambitious politicians, and removing perceived "dissidents" of the government or those who posed as "threats" to power. Evidence of state involvement and subsequent cover-ups is evident in the majority of political murders. Propaganda and commissions of inquiry are often used as smokescreens to get to "the bottom of the matter," and often have the effect of masking the motives and faces behind the assassinations. Prominent figures in government are said to be implicated. Key witnesses into the assassinations disappear or die mysteriously. No real perpetrators have ever been prosecuted, much less effectively investigated.

Under the KANU governments of Kenyatta and Moi, issues relating to the return of people's land were not resolved. Instead, the local and settler elites and transnational corporations consolidated their grip on this basic national resource. They were, in fact, further aggravated. Landlessness, the single most significant issue in Kenya before and after independence, continued to increase. Moi continued the torture, killings, executions, and massacres. The three pillars of resistance – Mau Mau, trade union organisations and people's forces – were responsible for the achievement of independence in 1963. But imperialism saw the danger that this combined force posed to its continued exploitation after independence. The comprador regime systematically attacked all the three. Mau Mau fighters in the forests



were killed in large numbers by colonial military forces and those who continued the struggle were hunted down and killed; others who came out in good faith at independence were ruthlessly murdered by armed forces. The radical wing of KANU which represented the demands of Mau Mau was systematically attacked and rendered ineffective. The trade union movement was weakened by attacks on militant trade union movement and the marginalisation or detention of its militant leaders. Thus, all the avenues of militant political action were banned. All public resistance activities were suppressed either “legally” or by the use of force.

The murder in 1965 of Pio Gama Pinto, a socialist who was active in Mau Mau, signalled a new period of repression in Kenya. The banning of opposition political parties followed. In 1969, the Kenya People’s Union was banned, and its leadership was arrested and detained. This one chance of having open radical politics in Kenya was lost. All political activities now went underground as did the expression of any independent ideas and opinions.

## Resistance

Throughout the 1970s, underground groups flourished and articulated their vision of a Kenya free from capitalism and imperialism, issuing various underground pamphlets. Some of these are recorded in Durrani ( 1997). These included Mwanguzi and Kenya Twendapi which questioned the direction Kenya was taking after independence under the new elite. Many former Mau Mau combatants began to recount their experiences and stated that they had not suffered during the anti-colonial struggles merely to see a minority elite getting all the benefits of independence. Many such views could not be published within Kenya and were published overseas. The murder in 1975 of the popular politician, J.M. Kariuki, brought out a national unanimity in anti-government feelings. It also saw the publication and distribution of a large number of underground leaflets in support of basic human and democratic rights. The key feature of this period was the continued resistance by workers, peasants, and progressive people’s movements.

An important feature of resistance after independence was the lack of the strong united force such as the one that opposed colonialism in the earlier period. The strict censorship by the independent governments ensured that no strong, radical, organized working class and trade-union movement survived, nor did it tolerate any form of people’s resistance. Political parties that supported Mau Mau’s vision were also not allowed. Such suppression of resistance was the legacy that colonialism left in Kenya, and it curtailed, initially at least, the resistance of people. Nevertheless, resistance was not suppressed totally as the following section shows.



towns. Moi’s regime unleashed its security agents (police, GSU) to quell the resistance but with little success.

The history of Kenya shows that resistance builds on the achievements of an earlier period of struggle. The ideas of earlier anti-colonial struggles influenced Mau Mau, just as these ideas then influenced DTM-Mwakenya.

## Overseas Resistance

### From Kenya Committee to Umoja

The suppression of people’s rights led many of the vocal academics as well as progressives to seek asylum abroad. These newly resettled asylum seekers continued the activities that had been frowned upon by the Kenyan regime. These included campaigning for the release of political prisoners, and it was on this basis that the Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners in Kenya (CRPPK) was established in London on 2 July 1982. The Committee acted as a solidarity organization for those who were arrested, detained, or harassed for their political activities in Kenya. Its objectives were:

1. To campaign for the release of political prisoners in Kenya
2. To express solidarity with the people of Kenya in their struggle for democratic rights (e.g., political, cultural, and trade-union freedom)
3. To sensitize international public opinion on the repressive nature of the Kenyan regime
4. To support Kenyan people in their opposition to US military bases and all foreign military presence in Kenya

The Committee continued its campaign throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s publishing the influential Kenya News bulletin and coordinating with other Kenyan democratic and solidarity movements abroad. In October 1987, a number of resistance groups abroad came together and formed United Movement for Democracy in Kenya (Umoja) which was committed to:

1. The restoration of national sovereignty
2. The building of a truly democratic society
3. The restructuring of the economy for the social progress of all Kenyans

It had constituent branches and contacts in Britain (where the Secretariat was based), Norway, Denmark, Sweden, the USA, and also some African countries. Umoja also liaised and worked with progressive groups in Kenya among them Mwakenya though on a principled basis.

