KENYA

A History Since Independence

CHARLES HORNSBY

Charles Hornsby is an international manager with a multinational corporation. He completed his D.Phil. on Kenyan politics at St Antony's College, Oxford in 1986, and has since combined a professional career in information technology with a deep engagement with Kenya. He has published several articles on Kenyan politics and co-authored with David Throup the influential *Multi-Party Politics in Kenya* (1998). He has been a journalist or election observer during most of Kenya's recent elections and lived and worked in Ghana in 1995–8 and Kenya in 1999–2001. He currently lives in Malaysia.

'This is the first full history of Kenya's half-century of independence. And it is more than that. Hornsby roots independent Kenya's problems in its many colonial crises, particularly the brutally divisive Mau Mau war. Since then Kenya has experienced rapid change, not least its explosive population growth, and crises, often resolved, at least temporarily, by illegal government action. But the underlying continuities are extraordinary. What were patched-up, ad hoc, responses at independence had become settled political conventions a few years later. Hornsby shows how Kenya's most recent tragedy, the killings and evictions that followed the 2007 general election, can be traced back to these political deals of decolonisation, inscribed in disputed African access to the departing white settlers' land. His case is made all the stronger by his close attention not only to political but also to economic and social history, agrarian and international affairs. But, unusually, Hornsby also shows that political philosophy has mattered – as much as the intrigue, ethnic patronage, and corruption that are the conventional stuff of less well informed commentaries on recent African history. A fundamental choice was available to Kenya's leaders 50 years ago. They were divided over which path to follow, "socialist" or "capitalist". Choosing the capitalist road but calling it African socialism, Kenya's later history has always been dogged by an undertow of ideological dissent, difficult to define precisely, impossible for leaders to banish from their nightmares. In Hornsby's hands there is here a deep politics at work in a long process, under the high politics of the every day. One of many continuities has been the apparent absence of the army from direct political involvement – an a-political tradition that has emerged from a series of abortive interventions in earlier years. This is not the same as saying that the state has retained a legitimate monopoly on the exercise of force. It has not: political assassination has from time to time served regime interests; the police have often acted as a vigilante gang; vigilante gangs act as local police forces and political enforcers. To explain such ambiguities in the Kenyan nation and state is not easy. But with great thoroughness, edged with sometimes startling insight, Hornsby has done just that.'

John Lonsdale, Emeritus Professor of Modern African History,
University of Cambridge

'Charles Hornsby has followed Kenya intensely for decades and watched the twists and upsets of its dramatic politics. Now he has written a heavyweight and lucid history of this fascinating and important country. His account is a grand narrative full of sharp insights.'

Richard Dowden, Chairman Royal African Society

'The definitive study of independent Kenya. Hornsby has an encyclopaedic knowledge of Kenyan politics and politicians.'

David Throup, Senior Associate, Africa Program,
The Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC

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Contents

List of Tables, Figures and Illustrations vii
Acknowledgements xi
Abbreviations and Acronyms xiii

1 Introduction 1
2 Independence! 19
3 Struggle for the State, 1964–1965 93
4 Multi-Party, but not Democracy, 1966–1969 156
5 'Golden Years', 1970–1974 220
6 Rigor Mortis, 1975–1978 279
7 Too Many Cooks, 1978–1983 331
8 Heavy Footsteps, 1984–1989 398
9 A Second Liberation? 1990–1992 466
10 Conflict and Change, 1993–1997 539
11 Unnatural Succession, 1998–2002 618
12 Back to the Future, 2003–2008 697
13 Cold War and Compromise, 2008–2011 771
14 Conclusions 787

Notes 819
Bibliography 890
Index 911

Tables, Figures and Illustrations

Tables

3.1 Civil servants who converted rapid promotion into enduring power 124–5
4.1 Military heads, 1964–71 180
5.1 Ethnic composition of the government, 1969 221
5.2 Military heads, 1969–78 231
5.3 Police heads, 1969–78 232
5.4 Kenyatta's key provincial commissioners 255
5.5 Senior Kikuyu parastatal heads in the 1970s 256
7.1 Military positions during the transition 336
7.2 Police and internal security heads in the early Moi years 381
8.1 Military heads, mid- to late 1980s 411
8.2 Police and internal security heads, mid- to late 1980s 412
10.1 Military heads, 1990–9 554
10.2 Police and internal security heads, 1991–2002 556
11.1 Military heads, 1997–2003 659
12.1 Police and internal security heads, 2003–8 712
12.2 Military heads, 2003–8 713
12.3 Parliamentary election results, 2007 759
12.4 Presidential election results, 2007 760
13.1 Key military positions, 2008–11 774

Figures

2.1 Kenyatta signs the Articles of Independence, December 1963 20
2.2 1962 census results 22
2.3 The 'white highlands' 28
2.4 1961 election results 65
2.5 New regional boundaries and ethnicity, 1962 74
2.6 KADU's manifesto, 1963 81
2.7 1963 election results 83
2.8 The independence Cabinet 85
3.1 Kenyatta and Colonel Ndolo, December 1965 108
3.2 Coffee and tea production, 1961–70 133
3.3 Primary and secondary school enrolments, 1960–70 139
4.1 Oginga Odinga and Tom Mboya 159
4.2 The May 1966 Cabinet 161
4.3 Performance of KPU candidates in 1963 and 1966 Little General Election 164
4.4 Kenyatta and Moi, Jamhuri Day, 1967 166
4.5 The military chain of command, 1969 182

4.6 Real GDP growth, 1964–70 183
4.7 Wage employment, 1960–73 191
4.8 International arrivals and game park visits, 1962–72 192
4.9 Maize imports and exports, 1963–2003 194
4.10 Population growth by ethnic and racial group, 1962–9 200
4.11 J. M. Kariuki 208
4.12 Fighting outside the cathedral, 8 July 1969 209
4.13 The Kisumu incident, 25 October 1969 214
5.1 British High Commission report on the coup plot, 1971 229
5.2 Bernard Hinga and James Kanyotu 232
5.3 Real GDP growth, 1964–80 238
5.4 Imports and exports, 1964–78 239
5.5 Inflation rates, 1963–78 240
5.6 Government deficit, 1964–75 242
5.7 The ethnic composition of Kajiado District, 1962–89 252
5.8 The ethnic composition of Lamu District, 1962–89 253
5.9 Primary and secondary school enrolments, 1963–78 267
5.10 Njoroge Mungai and Charles Njonjo 277
6.1 Kenyatta's swearing-in, November 1974 280
6.2 Bus explosion, 1 March 1975 282
6.3 Students demonstrate after the murder of J. M. Kariuki, 17 March 1975 283
6.4 Paul Ngei 287
6.5 Marie John Seroney and Martin Shikuku 289
6.6 Export earnings by value from coffee, tea and petroleum products, 1964–84 291
6.7 Total overseas development aid, 1970–8 294
6.8 Government debt, 1964–78 295
6.9 Tourism indicators, 1969–79 300
6.10 Coffee and tea exports, 1964–79 302
6.11 The Kenyatta family 315
6.12 Kenyatta's funeral, 31 August 1978 329
7.1 Moi's first Cabinet, 1978 332
7.2 Defence spending as percentage of budget, 1969–2002 337
7.3 US grants and loans to Kenya, 1969–84 338
7.4 Nicholas Biwott 342
7.5 The Cabinet, January 1980 345
7.6 The ethnic composition of the Cabinet, 1963–83 345
7.7 Njonjo's swearing-in, June 1980 352
7.8 Public sector workforce, 1955–84 358
7.9 Dollar debt servicing costs, 1963–84 360
7.10 Maize and wheat production, 1964–84 364
7.11 Annual land registration and adjudication, 1966–89 367
7.12 The army on the streets, 1 August 1982 377
7.13 Chief of Staff Mulinge and Major-General Peter Kariuki 379
7.14 Loyalty demonstrations, August 1982 380

7.15 Government spending, 1964–84 384
7.16 Imports and exports, 1969–89 385
7.17 Population by ethnic group, 1969 and 1979 386
7.18 George Saitoti 395
7.19 Paul Muite and Charles Njonjo, 1984 395
8.1 Hezekiah Oyugi 406
8.2 Nyayo House 415
8.3 The annexation of the Ilemi triangle 419
8.4 Real GDP growth, 1979–90 420
8.5 Government debt, 1980–90 421
8.6 Moi demonstrates the Nyayo car, 1990 428
8.7 Public and private sector employment, 1961–2007 431
8.8 Coffee and tea production, 1969–89 435
8.9 Coffee and tea exports, 1963–93 435
8.10 Milk production, 1963–93 438
8.11 Primary and secondary school enrolments, 1978–93 446
8.12 Secondary school places in Central and Rift Valley provinces, 1974–91 447
8.13 International arrivals and visits to national parks, 1979–91 450
8.14 Moi burning ivory, 1989 451
8.15 Changes in population by ethnic group, 1969–89 452
8.16 Ethnic diffusion, 1969–89 453
9.1 US grants and loans to Kenya, 1984–92 468
9.2 GDP per capita, 1981–2002 469
9.3 Robert Ouko 473
9.4 Matiba and Rubia's press conference, 3 May 1990 476
9.5 Shikuku, Muliro and Orengo, 16 November 1991 484
9.6 FORD's second press conference, 5 December 1991 489
9.7 Clash victim, 1992 491
9.8 Dollar exchange rates and currency in circulation, 1978–98 505
9.9 Moi's percentage of the presidential vote, 1992 529
9.10 Voting preferences in the presidential election, 1992 530
9.11 Presidential results by constituency winner, 1992 532
10.1 Ethnicity of Cabinet appointments, 1963–98 540
10.2 Murder figures and population aged over 15, 1962–2000 551
10.3 GDP growth, 1990–8 561
10.4 Inflation rates, 1978–2007 562
10.5 Internal and external debt, 1982–2002 563
10.6 International arrivals and visits to national parks, 1964–2002 564
10.7 Overseas development aid, 1978–96 565
10.8 Public sector wage employment, 1963–2002 571
10.9 Per capita maize production, 1963–2007 573
10.10 Coffee and tea production, 1989–2007 575
10.11 Imports and exports of raw equivalent sugar, 1963–2002 578
10.12 Ratio of imports to exports, 1964–2004 581
10.13 Raila Odinga and Kijana Wamalwa 593

10.14 KANU A and KANU B 595
10.15 Women parliamentary candidates and elected MPs, 1963–2007 607
10.16 Presidential voting preferences of the 10 largest communities, 1997 612
10.17 Presidential election results, 1997 613
11.1 The January 1998 Cabinet 619
11.2 Moi's chess game, 1999 622
11.3 US grants to Kenya, 1992–2002 630
11.4 Change in real and per capita GDP, 1991–2002 638
11.5 Development as a proportion of government expenditure, 1964–2002 640
11.6 Public sector employees by type, 1982–2007 641
11.7 Nairobi Stock Exchange Index, 1964–2002 644
11.8 Changes in formal sector employment, 1951–2007 646
11.9 Census data by province, 1969 and 1999 651
11.10 KANU–NDP alliance, 24 August 2001 663
11.11 Moi and the new KANU chairmen, March 2002 672
11.12 Political dynasties 673
11.13 Rainbow rebels, 6 September 2002 678
11.14 Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta, 2002 681
11.15 Registered voters per seat by ethnic group, 2002 682
11.16 NARC billboard, Nairobi 688
11.17 Presidential voting preferences of the largest communities, 2002 691
11.18 KANU's presidential votes by province, 1992, 1997 and 2002 693
11.19 Change in actual presidential vote, 1997–2002 693
12.1 Ethnic composition of the Cabinet, 1963–2008 699
12.2 Gado cartoon on Kibaki's 'style' 701
12.3 Primary and secondary school enrolments, 1993–2008 703
12.4 The 'Meru mafia': Murungi, Mwiraria, Muthaura and Ringera 711
12.5 The Bomas Talks 723
12.6 Changes in GDP and GDP per capita, 1997–2007 731
12.7 International tourist and business arrivals, 1963–2009 736
12.8 Difference between Kibaki's 2002 presidential vote and 2005 referendum yes vote 741
12.9 ECK presidential election results, 2007 761
12.10 Ethnic voting patterns, 2007 762
12.11 Presidential votes cast by province, 1992–2010 763
12.12 Size of Cabinets, 1963–2008 770
13.1 April 2008 coalition government, by party and ethnic origin 772
13.2 Registered voters and votes, 1963–2010 779
13.3 Referendum results by ethnic group, 2010 780
13.4 Kibaki and the new Constitution, August 2010 781

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

4Cs	Citizens Coalition for Constitutional Change
ACK	Anglican Church of Kenya
ADB	African Development Bank
ADC	Agricultural Development Corporation
AEMO	African Elected Members Organisation
AFC	Agricultural Finance Corporation
AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AIC	African Inland Church
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ALCS	African Liaison and Consulting Services
APP	African People's Party
BAT	British-American Tobacco
BHC	British High Commission
CBK	Central Bank of Kenya
CCK	Communications Commission of Kenya
CDC	Commonwealth Development Corporation
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (US)
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CJPC	Catholic Justice and Peace Commission
CKRC	Constitution of Kenya Review Commission
CLARION	Centre for Legal Aid and Research International
CMC	Cooper Motor Corporation
CNU	Coalition of National Unity
CO	Colonial Office
COGS	Chief of General Staff
COMESA	Common Market for East and Central Africa
COTU	Central Organisation of Trade Unions
CPK	Church of the Province of Kenya
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DC	district commissioner
DDDG	Donors for Development and Democracy Group
DFCK	Development Finance Company of Kenya
DFRD	District Focus for Rural Development
DP	Democratic Party
DPF	Deposit Protection Fund

