

## **Kenya's War of Independence - Mau Mau and its Legacy of Resistance to Colonialism and Imperialism 1948-1990**

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**Q&A:** By Maya Parmar

*Kenya's War of Independence* restores Kenya's stolen history to its rightful place, stripped of colonial interpretations. In this expanded and revised version of his 1986 booklet, *Kimaathi, Mau Mau's First Prime Minister of Kenya*, Durrani covers Mau Mau's resistance to colonialism and neocolonialism and reflects on its ideology, organisation and achievements. He sees Mau Mau in the larger context of Kenya's War of Independence and looks at the influence of organised, radical trade unions as the engine of resistance, linking economic with political demands of working people. New sections then examine post-independence resistance by the underground December Twelve Movement-Mwakenya.

Durrani captures the dynamism of transition from colonialism to neocolonialism: "Capitalism and imperialism flourished; corporations had a field day; neocolonialism replaced colonialism, a comprador government replaced the colonial administration, Black elites took over land from White Settlers while peasants remained landless, workers with poor or no employment; poverty everywhere; democratic rights curtailed. Mau Mau and the trade union movement and their visions were sidelined, and activists were detained, disappeared, or murdered. Soon resistance flourished once again: the War of Economic Liberation replaced the War of Independence. Class struggle became evident everywhere" he says.

The movement [Mau Mau] was radicalized by a militant leadership that emerged from the trade union movement in Nairobi ... the fact is that without their participation a sustained revolt would not have been possible - Newsinger (2006).

"This booklet, along with such classic accounts as Barnett's and Njama's *Mau Mau From Within*, is a fitting tribute to the pioneers in the struggle against imperialism and their martyred leader, Dedan Kimaathi" Egil Hjelmervik, *Fight Racism Fight Imperialism* (1993) - Review of Durrani's *Kimaathi, Mau Mau's First Prime Minister of Kenya*.

Compensation for what happened may be paid, an apology may be given but the lives lost, the villages burnt, the reign of terror the British imposed in a colonial era that was rapidly approaching the sunset, will never be forgotten - Jeremy Corbyn (2012).

[Shiraz Durrani](#) is a British-Kenyan library science professional noted for his writings on the social and political dimensions of information and librarianship. His other books include *Never Be Silent: Publishing and Imperialism in Kenya, 1884-1963* (2006); *Progressive*

*Librarianship: Perspectives from Kenya and Britain, 1979-2010* (2014); *Information and Liberation: Writings on the Politics of Information and Librarianship* (2008). Durrani edited *Makhan Singh, A Revolutionary Kenyan Trade Unionist* (2016).

**CONTENTS:** Foreword by **Dr. Willy Mutunga**; Introducing Kenya's War of Independence: Resistance Before Mau Mau, Trade Unions Light a Spark; Mau Mau, 1948-1960; The Final Stage; Transition to Neocolonialism; Uhuru, 1963:

Underground Organised Resistance. References & Bibliography. Appendices: Jeremy Corbyn; Selected Documents; Research Aid: Mamon, Kenya Resistance, Repression & Revolt, A Timeline; Durrani, S: The Other Kenya: Underground and Alternative Literature.