## Release Political Prisoners Group and the Assassination of Karimi Nduthu

National and overseas campaigns forced the government to make constitutional changes. It repealed Section 2A of the Constitution in 1991, thus ushering in the multiparty system. This, however, did not bring change as many of the people who had been jailed for fighting social injustice remained in prison. In response to this situation, the Release Political Prisoners Pressure Group (RPP) was formed in the same year to put more pressure on the government. The group mobilized mothers of some political prisoners and presented a petition to the Attorney General demanding the release of all political prisoners. After presenting the petition, the mothers headed to Uhuru Park (Freedom Corner) and staged a hunger strike (surviving on water and glucose). Their demands were, however, not taken seriously by the government which sent the police on 3 March 1992 to disperse them. In the process they beat them up. The government later rounded up the mothers and forcefully took them to their respective homes. This government action did not weaken the women’s resolve to fight for their children’s freedom. The following day they came back to Nairobi and continued with their hunger strike. They were hosted by Reverend John Njenga of All Saints’ Cathedral. The government continued to harass them by sending police to the cathedral and arresting members of RPP. The campaign ultimately bore fruits as by late 1992, all political prisoners except Odhiambo Apiny had been released from prison. RPP believed political prisoners were not only those confined and serving a jail term but anyone whose freedom, livelihood, conscience, ethics, values, and principles were compromised by state powers. Based on this tenet, RPP members



In its short life, DTM left a legacy of progressive policies, vision, and experiences reflected in its publications. These provided an alternative vision of a free, socialist Kenya.

## Mwakenya

Mwakenya came into existence in the late 1980s and was composed largely of members of the December Twelve Movement (DTM), the revolutionary movement formed in mid 1970s. DTM members partnered with other progressive forces and formed Mwakenya. By the 1980s, the Moi regime had become increasingly repressive and did not tolerate any divergent views. Mwakenya as an underground movement played crucial role in exposing the ills that the regime was committing against the people. It summed up the democratic mood of the underground resistance under its slogan *Ni haki yetu kupingania haki* (It is our right to struggle for our rights). One of the rights denied to Kenyans was the right to organize. For this reason, Mwakenya concentrated in organizing people and distributing its literature throughout the country in secret. Mwakenya was guided by the following fundamental goals or objectives:

1. The recovery of national sovereignty and integrity
2. The building of an independent and integrated national economy
3. The establishment of genuine democracy
4. The establishment of social justice for all classes and nationalities
5. The promotion of a patriotic and democratic national culture
6. The building of a strong people's defense force
7. The pursuit of an independent foreign policy

Events were to prove that many practices of DTM which had given it strength were not carried on into Mwakenya and that this perhaps led to its decline in the long term. DTM's strict recruitment policy was discarded. Instead Mwakenya became a mass party by opening up membership to all, irrespective of ideological commitment, clarity, and experience in the struggle. The earlier requirements of study and practice were also dispensed with.

And yet there were important contributions made by Mwakenya. Its greatest achievement was the creation of a clear political and ideological framework in opposition to the KANU government's pro-Western, pro-capitalist program. It did so with an evidence-based analysis of the conditions of the time and the state of contradictions in the society. Based on such analysis, it produced two important documents setting out its vision.

The first document was Mwakenya's Draft Minimum Programme which set out the history of neo-colonialism in Kenya and also traced the history of resistance in Kenya. It also gave the background to the formation of Mwakenya itself and recorded its publications and Congresses. The most significant part was "the Fundamental Goals and Objectives of Mwakenya." The publication Draft Minimum Programme marked a new stage in the anti-imperialist struggle in Kenya. Once again, an underground opposition party challenged the monopoly of KANU as the true spokesperson for the masses of Kenya. No longer could KANU claim its exclusive right to speak for all the classes in Kenya. It now became obvious that KANU spoke for the comprador class in Kenya, while Mwakenya and allied progressive movements represented the interests of the rest of the people. The challenge to KANU was on ideological and organizational fronts as well, as Mwakenya set out the demands of the "oppressed and exploited classes of Kenyan people" and called upon the people "to overthrow the entire neo-colonial system, seize political power and establish a peaceful state of democracy and social progress." The silent class struggle since independence was formally brought into broad daylight. Under its slogan "In Struggle Lies the Way Ahead," Mwakenya proclaims its stand, *Ni haki yetu kupigania haki zetu* (It is our right to fight for our rights).