EAA	East African Airways
EAC	East African Community
EACSO	East Africa Common Services Organisation
EAD	East Africa Department, UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office
EAI	East African Industries
EALA	East African Legislative Assembly
EAP&L	East African Power and Lighting Company
EAP&T	East Africa Posts and Telecommunications
EAR	East African Railways
EAR&H	East African Railways and Harbours
EATEC	East Africa Tanning and Extract Company
ECK	Electoral Commission of Kenya
EEC	European Economic Community
EPZ	export processing zone
ESAF	enhanced structural adjustment facility
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London
FERA	February 18th Revolutionary Army
FGM	female genital mutilation (also female circumcision or clitoridectomy)
FKE	Federation of Kenya Employers
FORD	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy
FORD-Asili	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Asili
FORD-Kenya	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Kenya
FORD-People	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-People
Forex-C	Foreign exchange bearer certificate
GB£	British pounds
GDP	gross domestic product
GEMA	Gikuyu Embu and Meru Association
Gema	Gikuyu, Embu and Meru ethnic groups
GNU	Government of National Unity
GPT	graduated personal tax
GSU	General Service Unit
HELB	Higher Education Loans Board
HFCK	Housing Finance Company of Kenya
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HoROR	*House of Representatives Official Report*
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICDC	Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ICI	Imperial Chemical Industries

IDB	Industrial Development Bank
IED	Institute for Education in Democracy
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IFI	international financial institutions (World Bank, IMF)
IIEC	Interim Independent Electoral Commission
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPK	Islamic Party of Kenya
IPP	independent power producer
IPPG	Inter-Parties Parliamentary Group
IREC	Independent Review Commission
IRI	International Republican Institute
ISP	Internet service provider
K£	Kenyan pounds (20 shillings)
KACA	Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority
KACC	Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KAF	Kenya Air Force
Kamatusa	*Ka*lenjin, *Ma*asai, *Tu*rkana and *Sa*mburu ethnic groups
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KAR	King's African Rifles
KASA	Kenya African Socialist Alliance
KAU	Kenya African Union
KAWC	Kenya African Workers Congress
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KBL	Kenya Breweries Limited
KCA	Kikuyu Central Association
KCB	Kenya Commercial Bank
KCC	Kenya Cooperative Creameries
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSOP	Kenya Civil Society Observation Programme
K-DOP	Kenya Domestic Observation Programme
KEDOF	Kenya Elections Domestic Observation Forum
KENDA	Kenya National Democratic Alliance
KFA	Kenya Farmers Association
KFL	Kenya Federation of Labour
KFRTU	Kenya Federation of Registered Trades Unions
KGB	Komityet Gosudarstvyennoi Biezopasnosti (USSR)
KGGCU	Kenya Grain Growers Cooperative Union
KHRC	Kenya Human Rights Commission
KIE	Kenya Industrial Estates
KLFA	Kenya Land and Freedom Army (also LFA)
KLGWU	Kenya Local Government Workers Union
KMC	Kenya Meat Commission

KNA	Kenya News Agency
KNAC	Kenya National Assurance Company
KNC	Kenya National Congress
KNFU	Kenya National Farmers Union
KNP	Kenya National Party
KNTC	Kenya National Trading Corporation
KNUT	Kenya National Union of Teachers
KPA	Kenya Ports Authority
KPC	Kenya People's Coalition
KPCU	Kenya Planters Co-Operative Union
KPF	Kenya Patriotic Front
KPLC	Kenya Power and Lighting Company
KPTC	Kenya Posts and Telecommunications Corporation
KPU	Kenya People's Union
KR	Kenya Railways
KRA	Kenya Revenue Authority
KSC	Kenya Social Congress
Ksh.	Kenya shilling
KTDA	Kenya Tea Development Authority
KTDC	Kenya Tourist Development Corporation
KTN	Kenya Television Network
KVDA	Kerio Valley Development Authority
KWAL	Kenya Wine Agencies Limited
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Service
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
LNC	Local Native Council
LSK	Law Society of Kenya
MI5/6	Military Intelligence Section 5/6 (UK)
MoU	memorandum of understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
NAC	National Alliance for Change
NAK	National Alliance (Party) of Kenya
NAOR	*National Assembly Official Report*
NARC	National Alliance Rainbow Coalition
NARC-Kenya	National Alliance Rainbow Coalition-Kenya
NAU	New Akamba Union
NBK	National Bank of Kenya
NCA	National Convention Assembly
NCC	National Construction Corporation
NCCK	National Council of Churches of Kenya
NCEC	National Convention Executive Council
NCPB	National Cereals and Produce Board
NCWK	National Council for Women of Kenya
NDC	National Disciplinary Committee

NDI	National Democratic Institute
NDP	National Democratic Party
NEC	National Executive Committee
NEMU	National Election Monitoring Unit
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NHC	National Housing Corporation
NHIF	National Hospital Insurance Fund
NIB	National Irrigation Board
NKP	New Kenya Party
NOCK	National Oil Corporation of Kenya
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPCP	Nairobi People's Convention Party
NPK	National Party of Kenya
NSE	Nairobi Stock Exchange
NSIS	National Security Intelligence Service
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
NYS	National Youth Service
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
ODM-Kenya	Orange Democratic Movement-Kenya
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OP	Office of the President
PAC	Public Accounts Committee of the National Assembly
PC	provincial commissioner
PCEA	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
PICK	Party of Independent Candidates of Kenya
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PNU	Party of National Unity
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
PSC	Parliamentary Select Committee
PTA	Preferential Trade Agreement
RAF	Royal Air Force (UK)
SAOR	The Senate Official Report
SAP	structural adjustment programme
SAS	Special Air Service (UK)
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SDR	Special Drawing Right
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
Supkem	Supreme Council of Kenya Moslems
TI	Transparency International
TLB	Transport Licensing Board
TRDC	Tana River Development Company
TSC	Teachers' Service Commission
TV	television

UDI	unilateral declaration of independence
UDM	United Democratic Movement
UK	United Kingdom (also Great Britain)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US(A)	United States of America
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VAT	value-added tax
VoK	Voice of Kenya
WTO	World Trade Organization
YK'92	Youth for KANU '92

Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

This book is a history of the state of Kenya since its independence in December 1963. 'Kenya' was a colonial invention, and its history has been dominated by the disruptive changes that followed the British conquest at the turn of the twentieth century. However, while many histories of colonial rule and particularly of the Mau Mau conflict of the 1950s have been written, there are few histories of independent Kenya. There have been many edited collections of papers and many scholarly works on Kenya's economy, but most have focused on the colonial era or on specific post-independence topics. British rule lasted 60 years; Kenya has been a sovereign state for 47. Kenya should be assessed not only as a colonial invention, but also for the successes and failures of its own making. This book tries to do this. It is a history of one country, not a comparative history of Africa. It seeks to explain what has happened in Kenya since independence and to align academic understandings of post-colonial development with the experiences and perceptions of Kenyans about their country. Others will compare this story with that of other states, and I hope, use it to understand Africa better.

Kenya's history has not been one of war, military rule, mass murder or state collapse; neither has it been one of improving living standards, industrialisation, growing national pride and the establishment of a key role in the world economy. It has been rather a story of endurance: of political and economic structures inherited from colonial days, of unfulfilled promise and weighty historical baggage. It is a story that blends both politics and economics, a struggle to create and consume resources that involved Western powers and Kenyans in a complex web of relationships; a tale of growth stunted by political considerations, of corruption and of money.

It is also a story about people, about a few powerful individuals whose choices have so influenced Kenya's future. Few of them come out of the story entirely unblemished, though many made great sacrifices in the struggle for what they believed right. Hindsight is a wonderful thing and retrospective assessments of people's choices seldom take account of the circumstances and perceptions of their world at that time. To lead requires difficult choices and compromises, and the role of a politician in a less-developed society (in which nothing is easy and nothing is safe) is a challenging one. However, the rewards of success are great.

This is also a tale of people as communities and their collective behaviour, in which ethnicity plays a strong role – a topic that often evokes strong responses. Kenyan politics cannot be understood without understanding Kenyan ethnicity. It is not, however (and never was) a primordial constant, but an arena for conflict, based

around genuine differences of language, culture and economic interest between the peoples living within the boundaries of the nation state, but always changing. Ethnicity is about shared communities, gradations of us-ness from the nuclear family to the language family, but also about conflict and difference. In Kenya, a certain form of ethnic conflict has been enduring, despite many efforts to build a national identity. It has shaped the political system, and has in turn been shaped by Kenya's politicians and the institutions they inhabit. Sometimes, it has been associated with violence. The problem of ethnically focused political violence in Kenya has come to world attention in 1969, 1991–3 and 2007–8; each time worse than the last. Its origins lie elsewhere – in land rights, poverty, elite survival strategies and state abuses - but the recourse to violence takes on its own logic, and the risk of further trouble remains real.

Inevitability and Contingency in Kenya's History

The history of any country is the consequence of a number of elements. Some – population, geography, economic structure and technological level – are the products of the past and are relatively inflexible. Such structural forces place a country in a particular global position, limiting the options available to its leaders. Broad economic, cultural and social forces will drive a gradual evolution across whole continents, changeable by the acts of a few great individuals, but with huge inertia.[1] Other parts of a history are more contingent and may mask, modify or redirect these broader forces. Although the outlines of a country's history may be predictable, unplanned events and the actions of influential individuals, particularly during periods in which change has already begun, remain critical to the actual outcome. As Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale wrote in 1992, it is essential not to 'write history backwards' from outcomes to inevitable antecedents, but to accept contingencies and accidents alongside deeper social and economic forces.[2]

Kenya's independence history is no different. As in much of Africa, the new, weak political institutions and externally oriented economic system inherited from colonial rule permitted a greater contingency and unpredictability than in more mature states, as the impact of individual actors and accidents was proportionately greater. Nonetheless, the probable trajectory of its future was clear. It was likely at independence that the new states of East Africa would have difficulty in standing alone on the world stage and that they would fall into a dependent economic, political and military relationship with the world powers (at that time the USA and USSR). It was likely that Kenya, with its stronger economy and greater Western investment, would perform better than its neighbours. 'Tribalism' and ethnicity (reflecting the existence of at least 42 ethnic groups in Kenya, with different languages, traditions and economic interests, and the country's fractured history during and after the Mau Mau war) were always going to be challenges. A powerful and coercive bureaucracy, built to maintain order, defend British rule and repress a violent revolt, would inevitably play a major and self-interested role in the country's future. As Chris Allen has argued, there were only a few 'basic histories' in independent

Africa, 'frequently repeated and causally entwined sequential patterns of political development'.[3] Most states followed a pattern of one-party rule and clientelism, matched and mitigated by centralised, bureaucratic politics, unless disrupted by war or military coups and a catastrophic descent into 'spoils politics'. This phase was followed in the 1990s by an externally driven restoration of democratic forms and liberalisation of the state and the economy, if the state had not imploded entirely. Kenya followed this pattern closely, with one difference: it never experienced a period of state failure or overthrow. From the British withdrawal until today, the Kenyan state has endured, its grip looser or tighter, but always present, with great continuity in structure, accountabilities and personnel. Events reached a crisis at least a dozen times, but were always settled conservatively. Despite constitutional and economic change, party splits, murder, repression, a coup attempt, politically motivated ethnic clashes and mass civil disobedience, the country's political and economic system has endured.

Nonetheless, the precise shape of Kenya after 47 years of independence could not have been predicted with confidence. Kenya could easily have ended up under military rule, or could have disintegrated for a decade, as Uganda did. With good luck and better governance, it might have leapfrogged onto a path of sustainable growth as an 'African tiger'. Prime Minister and then President Jomo Kenyatta's strategy for rule, with its state capitalist, pro-Western orientation, could have been very different if he had emerged from nine years of false imprisonment with greater bitterness towards the British. The murder of Tom Mboya in 1969 and Daniel arap Moi's accession to the presidency in 1978 both demonstrated the power of contingency, and the impact of decisions by a few influential men. The first speeded Kenya's move towards rule by a Kikuyu oligarchy, political and economic decay; the second shifted the country onto a trajectory of ethnic tension and resource redistribution. The failure of the 1982 coup probably diverted a descent into military rule and instead set Kenya on a path of Kalenjin-led authoritarianism. The reintroduction of multi-party democracy under Western pressure a decade later was probably inevitable, but the consequences, including the ethnic clashes and the Goldenberg scheme to loot the Treasury, were not. Ten years later, Moi's decision to back Jomo's son Uhuru Kenyatta for the presidency was a catastrophic mistake that destroyed the Kenya African National Union (KANU) and gave victory to an uneasy alliance of its opponents. Little had changed either economically or institutionally since the opposition's defeat in 1997, but as individual alliances shifted, their supporters followed and the result was entirely different.

More predictably, during 2003–5, an opportunity for national renewal was squandered by bad luck and a legacy of ethnic and personal tensions. Kenya's primary political cleavage reverted to the same two divisions that had dogged it in the 1960s: epitomised by the relationship between the Luo and Kikuyu communities and – independently – between the Kikuyu and Kalenjin, each representing a different path for Kenya. Raila Odinga's ability to retain a cross-ethnic alliance even after his party split, and the narrowness of Mwai Kibaki's disputed electoral victory in 2007, inspired a violent backlash that split the country in two and forced a division of

powers that had been demanded and rejected many times before. Kibaki and Odinga were forced into a power-sharing deal that avoided the horror of civil war, but it was an unhappy arrangement, a sticking plaster to allow the wounds of 2007–8 to heal.