The other publications by Mwakenya were *Mzalendo Mwakenya* and *The Register of Resistance*. The publications exposed the deceptions of the Moi regime and attracted a wider readership from the people who were looking to resolve some of the problems facing the country. The period saw a large number of strikes and demonstrations. According to the Register of Resistance (1986), a total of 65 strikes involving over 42,000 workers took place in over 44

## People's Resistance

### Worker Resistance

Worker resistance throughout the country was in the forefront of direct action through strikes and related actions, reminiscent of the practice during the colonial period. Seen as an overall systematic resistance, these strikes and other struggles helped to build a movement against the government which has come down heavily against trade unions. It banned strikes and imprisoned trade-union leaders. And, in the end, the Central Organisation of Trade Unions (COTU) was affiliated into the ruling party, KANU, thus ending its role as a workers' organization to fight for economic and political rights of working people. But this did not suppress working-class militancy as activists and shop stewards continued resistance, isolating the official, conservative leadership. Year after year, thousands of workers broke KANU laws and went on strikes for their rights.

The militant activities of the earlier radical organized trade-union movement were absent in this period. But it was the daily struggles of the workers that gave true significance to the growing worker movement. Not willing to accept the situation, which meant daily erosion of their already very low standard of living, the workers intensified their struggles for a decent living wage and their economic, social, and political rights. Mwakenya (1987b, p. 4) breaks down the workers' demands into three categories:

- Economic demands: for higher wages, land, and employment
- Social demands: safety at places of work, improved working conditions, adequate health facilities, and adequate and relevant education
- Political demands: right to organize, right to assembly, union rights, support other workers, and liberation from the entire oppressive system

It is significant that Kenyan workers saw workers' rights in the same way as Mau Mau did: that workers' rights should include social and political as well as economic rights as legitimate demands of the trade-union movement. This was the main plank of the

trade-union movement set up by Makhan Singh, Fred Kubai, Bildad Kaggia, and others during the colonial period under the East African Trade Union Congress. The colonial administration, as well as the independent Kenyan government, legislated to remove workers' political rights from trade-union remit – an aspect that has gravely weakened the trade-union movement in Kenya. Workers' resistance in this period took various forms: strikes, demonstrations, boycotts, work-to-rule, and refusal to accept unfair practices.

### Peasant Resistance

Landlessness remained a key factor in resistance after independence. Peasants and pastoralists reverted to their colonial practices of resistance. No week passed without reports of peasant resistance to the Moi government's policies and attacks on government officials. At the same time, because of the shortage of land which resulted in high prices, it often became necessary for a large number of peasants to pool their resources together to purchase one farm. This came in useful when they faced common problems: thousands of small land owners found strength in defying government directives, whereas individual plot owners may fear taking direct action. Peasants as a class joined hands with workers in resisting the policies of the government. Conditions were ripening in the countryside for a more systematic and organized resistance by peasants. Underground resistance movements got much support from the peasants. Indeed, the government's use of force against peasants showed its fear of this resistance building up into a formidable force.

### Student Resistance

Students throughout the country joined workers and peasants in opposing government policies. In representing their own interests as students, they also articulated the aspirations of the working people. The youth derived their political consciousness from the material conditions of their own lives as well as from the experiences of their parents who in the main were workers and peasants. The government attempted to turn students into docile acceptors of its policies, including those in the education field such as the curricula. School, college, and university



syllabi were controlled to remove any progressive ideas, similarly removing the militant ideology and aims of Mau Mau and the war of independence. Their cultural and social activities were vetted to ensure that there were no mentions of facts and events which could inspire independent thought. In short, the whole educational process was geared to produce supporters of capitalism and comprador rule.

But students never accepted this. They consistently resisted not only the colonial and imperialist-orientated elements of the education system itself but also the socioeconomic system that blindly followed Western capitalist ideas and encouraged corruption. They instead sought a united student national movement which would ensure free circulation of ideas and links with fellow students from Africa and other progressive students from around the world.

Students were also in the forefront of writing and distributing underground pamphlets setting out their demands. This was especially the case at universities. Students at the University of Nairobi, for example, produced a vast amount of such literature, reflecting the militancy of the students there. Indeed, a tradition of at least one enforced closure per year was the norm as the government dealt with student protests by sending in the dreaded paramilitary general service unit (GSU) and closing the institution. New repressive regulations were introduced after every closure, but this did not stop student militancy. Most student union leaders ended up being thrown out of the University and jailed, detained, or murdered. The student newspaper produced at the School of Journalism reflected socialist tendency among students. Mwakenya (1987a, p. 12) summarizes student resistance:

After the banning of K.P.U., democratic opposition was led by University and Secondary school students. Nairobi and Kenyatta University students unions played a major role in fighting for democracy and human rights, and opposing neo-colonialism and foreign military bases in Kenya. They demonstrated in the streets, wrote leaflets, spoke in public and student gatherings, and in so many ways helped expose the reactionary character of the KANU regime.

The significance of these student activities was that

they represented a new generation which refused to accept a corrupt, man-eat-man society. The future of Kenya in reality lay in their hands. And they indicated their rejection of the regime's policies which were to accommodate capitalism and imperialism in Kenya.