Politics and Economics

This book, unusually, is not presented as a sequence of separate essays on economics, political institutions, security, agriculture and foreign policy, but as a historical narrative that draws together these subjects and shows how the relationships between them have evolved over the five decades of independence. It is probably the first attempt at an inclusive political and economic history of independent Kenya. There are two reasons for this approach: first, in Kenya, politics and economics are so deeply entwined that you cannot discuss one without discussing the other; second, policy and practice are not ahistorical, but vary over time. Events must be understood in their historical context. It is no more logical to treat the Kenyatta, Moi and Kibaki governments' policies as constant than it would be to describe British history since 1963 without distinguishing between the policies of Harold Wilson, Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair and the circumstances in which they operated.

Although sometimes appealing, a sharp distinction between the economic and the political sphere has limited value, particularly in Africa. Both are the collective products of individual choices and much (though not all) political conflict is about economic issues. The dependency between the two spheres is deep. A country such as Kenya does not improve its infrastructure and social services, produce more, or become richer independent of its political system, but as a direct consequence of it. To give one example: agricultural productivity is a function not only of farmers' individual decisions and world prices, but also of land policy, ownership patterns, the degree of state marketing and price support for particular crops, the degree of predation on profits from regulatory and marketing organisations and the disruptive effects of land-related violence. All are political issues. In the same vein, Kenya's various redistributive and growth-oriented economic policies can only be understood in the context of who was benefiting from them at a particular time. The importance of wealth as a route to power, and of political power as a route to acquire both wealth and access to state resources has also meant that the same elites dominate both politics and economics and fight their battles in both spheres. Through control of the state, political power becomes economic power; through patronage politics, economic power becomes political power. Corruption is simultaneously an economic, political, administrative and social process.

At the macro level, Kenya's economic performance has also been driven by Western political pressure. Good relations and alignment on international issues encourage investment and tourism. The granting and withholding of foreign aid and budgetary support is a political process, driven by the degree of alignment between the ruling elite and Western interests, and by the behaviour of the elite. As the history of structural adjustment shows, the granting and withholding of aid is only loosely related to the actual reforms introduced by governments. Foreign investment, a key

driver of growth, is a fickle, fearful thing that can be frightened away by corruption, violence and nationalism alike. Mass tourism, although it helped Kenya become more prosperous, also tightened the links between politics and economic performance, as political problems hurt tourist bookings and therefore national prosperity. Global communications have similarly amplified the knock-on effects of domestic problems on foreign audiences, and therefore on tourism, aid and investment alike.

A Stable State?

Kenya in 2011 remained recognisable as a natural evolution of the nation created at independence. Unlike most African states, it had avoided military rule, social instability, warlord-ism, mass murder or social collapse. Religious divisions have not led to violence, and attempts at secession have been defeated or deterred. Kenya has never gone to war. In almost every crisis over the years, the outcome was a more gradual shift away from the existing course of events than in neighbours such as Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. Why did Kenya show such continuity that the same governing party could run the country for nearly 40 years? The army remained loyal, constitutional process was followed and losers did not (generally) resort to violence. The 2008 coalition government was headed by a president who had been part of the government at independence and a prime minister who was the son of the first vice-president. The economy remained based on the colonial pattern, with an externally oriented cash-crop sector, a large smallholder agricultural sector and modest industrial development. Despite mass urbanisation, education, social change and global communications, the political system was built around the same institutions and with the same focus on ethnicity as in 1963. The command and control system and authoritarian political culture, the 'guided' democracy and the huge gulf between rich and poor remained (though the rich elite itself had changed). The same families appear to run the country, and the same arguments over land, ethnicity, presidential authority, corruption and foreign intervention seem to continue decade after decade.

The answer to the question of why this is the case is a difficult one. Clearly, one reason is simply luck: that the crises of the nation-state were settled with moderation rather than coups and murder was sheer accident. More interesting is the possibility that inherited social and economic structures and direct external influence held Kenya on a more stable course. The command and control system that the British created to maintain order was propagated into the independent state almost unchanged.[4] Kenyatta and his advisers were concerned from the first about Kenya's security and the desire for political order was one of their core motivating forces. There was an effective bureaucracy at least for the first two decades of independence, which helped temper political excess. The defeat of Mau Mau left a population fearful of the state and accustomed to obedience. The substantial wealth in the country, originally European and Asian, but later also African, the tight links which emerged between the economic, political and administrative elites and the patron–client structures of political power meant that many had investments in the existing social and economic

order, and that truly radical change was supported by few in positions of power. There was something substantial to fight over, and most actors in the drama agreed that any action that would destroy the commercial farming sector, tourism or the foreign support on which the country depended was not worth the price.

The absence of strategic minerals was a blessing in disguise, unlike for example Angola, the Congo, Nigeria and Sudan. The physical and population geography of the country also discouraged ethnic separatism. Kenya had too many ethnic groups, and the misalignment of communities and boundaries left by the Europeans meant no partition of the country was viable, while only the Maasai and Somali could plausibly have seceded to join a neighbour.

Western involvement also played a role. The large foreign investments and number of foreign citizens living in Kenya at independence acted as stabilising forces, both for good and ill. British finance, military support and advice actively contributed to the survival of the Kenyatta government. Foreign advisers have continued to serve in little-noted but influential positions ever since. In the 1970s, the decade of self-reliance, Western intervention was less overt, but thousands of aid workers, teachers and other foreign professionals continued to work in Kenya. Foreign aid sustained the country's economy from the moment of independence, providing a buffer for the errors of its leadership and a safety net that was guaranteed by Kenya's pro-Western orientation. In the 1990s, with the fall of communism, attitudes changed. Western governments and international finance institutions placed tighter constraints on what the state could 'get away with', and donors drove a reform agenda that unwound most of the economic structures created in the 1960s and 1970s, but aid continued.

Continuity also owed something to the *dramatis personae* of the early days: Kenyatta himself, Charles Njonjo, Moi and Kibaki. All were conservative figures, patriarchal and authoritarian, but always pragmatists, willing to turn back from the brink at moments of crisis. Although all have been accused of corruption, authoritarianism and self-interest, all subscribed to a paternal vision of the rights and duties of power, which included the preservation of the country they had inherited. They each felt a degree of accountability to the 'will of the nation', if not to its electoral expression.

After a brief period of instability in 1963–5, the nation-state was set on its course, driven by both active commitment and growing inertia down a single path. Kenyatta's age and autocratic inclination created a political system that began to see its perpetuation as its primary reason for existence. The conservative and authoritarian political culture he nurtured was sustained into the twenty-first century under Moi, who truly followed in the footsteps of his patron, though with very different consequences. This state ideology was overlaid, often forcibly, on a more egalitarian, democratic, racist, populist and nationalist public opinion. Many of Kenya's challenges have been grounded in deep differences between the way the governing elites have seen the interests of the country and the opinions of the electorate.

While Kenya has been one of the most stable states in Africa, this is not necessarily a term of approbation. Although today's Kenya would be easily recognisable to Kenyatta or Mboya, they would be disappointed by what they saw. Kenya's

competitive advantage within Africa has been frittered away, while the continent as a whole has been left behind. Economically the equal of Singapore and Tunisia in 1963, in 2005 the country's gross domestic product (GDP) per head was lower than that of Chad or Mauritania.[5] Kenya has failed to make a transition to a new model of economic development or a higher level of material benefit for its people. In the absence of bloody, discontinuous change, politicians have continued to fight the same battles, decade over decade, and have failed to deliver the basic services that even a liberal state provides in other societies.

The country has also been stable because it has found institutional change to be hard. The state's growing incapacity and a zero-sum mental model of political competition amongst Kenya's citizens left the country struggling to implement new policies. The mould hardened before the work was finished, trapping the country with a set of institutions that no longer matched the challenges it faced, but every attempt at reinvention failed because of the vested interests it might harm and the neo-patrimonial and ethnic lenses through which actions were seen. The shambles of 13 years of pressure for constitutional reform showed this most clearly, as institutional incapacity combined with a legacy of class, ethnic and personal tensions to create a veto on change, until it was forced through violent confrontation. Kenya is therefore less a *stable* state than a *brittle* state: resistant to change, but liable to fragment if social pressure exceeds the tolerance of its inflexible shell. For a while, in January 2008, it seemed that this shell might fracture completely.

It is clear that the real Kenya has changed, however. Despite popular rhetoric suggesting the continuity of presidential authoritarianism, Kenya in 2011 is a very different country from that of its first decade. The economy's prosperity no longer relies on the state; multi-party democracy is here to stay and presidential demands provoke as much resistance as obedience. Even the constitution is changing, as this book goes to press, creating new opportunities and risks. A fourth generation of political leadership is coming onto the scene, with fewer ties to the past. It is unclear, though, what will replace presidential authoritarianism in the long term. Devolution has dangers, and ethnicity, money politics and populism have created a cocktail of expectations and constraints that will be hard for any leader or structure to satisfy.

Themes of Conflict

Since the foundation of the state, five themes of conflict have continued to influence the country's direction, threading through and shaping historical events.

Centralism versus Majimbo *(Regionalism) and the Politics of Land Ownership*

The choice between a centralised constitution (with its focus in the executive presidency) and a decentralised constitution with competing or layered sources of authority dominated Kenya's politics in 1961–4 and has re-emerged since 1991 as the key fault line in Kenya's polity. It encapsulates and is powered by a deeper debate between what became known as 'minority' and 'majority' groups over the

right of 'willing buyers' to purchase land in the 'ancestral lands' of others. Land was not the only issue at stake, but it was certainly the most important. Within this lay a third debate, over the bodies in which rights resided: individuals in the liberal democratic citizenship model, as the state formally espoused, or ethnic communities or collectives, as supporters of federalism often argued.

After a decade of neglect, the shift of leadership and state preference to the Kalenjin ethnic community in 1978 reawoke the challenge to the centralised model of presidential authoritarianism and to the willing buyer, willing seller land model, resulting in a gradual rollback of the black settler land rights that had been established in the 1960s. The reintroduction of multi-party democracy in 1991 re-established land as a key cleavage between settled communities (particularly the Kikuyu, but also the Luo, Gusii and Luhya) and Kalenjin and Maasai pastoralists, and powered the subsequent violence. This dispute was fought during the 1990s both on the ground in the Rift Valley and through party politics and the constitutional review process. The killing fields of 2007–8 in the Rift were the same farms over which Kikuyu, Kalenjin and Luhya had competed in the 1960s and 1990s. The underlying tension remained: was land something to be bought and sold, and could Kenyans live anywhere in the country, or was land a collective asset, held in trust for future generations, and were strangers who bought land simply '*ahoi*' (tenants), who could be evicted at will?

Socialism versus Capitalism and Individualism versus Egalitarianism

Kenya has also experienced enduring tension between supporters of a more communal, egalitarian or socialist path, and proponents of a more individualised, capitalist and unequal view of what was right for the country. The tension was most visible during 1963–5, but proponents of a more egalitarian or socialist view continued to seek expression through the Kenya People's Union (KPU) in 1966–9, the unofficial opposition of the 1970s, Oginga Odinga's socialist party of 1982, Mwakenya, the struggle for multi-party democracy and even the Orange Democratic Movement of 2007. Kenya's 'left' has seldom had the opportunity to set policy or even articulate its views without harassment, but there have always been individuals ready to make a case for change, whether harking back to pre-colonial communal societies or to Marxist models of development.

Kenya's African socialism was never truly socialist, and its capitalism was never of an American free-enterprise liberal type. Kenya's was an interventionist, 'state capitalist' regime, in which the state owned, managed or indirectly controlled the majority of productive activity and private capitalists were either foreign multinationals or the politicians themselves and their allies, forms of 'crony capitalism'. During the 1980s, the government's unpopularity and rent-seeking undermined Western-led attempts at reform. In the early 1990s, after the collapse of communism, the international finance institutions forced a more externalised, openly capitalist model on Kenya, against strong popular and state resistance. Even now, most Kenyans remain more pro-regulatory, egalitarian and communal than either their elites or Western governments might prefer. The fault line between economic liberals and those of a

more social democratic perspective remains deep, and sometimes aligns with the sensitive 'marker' of ethnicity (pro-state intervention and anti-capitalist political elites are often Luo, and the most open espousers of free market liberal ideologies are often Kikuyu).

Neo-Patrimonialism, Ethnicity and the 'Fruits of Uhuru'

The third theme of cleavage (which has overshadowed others in public perceptions) has been over which individuals and which ethnic groups get to 'eat the fruits of *Uhuru*' (a Kenyan metaphor for the benefits of independence). At every level of state and society and in every institution, the process of neo-patrimonialism continues to shape political and economic activity, as loosely structured factions based around powerful patrons compete for power and resources. These informal structures of authority and competition lie within and often conflict with formal bureaucratic-legal institutions and explain much of Kenya's politics since 1963. Institutions and the formal 'rules of the game' provide a structure within which this competition takes place, and have been strong in Kenya (by African standards), but neither rational-choice nor institutional frameworks can fully explain events, because the real beneficiaries may not even be visible. Ethnicity provides a frame for some of this competition, but not all.

At the national level, this struggle for power and resources coalesced into a three-way cleavage, epitomised by three ethnic groups: the Kikuyu, Luo and Kalenjin. The first two decades of independence saw the incorporation (on junior terms) of the Kalenjin into Kenyatta's Kikuyu-centred alliance, and the gradual marginalisation of the Luo, alongside the embedding of a series of advantages for the Kikuyu community. There was no inevitability about the cleavage created in 1963–9 between Kikuyu and Luo: it was a by-product of a competition over other issues, which gradually assumed an ethnic flavour. Similarly, the densely populated, agricultural Luhya ended up inclined towards the Kalenjin or 'minority' side for reasons that were as much accidental and personal as anything else. However, a view of politics as an ethnically driven competition for resources, a survival of the fittest where the prize was control of the resources of the state, was built into the country from independence. It was reinforced by almost every act of Kenyatta, Moi and Kibaki, each seeking to rule a fractious community of sub-nationalities by a combination of patronage, incorporation and reliance on their own ethnic community for their security. The rewards of power were sweet and the consequences of defeat severe, and winning became a goal in itself for both the individual and the community. Increasingly, an individual's success or failure was interpreted as victory or defeat for an entire ethnic community.

Once the struggle for power of 1980–3 was resolved, the presidency of Daniel arap Moi saw a shift in the balance of state benefit away from the Kikuyu and towards a new and more fragile Kalenjin-dominated pastoralist alliance. Unlike Kenyatta, Moi had to take away before he could give, since many of the 'fruits of Uhuru' had already been eaten, and the resulting fracture between the Kikuyu community and the Kalenjin continues to echo through the country's politics today. The failed coup

attempt of 1982 set him on a path of absolutist control and increasing Kalenjinisation. During the 1980s and 1990s, the government 'forced' the emergence of a new Kalenjin economic and political elite. In the multi-party era, ethnic tensions were reinforced by the consolidation of political party support along ethnic lines. Moi's Kalenjin were always the core of the 'government', the Kikuyu of the 'opposition', leaving the Luo community united but uncertain whether to back 'the Kikuyu' or 'the Kalenjin'. Raila Odinga's deal with KANU in 1999 represented a realignment of forces, a western alliance of Kalenjin, Luhya and Luo, but it fell apart when faced with Moi's preference for an older, more incorporative strategy. His choice of Uhuru Kenyatta, the old president's son, as KANU's presidential candidate in 2002 and Odinga's return to the opposition destroyed KANU.

The victory of Kibaki and of the National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC) ended Moi's 'pastoralist era', but the conflicts over which individuals and communities would benefit most from access to state resources continued, and the perception re-emerged that the state, through covert bureaucratic means, was favouring the 'Mount Kenya peoples' (Kikuyu, Embu, Meru) over all others. By 2005, Odinga had rebuilt the western alliance under a new banner, with support in the east and on the coast as well, strong enough to take on and arguably defeat Kibaki's Mount Kenya-centred government. The 2007 elections ended in chaos, with three very Kenyan problems: electoral abuses, political violence and land powering a crisis that focused world attention on the country once more.

This struggle for resources at the centre has defined and structured ethnic identities as much as vice versa. Where in the pre-independence and early post-independence era ethnic identities aggregated themselves on a national scale to challenge for the state, the post-independence struggle for control has seen further aggregation. Thus, the Gicugu became part of the greater Kikuyu community, then in turn the 'Gema tribes' (the Gikuyu, Embu and Meru communities) and the 'Mount Kenya peoples' (sometimes expanded further to include the Kamba). Likewise, the Cherang'any of the Rift Valley became the Marakwet, then the Kalenjin and briefly the 'Kamatusa' (*Ka*lenjin, *Ma*asai, *Tu*rkana and *Sa*mburu) supra-ethnic aggregate. The levelling effects of development are taking their toll, laying the foundation in one to two generations for new ethnic identities to emerge. Although county-based devolution could delay this, in the long term the political identities of Kenyan peoples will probably continue to aggregate, creating 'identities' such as Western-Nilotic, Kamatusa, Mount Kenya, Coastal and Northern, as economic and political divisions absorb and subsume older differences of language, culture and history.

Internationalism versus Nationalism and Self-Reliance

The choice of whether to seek autonomy from or incorporation into the world economy and culture has also threaded its way through Kenya's history. The first decade of independence was dominated by the desire to Africanise skilled jobs and assert Kenya's African identity and demonstrate the country's ability to control its destiny against strong influence from the old colonial power, the Americans

and Eastern bloc. A similar tension existed over whether to create protected local industries, providing jobs and saving foreign exchange, or to gamble on the roulette wheel of free trade. The cultural debates of the first two decades contained the same fault line: whether Africans should remain close to their own cultural heritage and consensus-based, elder-led political structures, or immerse themselves fully in the emerging Western/world culture and the atomised individualism it represented.

To some extent, this fault line has been overtaken by events. Since 1963, Kenya has been buffeted by the vagaries of oil prices, Cold War politics, technological change and globalisation. The perception of national autonomy that most governments try to portray – that they can decide the nation's policies independently of outside forces – was always an illusion. There was always a strong relationship between Kenya and foreign governments, and the British played the role of patron and guardian uncle to Kenya for the first decade of its independence. As the influence of the UK diminished in the 1970s, it was replaced by the United States as a more powerful but less reliable patron. External as much as internal pressure forced the reintroduction of multi-party democracy in 1991. By the mid-1990s, the debate over Kenya's dependence on foreign interests had shifted to the 'tyranny' of the international financial institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund). The balancing act and the conflict continued however: should Kenya follow its own course or open its borders and adopt ideas from elsewhere? How far should local farmers, industries and elites be protected against foreign factories, capitalists and farmers? In many cases, those in power have discovered that their choices are far more limited that those on the outside believe.

Moi as a man embodied a 'heartland' culture of African identity and resistance to externally imposed ideas. He and many other Kenyans have felt themselves to be victims of and powerless towards the Western powers, subject to their whims of policy and fashion. While Kenyatta emphasised the form of self-reliance, though perfectly willing to compromise on the substance, other Kenyans have sought a more thorough accommodation with the West. Tom Mboya represented an early example of a politician deeply attuned to international opinion who saw no particular virtue in economic or social autarky. Others who sought stronger links with Western interests included Njonjo and, since the 1980s, many in the NGO sector who have made use of both Western ideas and money to drive domestic change.

Inside Kenya, although Africans have dominated the political sphere for four decades, the economy remains dominated by non-Africans. While the settlers and administrators of the 1950s have gone, today's aid workers, diplomats and executives constitute a large, privileged and influential social tier. Multinational businesses come and go, but Kenya's high degree of externalisation means it must accommodate to the outside. The Chinese are the latest opportunity and challenge. Even the role of the Kenyan Asian community has not been fully resolved. Although there are now only about half as many people of Indo-Pakistani origin in Kenya as at independence, they continue to wield a disproportionate economic influence and face systemic discrimination. The fears and frustrations over Asian economic power were reawoken by the scandals of the Moi era, in which Asian executives' names featured with disturbing frequency.

Democracy and Autocracy

The African men (they were all male) who replaced their British (male) rulers in 1963 inherited a highly stratified society and then perpetuated it. Although they had used electoral democracy to rise to power, they soon jettisoned it in the interests of a more hierarchical model, in which they, despite their youth, became Kenya's 'elders', elevated by their education and experience to speak on behalf of their less-educated, less-fortunate brethren. Indeed, the idea of electoral democracy as an open individual choice between competing parties was far from universally accepted as a social 'good': many believed it produced waste, caused conflict and heightened ethnic tensions. With a brief and shallow tradition of democratic accountability, there was a natural tendency amongst Kenya's new rulers to see their interests as identical to those of the country. They soon demonstrated they had little interest in the opinions of the poor, less educated, more ethnically parochial peasants, urban workers or the growing underclass of poor and landless. They were supported in this paternally autocratic approach by Western governments, which often encouraged policies that were unpopular inside Kenya, believing these to be in Kenya's best interests in the long term.

As president, Kenyatta was the aged king whose word was law, and Moi inherited and adapted the model of authoritarianism and the administrative structures that supported it. Although Kenya is one of the few states in Africa to have conducted regular elections, it was a constrained pseudo-democracy until 1992, and even thereafter, elections remained far from fair, even where they were free. A tension still remains in public and elite opinion over the merits of a strong leader and a powerful authoritarian state that can direct popular energies into developmental channels ('*Maendeleo*') versus a fully democratic state, better representing the diversity of popular opinion, but with greater conflict, resource wastage on competitive politics ('*Siasa*') and a weaker leader. The 2007 elections were a watershed in this evolution, inaugurating an era in which popular and populist politicians and policies played a greater role than in any previous contest. However, the rapid emergence of political families, the inheritance of parliamentary constituencies and a general resignation to the fact that political power will always be exercised by a wealthy, closed, connected elite, all conflict with contemporary rhetoric of popular choice.

Since the early 1990s, representative democracy has also been associated with a greater political role for women, as voters, then as parliamentarians and even presidential candidates. But the rhetoric of empowerment often conflicts with the reality; despite the active leadership of a cadre of women in NGO and political roles, most women remain in supporting roles economically and politically.

Within the state, there has been a three-way struggle between predatory policies that would benefit the elite alone; utilitarian policies that should benefit the majority, even if they increased inequality; and those that were popular, even if they might be economically ineffectual. Because Kenya remained nominally a democracy, and its presidents were alert to the risks of popular dissatisfaction, the tendency of the elite to rule in its own interest was tempered by the need to seek legitimacy, and

therefore by recourse to popular policies, even when these were difficult to defend on economic grounds. This was one of the key functions and benefits of the electoral system and the single-party parliament, as they ensured that the voice of the majority could sometimes be heard. Western governments steered Kenya towards rational-technocratic options and away from both populism and predation.

During the 1980s, however, Moi's elite rigged elections and drove redistributive policies that did not always prove to be in the interests of the masses either. The result was a shift in the grounds of debate, so that the interests of the majority aligned better with the interests of the Kikuyu elite than with the new Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba and Asian 'state class'. The tension in the 1990s on structural adjustment concealed a tension over whether policies should benefit the majority of Kenyans or ensure that resources continued to flow primarily to the elite, even at the expense of the majority. The 2003 Kibaki regime was to offer growth once more, at the expense of growing inequality, but was near eviscerated in 2008 by accusations of election-rigging to sustain itself in office against the popular will.

Security, Impartiality and Growth

Alongside these five themes of conflict, independent Kenya's history has been dominated by the need to deliver three key 'public goods' that cross the boundary between politics and economics. These were *security and stability* (as contrasted with foreign invasion, internal violence and civil disorder), *bureaucratic impartiality and efficiency* (as contrasted with corruption, 'tribalism', non-economic resource allocation and neo-patrimonialism) and *economic growth and development* (as contrasted with economic decline, service failure, poverty and starvation). These were the core values of the Kenyatta state and the foundation of its success. Despite the battles over 'who got what', as long as Kenyatta and his allies could retain a secure state, ensure there was more to go around and maintain a civil service in which corruption and tribalism did not dominate, they would survive. More centralised, capitalist, Kikuyu-focused, internationalised and elitist policies and practices were all justified on the basis that such choices would deliver these key public goods. Neo-patrimonialism – although it resulted in non-economic decision-making, centralised and personalised authority and bloated bureaucracy and ethnic conflicts – was constrained by a recognition that it must not be allowed to rot the state from within.

In the long term, however, Kenya's governments could consistently deliver none of these. By the mid-1970s, economic growth was slowing, and corruption and tribalism were worsening, though the state retained its ability to maintain order into the 1990s. The growth that Kenyatta delivered was founded on rising indebtedness and was never truly secure. In turn, the real failures of the Moi government lay in its inability to deliver any of these three public goods. The need to build up new ethno-regional factions as alternative sources of power to the existing Kikuyu elite led to massive state-sanctioned corruption, non-economic decision-making and a collapse of bureaucratic efficiency. Poverty worsened and food security was a constant concern for half of the country. The desire to defend Rift Valley pastoralist land rights and to neutralise the

political impact of immigrant communities led to the clashes of the 1990s, which destroyed much of Moi's residual legitimacy. A combination of external events and a decline in bureaucratic efficiency led to a spiral of economic inefficiencies, resource misallocation and Western hostility, which destabilised an already-shaky economy and eventually undermined the KANU government's will to live.

Kibaki's presidential victory appeared to be a platform for radical change, but the problems of the Kenyatta and Moi states lingered on. During 2003–7, NARC delivered greater growth, resource efficiency and security (though security proved the most intractable). However, its achievements were overshadowed by its insensitive and arrogant behaviour, resulting in a growing clamour over devolution and power-sharing and a resurgence of ethnicised conflicts over 'who gets what'. Corruption remained endemic, the economy struggled to support popular expectations, the poor remained poor, the executive presidency was still a point of division and politics remained ethnic, personalised, violent and accumulative.

The Colour of Money

Kenya's history has been dominated by the struggle for and the exercise of political power. This has been the most visible view of Kenya, and its narration – of presidential authoritarianism and centralism, ethnic conflict and struggles for office – has been the main strand of history and journalism both inside the country and outside. Kenya's second history was the story of the state's struggle to maintain the public goods that sustained its legitimacy. Behind this was a third storyline that underpinned and fuelled the successes and failures of four decades: of money.