## Organized Resistance

It was comparatively easy for the government to control people's resistance as it lacked a central ideology, leadership, and organization. It was often focused on local issues of relevance to a comparatively small number of people. What was lacking was the nationwide perspective that the radical trade-union movement and Mau Mau provided in the anti-colonial stage. This was rectified by the organized underground movements, the chief one being the December Twelve Movement that provided ideological direction, an analysis of history, and proposals for future action. In this way they provided the overall strategy for socialism that opposed the capitalist direction of the ruling party and class.

## December Twelve Movement

Earlier attempts by radical groups to continue the vision of Mau Mau within KANU had failed, reflecting the total surrender of the comprador class to imperialist interests. It became the historical role of underground resistance movements to articulate the new phase in Kenyan politics where open opposition to the government was not possible. The tradition of organized underground resistance in Kenya goes back to the beginning of the twentieth century and continued throughout the colonial period and post-independence. Moreover, it carried on throughout the period of Kenyatta's regime and intensified under Moi, as the US-backed regime consolidated its neo-colonial grip on the country. Among the key underground movements was the December Twelve Movement (DTM) which later emerged as Mwakenya.

DTM's activities represented a continuation of resistance from pre-independence days. DTM opposed the capitalist outlook of the ruling class and

their party. It was active in articulating its ideological position, policies, and outlook, not only among its active members grouped in secret cells but also in disseminating these to its actual and potential supporters among the masses. It was not a mass movement, and only accepted into its membership were those who showed a clear grasp of its ideological stand and were willing to put into practice their commitments. The emergence of the DTM marked the end of the attempts by democratic forces to form legal opposition parties. DTM's activities and ideological stand are best seen in its publications.

One of the most important underground publications of DTM was InDependent Kenya, (Cheche Kenya 1981) published by the group Cheche Kenya, an earlier name of the DTM. InDependent Kenya documented, from the perspective of the Kenyan working people, the history of Kenyans' struggle for independence, the struggle of militants and conservatives within the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the corruption that became a way of life within the regime, and the cultural dependency on imperialism. InDependent Kenya was cyclostyled and widely distributed through underground channels in Kenya. It was published in book form in London by Zed Press in 1982, sponsored by the Journal of African Marxists "in solidarity with the authors."

It was DTM's newspaper Pambana, Organ of the December Twelve Movement, however, which had the widest circulation and the greatest impact in post-independence Kenya. The first issue was published in May 1982. DTM's program became, in effect, an alternative to that of KANU's essentially capitalist one. DTM stood for a national democratic revolution which could unite all national forces opposed to imperialism and the neo-colonial comprador regime. As Pambana made clear, the December Twelve Movement supported all genuine Kenyan organizations and individuals, "fighting any aspect of local or imperialist reaction." It set out the tactics of achieving a broad unity of all democratic forces, and, in the process, it clearly isolated the comprador class.

The short-lived coup of August 1982 was, at one level, a reflection of the developing democratic forces. The coup's message (Kenya Coup, 1982, Broadcast)

reflected the desire of millions for an alternative political system from the one KANU offered. It was clearly a vindication of DTM's program, which appears to have influenced the coup leaders.

The aftermath of the coup altered the political scene in Kenya. Realizing how little public support it had, the KANU Government took repression to new heights and relied even more on the military. Many people who were active before the coup were brutally murdered or illegally detained. All pretenses of democracy disappeared. Economically, the Moi regime aligned itself even more firmly with US imperialism, which now acquired military facilities in the country in return for supporting the unpopular regime. At the same time, the coup ended prematurely the developing revolutionary forces from gathering more support and setting up an appropriate organizational and ideological framework to challenge the government on a stronger basis. The coup also gave the Moi government an excuse to undermine every strand of resistance to its rule and to arrest, detain, and eliminate those it saw as opposing its rule. This included the growing trade-union and student movements and also DTM. With strong support from Britain and the USA, it re-established its rule, but this time it would be even more oppressive. It is difficult to speculate how the forces of resistance would have developed had Moi not used the coup to silence all opposition. It is fair to say, however, the resistance movement suffered a setback with Moi's reign of terror unleashed in the wake of the coup.

The DTM just about survived Moi's attacks on all forces opposed to him but as a much-weakened movement following the jailing, detention, or elimination of its members and leaders. It continued the production of Pambana, and the second issue came out in July 1983. It summed up the experiences following the coup and exposed the attempts of "the ruling clique and their army to instil fear amongst the people." It identified the root causes of the problems facing people and resolutely called for unity to defeat "the enemy." Pambana drew strength from the revolutionary traditions of the Mau Mau's use of struggle songs to mobilize people.

DTM also carried on its struggle overseas through Umoja in London, as recorded later in this article.