At independence, Kenya was a poor country with great expectations, determined to be independent, but without the financial means. Its leadership needed both foreign expertise and money to meet the (exaggerated) expectations that the settler class had shown them were possible. Its patron, Great Britain, wished to 'wash its hands' of its client as quickly as it could, and though willing to provide money, advice and support, did not intend to contribute more than was essential. However, Kenya never achieved financial independence; its budgets always depended on foreign gifts and loans, and its strategy of encouraging inwards investment was of limited effectiveness. When in the late 1980s its behaviour led the donors to close their wallets, the government could do little but obey. The multi-party Moi era of 1993–2002 was dominated by an endless dance over money with Western governments, as investments were tied to both political and economic reforms. Kibaki's first government tried to break this dependence, but with limited success. Although better economic performance weakened the donors' influence, new debts to new allies created new dependencies.

Money also permeates Kenya's internal history. The perception of politics as a zero-sum competition grew, in which one man and one community's gain was another's loss. Inherent constraints and politicised resource allocation drained resources from more productive to less productive sectors and a succession of figures saw their positions as a licence to accumulate. Much of what happens in Kenya can only be

understood as a struggle within the elite for personal reward and to direct resources towards specific communities for their political benefit. Money and elite corruption to acquire it sit at the nexus of politics and economics.

Competing Narratives of History

The history of independent Kenya is encrusted with myth and there is little consensus on even basic subjects. The limited scholarship on contemporary events until the 1990s, and the focus on issues of relevance to foreigners amongst international journalists, plus the state's reluctance to permit historical research, has led to the creation of 'imagined histories' in Kenyan discourse. History has been rewritten by successive winners, leaving both events and their meaning confused. The histories of Mau Mau, of Kenyatta and of the Kikuyu community's rights to land were rapidly rewritten and other stories erased in the 1960s. Leaders such as Mboya and Ronald Ngala became forgotten men after their deaths. After Daniel arap Moi's accession to the presidency, the role of the kingmaker Njonjo was downgraded and the land rights of the 'indigenous inhabitants' of the Rift Valley and Coast reasserted. Older histories were lost in the late 1980s, when being a professor of government was a career that led only to the prison cell. More recently, Raila Odinga's history has been one of continual reinvention, from coup plotter and dissident to statesman via seven different political parties.

Two enduring and conflicting narratives have dominated perceptions of Kenya's history. Caricatured for effect, the first is that of political conservatives and of foreign governments. Kenya was a shining star in Africa; Kenyatta was a wise and benevolent ruler. However, corruption and tribalism became a growing problem as his grip loosened, and the second president's tribalism, corruption and redistributive policies pushed Kenya off the path to growth. Only economic liberalisation – which needed liberal democracy in order to be sustainable – could change it. Western governments did their best to push Kenya into reform, but it failed to respond. Support and pressure from the donors and the IFIs saved Kenya from itself in the 1990s, but tribalism, corruption and incompetence continually drag it backwards. Kibaki's new broom brought liberalisation, growth and greater inequality, but its leadership remained corrupt and the divisive pressures of ethnicity a looming danger.

Kenya's alternative history is of popular resistance to an alliance of comprador elites and foreign rulers. This history was sustained by academics, socialists and nationalists, who believed that the leadership had made fundamental errors from the first. This narrative begins with resistance to the colonial conquest, then the struggle for land and identity leading to the Mau Mau war. It challenges the concept of 'development' as growth and argues that Kenya has been exploited and abused by Western powers. After independence, the victory of the conservative 'home guards' was a betrayal of independence, and attempts to reverse this civilian coup led to repression and murder. In the 1980s, the closure of all critical thought created martyrs and a deep-seated anger that exploded when foreign support for

the regime was withdrawn. Intellectuals kept alive a flame of dissent throughout, though they struggled to reconcile the dual roles of the West as both the source of Kenya's problems and its liberator. In the 1990s, reflecting the changes in the world, this school of thought moderated its socialism and redirected its anger towards elite rule and presidential authoritarianism, placing its faith in the ability of ordinary people to do the right thing if they were not exploited and misdirected by their political masters. This narrative remains egalitarian, hostile to liberalisation and sceptical of integration into the world economy. From this perspective, Kibaki proved that presidents were incapable of ruling without corruption, self-serving ethnic mobilisation and electoral abuse, and only radical, discontinuous change would bring renewal. This conflict has led to economies with history on both sides, although, as Lonsdale suggests, 'much of Africa's written history has certainly taken the part of its rulers rather than that of its people'.[6]

Sources

This book is based on 25 years of research on Kenya and, as a result, its sources are many and eclectic. The first source has been the rich and varied secondary material: the many books and articles on Kenya's politics, economics and international relations, including a growing number of biographical memoirs. Its second source has been Kenya's press, particularly its English-language newspapers from 1961 onwards, mostly in paper form in the *Daily Nation* archives, consulted between 1992 and 2005. Since 1997, they have been partially and since 2005 fully available in electronic form. Weekly magazines (the *Weekly Review* from 1975, many others after 1990) provide an essential counterpoint to the daily press. While living in Kenya during 1999–2002, it was possible to acquire 'grey' or flimsy publications, although they are seldom available outside the country.

The third source has been the British government records on Kenya from 1961 to 1975 in the National Archives in Kew. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) records are the most significant, but Cabinet records (CAB), papers from the Prime Minister's Office (PREM), the Colonial Office (CO) and the Ministry of Defence (DEFE) all contain valuable material. More are released every year, but as I moved to live in the Netherlands in 2005, 1975 was a natural end-point, matching the gradual diminution of British influence. Kenyan government documents have also been invaluable, including National Assembly Official Reports, Kenya Gazettes, Select Committee reports and Statistical Abstracts. An essential source of primary data on constituency and electoral politics was the Institute for Education in Democracy's archives between 1993 and 2005. All this has been filtered and structured from personal experience of Kenya since 1985, and from interviews and engagements with Kenyan politicians, academics, journalists and businesspeople. In the 1992, 1997 and 2002 elections, the author was respectively a journalist, external monitor and internal monitor, and at times an actor as well as observer.

Telling Kenya's story is not always easy. There are few truly authoritative sources of information, perceptions differ wildly and some stories (such as Njonjo's) have

never been written at all. For most of the 1960s and 1970s, there were few sources to challenge the official view, apart from the works of a few academics. In the 1980s, this paucity of evidence worsened, with even the simplest matters politicised and virtually all information secret. In the 1990s, the situation reversed, as liberalisation, democracy and press freedom resulted in an explosion of media comment, much of it violently polemical. Meanwhile, official sources of information became suspect, even on such fundamental issues as population, GDP, forest cover or exports, and were supplemented or supplanted by international institutions' and donors' reports, creating multiple, often competing 'truths'. Given that little of this information makes its way into the public sphere, and that many politicians have a limited understanding of the country's economic circumstances, some decisions were made with limited knowledge of the 'facts'. There is also a tendency towards conspiracy theories in the popular imagination. As a result, it is sometimes necessary to introduce generally accepted beliefs (though these may be false), rumour and gossip if such beliefs drive behaviour. In politics, perception is often reality.

The remainder of the book is divided into 13 chapters, structured by distinct periods of policy and practice. Chapter 2 introduces Kenya's history up to independence, focusing on the late colonial period and showing how decolonisation established the themes of conflict seen since. Chapter 3 describes the first giddy years of independence, the rush for growth, the impact of the land settlement schemes, the establishment of single-party rule and the growing tension over the country's course. Chapter 4 describes the second period of multi-party competition, which ended with Mboya's death and the re-establishment of one-party rule. Chapter 5 takes us into the 1970s, the 'golden years' of the Kenyatta era, in which his conservative, bureaucratic but authoritarian writ was still law, although the country's problems were deepening. The declining years of the monarch are covered in Chapter 6, which shows how power slipped into other, equally authoritarian hands. It describe the struggle for the presidential succession and – partly as a consequence – how tribalism, corruption and economic performance worsened.

Chapter 7 describes the instabilities of the early Moi years, in which a younger, non-Kikuyu president sought to change Kenya's course, but was driven by his need for survival to concentrate power in his own hands, close political space and create a new ethnically centred power structure. Chapter 8 recounts the dark days of the late 1980s, the missed opportunities for economic reform and growing corruption and political repression. Chapter 9 presents the seismic changes of 1990–2, during which Kenya was forced onto a new economic and political trajectory, which also saw the emergence of state sponsored ethnic and political violence. Chapter 10 describes the period 1993–7, during which a reinvigorated KANU presided over a gradual political and economic liberalisation, but this took place alongside corruption, tribalism and state decay. Chapter 11 recounts the dying days of the Moi administration, with the president a 'lame duck', and KANU weakened by years of misrule, but still able to dominate, entice or divide its opponents, until Moi's cataclysmic mistake of 2002 in selecting his successor, which handed victory to his opponents.

Chapter 12 describes the first Kibaki presidency, and how NARC's victory in 2003 resulted in the return of economic rationality and of growth, but how its achievements were frittered away in apparently ideological but ethnically underpinned conflict. This ended with the 2007 elections, the shattering violence of January–February 2008 and its aftermath in the creation of Kenya's first true coalition. An epilogue, Chapter 13, covers events since April 2008. The 'grand coalition' endured, but struggled to solve Kenya's problems, with the notable exception of a new constitution, which was inaugurated in 2010 with great hope but with huge risks as well. Chapter 14, the conclusion, reprises the themes of the book. It weaves together a picture of how Kenya's politics have been dominated by a struggle to deliver security, efficiency and growth, but how a few divisive political themes and the legacies of the past have undermined their achievements, making the long-term future of Kenya's institutions and the security of the country's people far from certain.

Chapter 2

Independence!

Introduction

Independent Kenya did not emerge suddenly in 1963, as a blank slate on which its new leaders could write, but as the organic evolution of decades of development, conflict and change, both under British rule and before the colonial incursion. Independence was a critical symbolic step, but the process of decolonisation had begun six years before and continued for a decade thereafter. In order to understand independent Kenya, we must understand how the colony emerged with its unique form and challenges, and how many of the problems of the independent state had their origins in choices made in the colonial period. Following the defeat of the Mau Mau revolt, the shape of the country's accelerated decolonisation in 1960–3 reflected a complex combination of African pressure and divisions, the legacies of war, settler land fears, changing metropolitan strategy (blown by an anti-colonial 'wind of change') and Cold War security concerns. The colonial government was far from happy about such a rapid transfer of sovereignty, but it ensured that the institutions that Kenya inherited at independence were based on British and colonial (rather than revolutionary) stock, and that most of its successors had been educated in the British view of the world. These institutions reflected a history of centralised, arbitrary political authority, on which had been recently overlaid a shallow set of democratic and then federal institutions. The country's political divisions similarly had their roots in a combination of the opinions of a few talented individuals, Cold War politics and deeper-rooted differences in the interests of the various ethnic groups in the country. The decisions made at this time, and the issues on which political competition centred, have dominated Kenya's history ever since.

Independence!

On 12 December 1963, Kenya attained independence from the United Kingdom (UK). At a ceremony on 11 December, in front of the Duke of Edinburgh, Colonial Secretary Duncan Sandys and 200,000 Kenyans, Jomo Kenyatta received Kenya's articles of independence (see Figure 2.1).

At midnight that night, in front of 250,000 revellers, the duke and ex-Mau Mau generals, the Union Jack was lowered and the black, green and red flag of Kenya rose. Kenya was one of the last British colonies in Africa to achieve independence, and the last in East Africa. The delay was a legacy of European settlement, powerful European interests and the Mau Mau war of 1952–6. When change came, however, its pace had proved overwhelming. Nonetheless, the British, who had often viewed

2.1: Kenyatta signs the Articles of Independence, December 1963

Courtesy: Nation Group Newspapers

Kenya's prospects with pessimism, negotiated a transition that proved comfortable both for them and for their successors.

The People and Geography of Kenya

Geography and Boundaries

Kenya is one of the most varied countries in Africa, with coastlines, forests, mountains, deserts, the huge Lake Victoria in the west and the Rift Valley. It has an Indian Ocean coastline and five countries as neighbours – Tanzania to the south, Uganda to the west, Sudan and Ethiopia to the north and Somalia to the north-west. The country contains five agricultural and climatic zones.[1] The coast is low-lying, fertile and hot. It blends into the eastern plateau, mostly semi-arid, stretching inland for several hundred miles. That is succeeded by the Rift Valley and neighbouring highlands (1,000–3,000 metres high), which run across the country north to south, creating a region of cool, fertile agricultural land around the valley itself. To the north and north-west lie semi-desert and desert. In the west, the land slopes down from the Rift Valley to a second small, fertile, humid zone bordering Lake Victoria. Less than 20 per cent of Kenya's land is suitable for agriculture or intensive livestock production, 10 per cent is agriculturally marginal and the remaining 70 per cent desert or semi-desert.

The rough boundaries of Kenya were set more than a century ago, once the division of East Africa into German and British spheres was complete. Most of what is now Kenya came under British administration with the establishment of the East Africa Protectorate in 1895, and control transferred to the Colonial Office in 1905. However, Kenya's boundaries have changed six times since then. The most significant was the transfer of Kisumu and Naivasha Provinces from Uganda to Kenya in 1902. The protectorate was renamed Kenya Colony in 1920, save for the 10-mile-deep coastal strip that Britain administered under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Zanzibar until they were merged at independence. In 1924–5, the British gave 'Jubaland', a northern buffer between British and Italian zones, populated by migratory Somali, to Italian Somaliland. In 1926, Kenya expanded to include northern Turkana.[2] More boundary changes took place after independence. None of the country's borders matched local languages, communities or physical geography; Kenya was an artificial creation, delineated by the British for their purposes, lumping together neighbours, enemies and some communities that had previously had no contact whatsoever.

The People of Kenya in 1963

Kenya's population at independence was 8.6 million people, less than one-quarter of its population today. Most people's involvement in the formal sector economy was limited and they were (on paper) poorer as a result, living a primarily agricultural or pastoral life. Despite Kenya being the most urbanised country in East Africa, 92 per cent of the population lived in the rural areas. Although life had changed dramatically under British rule, most Kenyans remained smallholders or pastoralists. Most land ownership was still familial, communal or collective. Average life expectancy was only 35, mostly due to very high childhood mortality rates, and half the population was under 16, reflecting the rapid population growth of the mid-twentieth century.

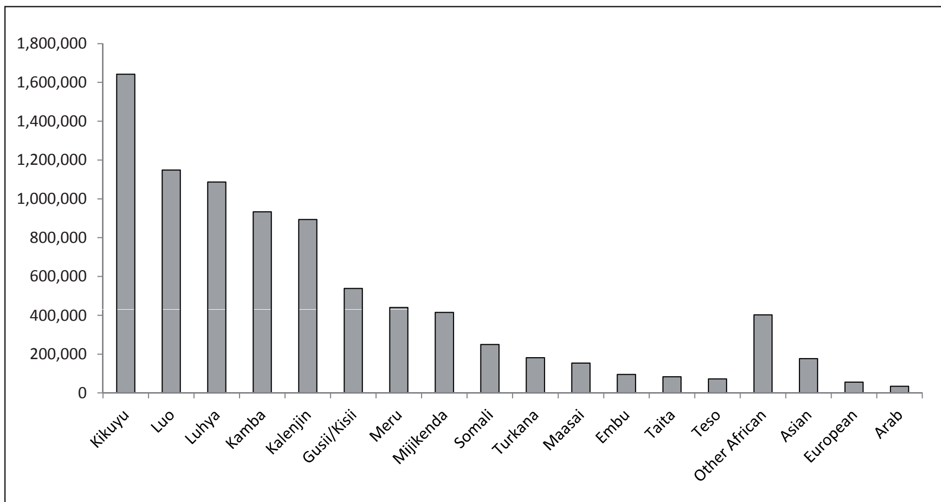
The African peoples of Kenya were then (and remain) classified linguistically into three main groups. The Bantu-speaking peoples constituted roughly two-thirds of Kenyans, including the Kikuyu, Embu, Meru, Kamba, Luhya, Gusii, Mijikenda, Taita and Pokomo communities. The second group consisted of the Lake, Plains and Highland Nilotes ('people of the Nile'): the Luo, Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Teso peoples. Finally, there was a smaller Eastern Cushitic-speaking community in the north: the Boran, Orma, Rendille and Somali. The new nation's boundaries included five large ethnic groups (or 'tribes', as they are universally known in Kenya): communities of shared language, ancestral origin and culture with a common name, together comprising two-thirds of Kenya's people, but at least 40 smaller communities.[3] Most were relatively recent arrivals in their area, displacing or absorbing older communities and languages between the fifth and seventeenth centuries.[4] Mobility was continuous until the arrival of the British, and the region was a mosaic of different communities, moving and assimilating under the pressures of food shortages, war, population growth and disease. Community boundaries were blurred and changing significantly as late as 1850.

The largest ethnic community in 1963 was the Kikuyu (or Gikuyu) of the central highlands. Having moved from the north and east over a period of 400 years, the related Kikuyu, Embu, Mbeere, Meru and Tharaka peoples had settled around Mount Kenya. They had then expanded south along the ridges of the highlands, on land cleared or purchased from hunter-gatherers, until they met the Maasai and the ancestors of the Kamba people. They were relatively recent arrivals, and only settled southern Kiambu district in the mid-nineteenth century.[5] Colonial rule stopped their further growth, as the white newcomers took Kikuyu and Maasai land for themselves. The Kikuyu constituted 19 per cent of Kenya's population in 1962. Their close linguistic cousins the Meru accounted for another 5 per cent (see Figure 2.2). Some placed the Gicugu and Ndia communities of Kirinyaga as separate sub-groups or with the Embu, but most considered them part of the broader Kikuyu.

The second largest community at independence was the Luo of Lake Victoria. They had migrated into central and south Nyanza from the north-west between 1490 and 1790, forcing out or assimilating the previous occupants.[6] Although there were at least 34 Luo clans, their tight geographical position and recent arrival meant there was less regional differentiation among the Luo than in some other communities. Their low-lying, humid territories and distance from the highlands also meant the Luo were unaffected by colonial land alienation. To the east of the Luo, in the small, fertile highlands south of the Rift in Nyanza Region, lived the Gusii people (commonly known as the Kisii). A Bantu community linguistically close to the Meru and Kuria but surrounded by Nilotic (Luo and Maasai) neighbours, they arrived in what was now Kisii District around 1820.

The Luhya (also known as the Abaluhya or Abaluyia – *aba* meaning people in the Bantu languages) to the north of the Luo, in contrast, were a looser federation

2.2: 1962 census results



Source: Republic of Kenya, *1962 Census Advance Report of Vols. 1 & 2*

of communities who also constituted 13 per cent of the population, mostly living in Western Region. There were 17 or 18 distinct Luhya 'sub-tribes' or sub-groups, ranging from the largest – the Bukusu of Bungoma and the Maragoli of Kakamega – through the monarchical Wanga to the tiny Kisa and Marama. The complex substructure of the Luhya was attributable in part to their recent history of migration, conflict and absorption of other groups.[7]

Fourth largest were the Kamba (or Akamba), Bantu speakers whose 'reserves' (in the language of their conquerors) were east of Nairobi in Machakos and Kitui Districts, collectively known as Ukambani.[8] Kamba families had also settled on the trade routes to the coast before the British arrival, and acted as ivory hunters and intermediaries between upcountry communities and Arab and Swahili traders. The Kamba too suffered from European land alienation around Machakos.

The fifth largest community was the Kalenjin family of peoples in the Rift Valley. These semi-nomads probably migrated into the area in the seventeenth century, assimilating and influencing existing inhabitants, including the forest-dwelling Ogiek.[9] The Kalenjin consisted of seven major sub-groups: the Kipsigis, Nandi, Tugen, Keiyo (or Elgeyo), Marakwet, Pokot and Sabaot. Some, such as the Kipsigis and Nandi, had become farmers, while most Tugen and Pokot remained pastoralists. These 'sub-tribes' themselves consisted of distinct communities or extended families, and in the early years of colonial rule they were subdivided further in ethnography and sometimes administration.[10] The Kalenjin were the least unified of the big communities, and censuses did not identify them as a 'tribe' (the term used in government documents) until 1979.

Other communities living in what had become Kenya included the once-powerful Maasai, though they constituted less than 2 per cent of the population.[11] In the nineteenth century, these warlike cattle-herders had controlled most of the Rift Valley grasslands from Tanganyika to Samburu, Laikipia and Uas Nkishu (anglicised to Uasin Gishu) in the north-west, an area equivalent to that of the European settlers who followed them. The Maasai had traded and intermarried with their agricultural neighbours, particularly the Kikuyu, but retained a distinctive military orientation, cattle economy and identity. Their control of the Rift Valley ended with the arrival of the British. Most of the Maasai were now in the south, following colonial relocations, with only a few Maasai and the Samburu (who spoke a dialect of Maa) in the north. North and west of the Samburu were the Turkana, very recent arrivals.

Much of the Kenya coast was populated by nine Bantu communities, each centred on a hilltop fort and clearing known as a *kaya*. These were the Mijikenda peoples. They shared inland areas with the Bantu Pokomo and Cushitic Orma in the north and with the Taita in the south. The coast itself was unique, however, in the influence of Omani and Zanzibari Arab culture and the development of a distinctive Swahili identity, which merged Bantu cultures and peoples with Arab and Islamic influences. Trading caravans had also brought the Swahili language into the interior, and it became widely spoken in the colonial era.

The British had ruled the Somali-speaking peoples of Kenya's north-west for 60 years, but most Somali still viewed themselves as part of a greater Somalia.

Kenya's Somali-speakers shared a common language and Islamic religion, but were divided into (often hostile) clans. Most were camel-pastoralists, unfettered by national boundaries, and most only arrived in Kenya in the twentieth century. The British made few attempts at either administration or development, seeking only to maintain order and to restrict their movement south and west. As for the Kalenjin, censuses recorded the Somali under their families or clans (for example, Ajuran, Degodia, Garre or Murille) until the 1980s.

The new colonial power tried to maintain order (and secure their own people's land rights) by fixing administrative boundaries based on the ethnic differences they saw between communities. To do this, they defined communal 'native' land rights in 24 reserves, each dedicated for occupation by specific ethnic groups. They also discouraged or banned outright cross-border settlement and land-buying by Africans. These Reserves hardened boundaries between communities and ended long-term migrations such as the southern march of the Turkana and the movement of the Tugen from the Baringo hills into Maasai-controlled grazing, which had been under way when the British arrived.

Other Recent Migrants

A unique feature of Kenya within East Africa was the high number of European immigrants in the country, encouraged over five decades by an open land frontier, government support and the promise of a colonial lifestyle. Mostly British or South African, Europeans had soon acquired much of the most fertile lands, inspired by glowing reports of the opportunities in the region. Although their numbers had grown rapidly, there were still only 56,000 Europeans in 1962, less than 1 per cent of the population.[12]

Immigrants from India arrived alongside Europeans at the turn of the century, adding their numbers to the Indian merchants trading along the coast.[13] Having built the railway, a few thousand stayed on and other tradesmen, clerks and workers followed. With immigration unrestricted, the community grew rapidly, taking advantage of the opportunities that colonial rule brought in trade and small-scale production, creating clusters of Indians of Gujerati, Punjabi or Goan origin throughout East Africa. The relative ease of travel from India meant that 'Asians' (as they became known in Kenya) maintained their caste and social structures more easily than elsewhere in Africa. By 1962, there were 177,000 Asians in Kenya, of whom half were Hindu, one-quarter Muslim and the remainder Sikh or Christian.[14] Most of Kenya's Asians and Arabs lived in urban areas.

The Fluidity of Ethnicity

The ethnic labels ascribed to peoples in the early twentieth century were not always identical to those used today. Although the collective identity of the Kikuyu was well established, as was that of the Luo, some communities were only just beginning to adopt a 'tribal' rather than a 'sub-tribal' label. This was particularly clear amongst the

Kalenjin, Luhya and Coastal peoples, who each identified themselves at a sub-group level (Nandi, Samia or Giriama, for example), rather than as a 'national' ethnic bloc. The name 'Luhya', for example, was coined in the 1930s, meaning 'those of the same fires', as a way of asserting a common identity large enough to entitle them to a share of the national 'cake'. The name 'Kalenjin' (a term for people whose languages include the phrase 'I tell you') dated from the 1940s or early 1950s, and its use was similarly driven by the desire to obtain bargaining power at the national level.[15] The Mijikenda retained separate identities as Rabai, Giriama, Kauma and Digo throughout the colonial period, and only in the build-up to independence did their political elite assert a 'Mijikenda' identity, reflecting a broadening conception of kinship driven by the creation of the nation-state.

The 'tribes' of pre-colonial Kenya were not hard, immutable collectives, but reflected gradations of shared origin, language and culture. Many if not most ethnic groups had clans whose rituals, language or history indicated recent absorption from another community. The Kikuyu, Embu and Meru of central Kenya, for example, spoke (mostly) intelligible languages, and people living on the borders between such communities might be unaware of their own 'tribe'. At an individual level, ethnic identities were not genetic, but fluid and incorporating.

There were also processes of cultural assimilation and aggregation under way, which were gradually reducing the number of recognised and self-ascribed ethnic groups. These processes were accelerated by the creation of district boundaries and by British expectations of 'ethnographic purity' within each tribal unit.[16] In South Nyanza district, for example, the Abasuba (or Basuba) peoples of Mfangano and Rusinga islands and the mainland Wagasi, all Bantu speakers, were still separately identified in the 1962 census, but were being absorbed linguistically and administratively into the Luo, leaving many 'Basuba' both Luo and Basuba.[17] The simplifying force of colonial rule was seen everywhere. The scattered forest-dwelling hunter-gatherer Ogiek (or Okiek, also known by the British as Ndorobo), were gradually driven to adopt a recognised identity.[18] As their ethnic and geographical status on the boundaries of Kikuyu, Maasai and Kalenjin was unclear, members of the community increasingly defined themselves as Kalenjin after independence, though many probably had common ancestors with those calling themselves Kikuyu. The Terik (or Nyangori) sub-group of the Kalenjin effectively ceased to exist after independence, fully assimilated into other Kalenjin communities. Similarly, the northern Sakkuye are today being absorbed into the Borana, and will probably cease to exist as an independent ethnic identity in the next few decades.

Early Years, 1888–1930

Over six decades, Kenya Colony was transformed from a lightly populated pastoral and agricultural area with no fixed borders or broad political authority into a functioning twentieth-century state. It was an artificial creation, following no natural boundaries, built through the imposition of will and technology by a small number of Europeans on a reluctant African population, directing African and Asian labour.

Conquest and Colonisation, 1888–1910

The British colonial invasion was a gradual event, lasting more than a decade. It began with private enterprise and the formation of the Imperial British East African Company in 1888. Then, in 1895, with the 'scramble for Africa' at its height, the British declared a protectorate over the land from the coast to the Rift Valley. The main impetus for settlement and commerce was the construction of the railway from the coast to Uganda, which began in the deep-water port of Mombasa in 1895 and reached Kisumu on Lake Victoria in 1901.

The railway was designed to protect the headwaters of the Nile in Uganda, but once completed, it needed both justification and defence, and from 1903 white settlers provided both, changing Kenya's future irrevocably. Britain believed it had a potential colony in Kenya, and many Europeans emigrated there to farm and live the life of adventure in the highlands, which were cool and generally free from disease. Many of the first settlers came from the British aristocracy and the military. Accustomed to command and with deeply engrained prejudices against foreigners, these imperial settlers were convinced that they were the natural rulers of Kenya (as of everywhere else) and that Africans were their feudal subjects.[19]

The existing inhabitants of the region resisted colonial rule, and the British employed large-scale violence to subdue them. There was conflict between East African Company forces and the Kikuyu during the first contacts of 1888–92. There was more sustained violence between colonial forces and the Nandi, Gusii, Luhya, Luo and Teso in the west between 1895 and 1908. It was a one-sided contest of spears against guns, mass slaughter and a population cowed into sullen obedience. The Gusii were not defeated until 1908, while the Giriama revolted as late as 1914.[20] Even where lands were unsuitable for white settlement (there were few mineral reserves to stir avarice), the imposition of colonial order had its own logic. The British were few in number, and relied on non-European armies to fight their battles. Some were mercenaries from overseas; more were local allies, persuaded by the promise of spoils or the defeat of their enemies. The Kamba were preferred for their loyalty and obedience, as were the Maasai and the Luhya Wanga in the west. The more paternal element of British culture was seen in their abolition of slavery in the sultan's dominions in 1907.[21]

The 30 years before the British arrival had seen drought, brutal wars amongst the Maasai and outbreaks of rinderpest and smallpox, which had depopulated much of the central Rift Valley and Kiambu and killed most Maasai cattle. Finding the highlands lightly populated and suitable for European agriculture, the British 'alienated' (took for themselves) most of the centre of the country, from Machakos to the Uganda border. Between 1902 and 1915, 7.5 million acres (3.1 million hectares) or 20 per cent of the best land in the country was declared Crown property and reserved for white immigrants only. The government then leased, sold or gave it to white settlers under a British-style individual land title system, creating what became known as the 'white highlands' or the 'scheduled areas' (see Figure 2.3). In 1915, to secure the position of the settlers, who demanded further support from the state, their land lease terms were extended from 99 to 999 years.

Compensation to the previous users or occupants was minimal, and some Kiambu Kikuyu and Kamba found themselves transformed overnight from landowners to 'squatters' (semi-feudal tenants with land-use rights in return for work). There were particular problems in southern Kikuyu areas, stemming from grants of land to Europeans around Limuru and Thika, though there were disputes about how much of the alienated land had been cultivated before the European invasion, and who had really 'owned' it, as such issues affected their land rights.[22] There was clear evidence of uncompensated land losses by some Kikuyu families, while others had 'sold' land to the British, believing they were only giving them 'use rights'. Although only about 4 per cent of Kikuyu and 2 per cent of Kamba lost land, their growing population was trapped in their small 'reserves'.[23]

Others experienced more substantial losses. The Nandi and Kipsigis Kalenjin to the west also lost land, while the Maasai lost the entire central Rift Valley. Three-quarters of the alienated lands had been Maasai-controlled until 1890.[24] The British signed controversial treaties with the Maasai and Sabaot Kalenjin in 1904, alienating their land for European settlement. Some of these treaties were for 99 years, considered a polite fiction at the time, but which proved an issue on their expiry a century later.[25] After the first treaty, the British moved the Maasai of Nakuru and Naivasha north to Laikipia 'in perpetuity'. In 1911–13, however, to extend white farms and ranching north, the governor drove all 10,000 Maasai from Uasin Gishu, Trans-Nzoia, Laikipia and Nakuru into the southern Maasai reserve, which later became Kajiado and Narok Districts. Both deportations were justified by agreements with (illiterate) Maasai elders, but were repudiated later as having been signed under duress.[26]

The Introduction of European Administration

Before the imposition of colonial rule, Kenya had no trans-ethnic and few ethnic political structures. Authority was personal and local, a function of age, lineage, supernatural abilities, wealth and leadership skills, supported by the communal wisdom of elders and the physical power of young men.[27] Age sets or grades (communities of similarly aged men) collectively moved into new roles as children became warriors, then elders and senior elders. Some communities created semi-elective chiefs, but most did not choose a formal head. All societies were gerontocratic and relatively egalitarian, and all relations were personalised.

The region's new rulers overlaid on this a different model: the provincial administration, a structure that they used to govern their colonies throughout Africa. They divided the country administratively into provinces, the provinces into districts, and the districts into divisions, locations and sub-locations. The new state drew these boundaries based on the needs of the white settlers and their understanding of African ethnic groups. The formalisation of the African 'reserves' in 1915 hardened boundaries that had been fluid, reinforcing separate development policies for black and white and for different ethnic groups.

Lacking the numbers to administer the colony directly, the British ruled through local representatives, and appointed 'chiefs' and 'senior chiefs' to administer African

communities – often inventing such leadership positions in the process.[28] They also created local courts to apply customary law and a local tribal police to enforce it. British civil servants administered these fiefdoms as provincial commissioners and district commissioners (PCs and DCs) and district officers down to the divisional level, below which African chiefs were appointed and salaried. Although they provided a buffer and communication channel between white rule and the population, these new chiefs (often traders, interpreters or early Christians) were widely disliked, and their establishment caused structural changes in patterns of wealth and influence. Many took advantage of their new gatekeeper positions to acquire land and money; early examples of the use of central authority to acquire local resources corruptly.

2.3: The 'white highlands'

Source: Government of Kenya

Alongside the provincial administration came technical services such as agricultural extension officers, labour officers and vets, working for the central ministries. All reported to the governor, a London appointee, and his small central government. The result was a structure of command and control that tried to maintain order and encourage development while delegating most authority to the district level. The Colonial Office in London decided overall policy, but relied on local officials for virtually everything else.

Racial segregation was embedded into the colony from the first, with Africans seen as a resource to be exploited, not as having rights equal to those of the European settlers. There was also tension within the colonial state between wholehearted support for white settler power and privilege, and support for African rights and economic development.[29] These tensions grew as changes in Kenya's society and economy caused economic differentiation, education spread, wage labour grew and the mythical monolithic 'tribal identity' that underlaid the indirect rule model disintegrated.[30]

The colonial government administered its new African subjects in differing ways. In the pastoral north and south there was little interest in development, and the key issues were livestock control and the maintenance of security. In the densely populated agricultural areas the settlers and therefore the government wanted labour for the new white farms. Taxation began early, with the government collecting a tax on every hut in the colony before the First World War, as a means to raise funds, but also as a way to force Africans into wage labour. Seeking ways to make the colony and railway pay, the government helped the settlers draw African labourers onto their under-utilised land, to work as squatters. There had been few significant Kikuyu settlements inside the Rift Valley before the arrival of the British, but under colonial rule the Kikuyu spread widely through the valley, working on European farms in return for the right to live, cultivate crops and graze sheep and goats inside the 'white highlands'. The majority of squatters in the southern Rift and Laikipia were Kikuyu, the largest number from Kiambu, but there were many Bukusu squatters in Trans-Nzoia, and Nandi, Keiyo and Kipsigis in the west. Many Luo, Luhya and Gusii, in contrast, moved to live as short-term contract workers on the tea estates around Kericho or on the sisal estates of the coast, a choice that had long-term implications for Kenya's future.

Gradually, the country developed from a scattering of foreigners with guns into a functioning state and economy, built on settler agricultural exports, mostly to the UK. Policy and practice encouraged the build-up of large ranches, plantations and farms.[31] Towns grew up, based on the railway network and European forts. An internally focused subsistence economy was overlain with an export-driven cash-crop agricultural economy, structured around a British-derived capitalist system.

During the 1920s, both maize and wheat became successful exports for white farmers. The search for profitable crops also saw the introduction of tea, coffee and sisal. While Europeans were the main initiators and beneficiaries, there were significant trickle-down benefits to their African subjects, with new tools such as hoes and ox-ploughs, and new crops permitting greater food production. Maize

cultivation grew rapidly, and maize soon became the staple food. Roads, standardised weights and measures, higher-yielding crop varieties and powered grain-mills improved the lot of many Africans. The area of land under African cultivation increased, as farmers could now cultivate land previously left empty for reasons of defence.[32] However, the state reserved the (particularly profitable) growing of coffee for Europeans, ostensibly to reduce the risk of disease and maintain quality, but also to maintain racial segregation and to encourage Africans into wage labour.

In 1906, the government set up an appointed Legislative Council to make laws and represent white settler opinion. In 1919, 6,000 European men and women 'of pure descent' chose their first elected representatives. Indian and Arab constituencies were added in 1924, but representation was not extended to Africans. In 1925, recognising the need for Africans to have some responsibility for their own affairs, the Legislative Council established local native councils (LNCs) to help administer the reserves. While they had taxation powers and could mobilise significant resources, most members were government appointees and the councils were primarily discussion fora for the communication of grievances to the DCs who chaired them. A key focus for the councils' efforts was access to European-style education, and they invested heavily in establishing local primary schools. The government also used the LNCs to channel dissent into more constructive activity.

The New Religions

Before the arrival of Europeans, most Kenyans had practised either Islam or animist 'traditional religions', a collective name for various forms of worship of gods, spirits or ancestors. Islam had recently spread inland from the coast with the Arabs and from the north with the Somali. Indian immigrants also brought new forms of Islam and the Hindu religion into urban areas.

Although Christianity first arrived in Kenya during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it had little impact until the twentieth century. The British conquest saw the Bible arrive alongside the gun, as missionaries moved into Kenya in the 1890s and 1900s. The result was the rapid growth of competing evangelical missions from European Christian communities. These included the Anglican Church Missionary Society, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission, the African Inland Mission/Church, Methodists, Pentecostal churches, Quakers and the Catholic Church. There was a rapid Christianising of the population, a 'race for Christ', with the lure of access to medical services and a basic education in the mission stations.[33] The Kikuyu, whose religion was monotheist, were particularly well served by competing churches. Some churches absorbed elements of local religions into their beliefs and practices, and African independent churches emerged as offshoots of Protestantism.

Development and Dissent in the 1920s

After the carnage of the First World War, in which many Kenyan Africans died, there was a stronger assertion of settler influence over the fledgling Kenyan government. African wages were cut by a third in 1921, and labour conditions were harsh. From 1919 until 1947, for purposes of identification and labour control, Africans had to wear a much-hated pass (*kipande*) around their necks when travelling outside the reserves.

After the war, the trickle of white immigrants became a stream. In December 1919, 1,500 soldier-settlers arrived on one ship alone, granted land by a grateful Britain. Many came with the aim of establishing a white state and society, on the pattern of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Many Britons believed that their civilising influence could only be of benefit to East Africans, whom they saw as amongst the most backward communities in the world, 'without a history, culture or religion of their own'.[34] New land alienations continued until 1919–20, when parts of the Nandi Reserve and Kericho were excised and allocated, contrary to previous commitments to the inviolability of the reserves.

It was amongst the Kikuyu and particularly those from southern Kiambu that the effects of land alienation and economic development were most pronounced. Rapid urbanisation in nearby Nairobi created both markets for agricultural produce and work in the factories.[35] The end of the First World War brought the first stirrings of Kikuyu resistance to colonial rule. Elders from Kiambu founded the first such body, to help protect *githaka* (extended family) land rights from European alienation. However, the best known was the East African Association, a Kikuyu-led young men's protest movement founded in 1921, helped by Indian businessmen unhappy with the increasingly white-supremacist direction of the colony. The consequence was stronger African protest – against land alienation, the hut tax, the *kipande*, wage cuts, restrictions on coffee growing and the lack of political representation. The protests ended in 1922 with the detention without trial of Kiambu agitator Harry Thuku and the killing by troops of dozens of Kikuyu protesters in Nairobi.[36] This took place only 27 years after the protectorate was established. Taxes were reduced soon after. However, an archetype had been established of Kikuyu-led popular protest, violent repression and subsequent compromise.

The tensions were not solely between 'white' and 'black'. With a large Indian population, the British briefly considered making the colony 'the America of the Hindu', but this idea fell out of favour as white numbers grew, and the scheduled areas remained 'whites only'. Still, there were twice as many Asians as Europeans in the 1920s. The period 1918–23 saw more disputes between Asians and Europeans than over the position of the African majority.[37] In 1923, facing evidence of conditions of near-slavery for African workers and serious tensions between white and Indian immigrants, the Colonial Office made a key decision, known as the Devonshire Declaration. This asserted that in Kenya the interests of the African majority would always be paramount, and that there would be no settler dominion of government as in southern Africa. The 'white highlands' would remain white, though, and there

would be no Indian land settlement or common electoral roll. The three-layer racial hierarchy would endure.

There was little indication in practice of African paramountcy. The government remained dominated by settler opinion, racial segregation remained universal and the treatment of African labour appalling. Discrimination against Africans and to a lesser extent Asians was institutionalised in practice, though rarely enshrined in law.[38] Kenya was becoming a dual state and society: a settler economy, with its crops, land, society, politics and form of government, coexisting alongside its African equivalents.

Meanwhile, the country developed rapidly as towns grew, roads were built, the railway extended (to serve European settlers) and new crops spread. The 1920s were a boom era for settler agriculture, and the land under European cultivation tripled. While the settlers were the most visible face of Europe, British capital also invested in primary production for export (tea, tobacco, wattle and soda ash). Africans were encouraged or forced to sell their labour by taxation, low wages, direct coercion, bans on cash-crop growing and the opportunity to purchase new goods. One-fifth of the adult male population was part of the labour force by the early 1920s – one of the highest rates in Africa.[39] Nonetheless, many communities resisted wage labour or integration into the money economy, and there was a labour shortage throughout the 1920s. Enforced communal labour was widely used to terrace land and build roads. Administration was closer and coercion more common than elsewhere in British Africa. The economy therefore evolved under the competing influence of both settler and metropolitan capital interests, periodically constrained by British humanitarian concerns and administrative commitments to fair play.[40] Relations between the colony and London were often as poor as with the 'natives'.

By 1928, there were more than 100,000 squatters on white farms, cultivating far more land than were the Europeans. Initially, the government had supported African squatting, as they knew the Europeans could not farm alone, and conditions were better for the migrants than in the crowded reserves. During the 1920s, attitudes changed and regulations tightened. Squatters' rights to land and livestock were restricted and settler demands for compulsory labour grew.[41] The state and more efficient European farmers were working towards an end to squatting and its replacement by wage labour, fearing that long-term cultivation by Africans would inevitably create de facto land rights in the highlands.

Before the twentieth century there were no settlements in Kenya larger than fortified villages outside Mombasa and the coast. Urban life in upcountry Kenya was a colonial phenomenon. Nairobi and Mombasa were the main trans-ethnic 'melting pots'. Nairobi was built near the meeting point of Kikuyu, Kamba and Maasai lands. It soon developed from a railway yard into a major urban, industrial and commercial centre. The country's capital moved there in 1907, a critical decision in the evolution of the state, as it centred politics and the economy on the whites and the upcountry Kikuyu (and Kamba), and away from the coast and the Swahili. Nairobi grew spectacularly quickly, with the population reaching over 110,000 by the first census in 1948. More than one-third of its inhabitants were Asian, fewer than 10 per cent were European. Mombasa, four centuries older, was Kenya's second town, populated by a

mixture of Muslim Arabs, Swahili, Mijikenda and growing numbers of upcountry workers, particularly Luo and Kamba, working around the port. Smaller settlements included Kisumu and Nakuru. Originally, the urban areas were designed for permanent European and Asian occupation only, with Africans regarded as temporary visitors. This policy soon broke down, but strict racial segregation was still observed, and most urban land was European or Asian owned until the 1960s. Urbanisation resulted in growing formal and informal incomes, but alongside this came crime, prostitution and disease.

Kikuyu dissatisfaction deepened once educated Kikuyu discovered that their reserve had been declared the property of the state and that the Colony would give no legal recognition to *githaka* land rights. Protracted debates in the administration over the merits of allowing individual land title for Africans produced no result. Thuku's efforts were followed in 1924–5 by the formation of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) by educated farmers and traders from Central Province (the home of most Kikuyu, Embu and Meru). Its aims were both political and economic: the return of Kikuyu land, an end to the ban on Africans growing cash-crops and the repeal of the hut tax. The KCA also adopted the Kikuyu practice of oaths of loyalty to an association, which was to evolve into one of the tools used in the Mau Mau revolt. The Luo also established protest groups in the 1920s and political associations emerged amongst other agricultural communities in the 1930s.[42] The British never accepted the legitimacy of such associations, however, believing that the provincial administration and their local government structures made them unnecessary.[43] They were also careful to ensure that these groups remained regional or ethnic, a policy that had long-term consequences for the independent state.

In 1929, a Kikuyu from Gatundu in Kiambu was financed by local contributions to sail to Europe to press their land claims on the British. He was named Kamau wa Ngengi, who had taken the Christian name Johnstone and was later to be known as Jomo Kenyatta. His history dominated that of Kenya for the next 50 years. At this time, the flamboyant Kenyatta was in his mid-30s, mission-educated and with a job in Nairobi.[44] He had become the full-time secretary of the KCA in 1928 and editor of its Kikuyu-language newsletter *Muigwithania* (the reconciler or unifier). After 20 months in Europe, having had little success in influencing the government, Kenyatta returned to Kenya. In 1931, however, he returned to the UK and was to remain abroad until 1946.

Social and Cultural Change

Pre-colonial labour in all Kenyan communities was divided by gender, with men generally responsible for cattle-keeping, hunting, land clearance and war, and women for agriculture, cooking and child rearing. Polygyny amongst wealthier men was common, as was the payment of bridewealth to the family of the bride in recompense for her agricultural labour. Marriage was an economic and social arrangement between families as well as individuals. Women could not inherit property, and mostly took a subservient social and political role. Most African

communities followed an age-set model of authority, which saw leadership as moving from generation to generation. The transition to adulthood was for most male and female youth an experience of genital excision, which symbolised their readiness for adult responsibilities. The largest community that did not practise male circumcision was the Luo, a distinction that took on political significance later, because of the association of circumcision with adulthood in other communities.

The growing numbers of adherents to the Christian missions in central and western Kenya were now challenging this model, and church mission schools – teaching Christianity, reading, writing, arithmetic and basic technical skills – allowed them access to jobs that the majority did not have. Even amongst non-English or Swahili speakers, the Christian message spread, as the churches translated the Bible into African vernacular languages. Areas where European administration came late, where pastoralism made permanent schools impossible or where initial responses were hostile were later at a significant educational disadvantage. The introduction of the money economy (replacing livestock as the main measure of wealth and medium of exchange) also changed social relations, weakening bonds between elders and youth, and the first 'urbanised' Africans emerged, who had lost their links with their local lineages (and often their land rights with it). In Central Province, fertile and close to Nairobi, commercial agriculture was threatening the *mbari* system of patron–client tenancies. Population growth, land purchases by chiefs and other wealthy men and pressure from commercial farming led to the first landlessness by the 1930s. Elsewhere, land-holding remained communal and land sales rare.

A major controversy emerged in 1929–30 concerning the practice of female circumcision (also known as clitoridectomy or female genital mutilation) as a rite of passage into adulthood for young Kikuyu women. The tensions within the Kikuyu over this custom catalysed the emerging conflict within the community. The European-led Protestant missions had campaigned increasingly assertively against female circumcision, and in 1929 they demanded that Christians abandon the practice entirely. The KCA opposed the missions and most Kikuyu supported their stand. The issue became a symbol of Kikuyu dissent against colonial rules and the European churches.[45] Concerned about native (especially Kikuyu) political activity, the government used legislation to restrict public meetings and limit fund collections, but it was unwilling to ban female circumcision entirely.

The crisis resulted in the breaking away of Kikuyu, Embu and Meru churches to form independent African Christian churches. It also strengthened the independent schools, which were an increasingly radical influence in Central Province and amongst Kikuyu squatters in the Rift. Despite state hostility, the independent schools movement (unfunded and with only African teachers) grew rapidly. By 1936, there were 44 independent schools in Central Province. In 1939, Chief Koinange wa Mbiyu of Kiambu also established an independent African Teachers' Training College at Githunguri.

Another key establishment for the future of Kenya was also sited in Kiambu – Alliance High School at Kikuyu, established by Protestant missions in 1926. The school took the best African Protestant secondary students from around the country, and educated most of the leadership that took Kenya to independence and

beyond. These included Chief Koinange's son Mbiyu, Eliud Mathu, James Gichuru, Oginga Odinga, Jackson Angaine, Charles Njonjo, Ronald Ngala, Jeremiah Nyagah, Charles Rubia, Ngala Mwendwa, Paul Ngei, Dawson Mwanyumba, Munyua Waiyaki and Julius Kiano.[46]

New Forms of Trade and Industry

There had been barter trade between communities before the British arrival – in food, livestock, pots and baskets, skins, weapons, tools, salt, ivory, poisons and slaves. The introduction of industrial mass production, high-speed rail transport and new markets overlaid on this a larger-scale pattern of production and trade. The design of Kenya's new road and rail networks was oriented towards the transport of raw materials from settler farms to the urban areas and the coast. Kenya's main exports were crops such as coffee, sisal and tea, while it imported most industrial goods from the UK. Asian merchants soon dominated retail and small-scale trade in imported goods, again overlaid on longer-established trading patterns amongst African communities in locally produced goods.

There had been small-scale industries in the pre-colonial period such as iron smelting, basketry and pottery, but these too were supplanted by the mass production of goods using factories, labour specialisation and electric power. Industrialisation began with the processing of local raw materials, producing beer, soap, dairy products, tea, coffee, sisal, meat and cement. Industrial development remained modest, however. Until the 1940s, British policy was against the local production of industrial goods; instead, the country was seen as a market for British exports.

Colonial Maturity but Rising Tensions, 1930–52

Kenya Colony was free to make policy under only the broadest guidelines from the Colonial Office, as long as it remained financially self-sufficient and did not cause concern at home. The state as a political and economic actor was not a monolithic entity, but responded to the pressures of several communities – British investors, white settlers, British domestic opinion, its own interests and what it believed were the interests of the African peasantry. It remained decentralised and responsive to local issues, though it rarely articulated Asian or African opinion explicitly.[47] However, the government and particularly the provincial administration continued to treat most opposition as akin to subversion. They did whatever they could to discourage, discredit or suppress it. For most Africans, the state remained alien and of little legitimacy, its laws arbitrary and its decisions made without their consent or involvement.

Agricultural Development in the 1930s

The 1930s and the global depression saw a fall in both agricultural exports and prices. Indebted white farmers needed government loans, rebates and cuts in African wages to keep afloat and to protect them against African competition. Their over-

dependence on maize and wheat inspired a diversification into new crops such as pyrethrum flowers, used for insecticide.

Agricultural cooperatives now processed and marketed most European crops. White farmers had formed the first cooperative in 1908 for marketing, sharing farm inputs and lobbying. Cooperatives offered farmers collective buying power and distribution and marketing economies. The three main cooperatives – the Kenya Planters Co-Operative Union (KPCU), the Kenya Cooperative Creameries (KCC) and the umbrella Kenya Farmers Association (KFA) – were registered in 1931. The KFA campaigned for high standards of products and growing (and against African competition in agriculture); the KCC processed and marketed milk, while the KPCU marketed settler coffee. Africans increasingly participated in this movement and built their own local agricultural cooperatives.

African agriculture began to receive serious administrative attention in the 1930s. There were efforts to improve yields and force communities to introduce terracing and soil conservation measures, and the government posted the first agricultural extension officers to the reserves. There was wider use of new ploughs, hoes and plant breeds. Some workers began to invest their wages in agricultural improvements, including 'grade' (high milk-yielding, imported) cattle. A few wealthier Africans, mainly in Central Province, began to engage in true cash-crop commercial agriculture, producing for sale rather than selling surpluses. Maize-growing was now near universal, while wattle (the bark from wattle trees) to tan hides became an important crop in Central Province.[48] Other crops began to be cultivated in larger quantities, including tobacco and cotton. The state permitted coffee growing by progressive farmers in the Kisii, Embu and Meru highlands by the mid-1930s, though they limited the scale of plantings, in part to minimise the social disruption caused by cash incomes.[49] Coffee-planting remained banned in Kikuyu Central Province, the area closest to European coffee farms, however, until 1951. The state wished to minimise competition between European and African farmers and discouraged the emergence of large African commercial farmers until the 1950s.[50] In their worldview, they had to maintain the bifurcation between African peasants in the reserves and large commercial white farms. By the late 1930s, though, there was already significant economic differentiation – at least in Central Province – with teachers and government officials enlarging their holdings. Colonial chiefs in Kiambu were particularly assertive in using their status to acquire land.[51]

Pastoralism had been a feature of East African life for centuries. Most communities practised agro-pastoralism (the keeping of animals as an adjunct to agriculture). The true pastoralists of Kenya, however, were the nomadic cattle-herding Maasai, Samburu, Turkana and Pokot and the camel-herding Somali, Oromo and Rendille. These communities had no permanent home, but moved from place to place and lived primarily from the consumption and barter of livestock products. Pastoral practices also changed during the colonial era. With less warfare, better disease control, and broader access to markets there were rapid increases in stock numbers. This was counteracted, however, by the limitations on land availability and animal ownership imposed by the government. There was a growing problem of soil erosion, caused

by what experts believed was 'overstocking', although the true causes included the restriction on stock movement for disease control and the closure of grazing in the highlands. Concern over the carrying capacity of the rangelands led to land rehabilitation programmes and forced destocking amongst the Kamba and Tugen during the 1930s, and resulting political ferment.[52] Settlers also engaged in their own form of agro-pastoralism, with the development of beef ranching, mostly in Laikipia.

Land Tensions, the Second World War and Kenyatta, 1933–45

In 1932, the British appointed a Land Commission to adjudicate African claims against the government and white settlers and to define the boundaries of the white highlands. Its 1933 report accepted KCA and other submissions that some Kikuyu had lost land through European alienation, and slightly enlarged the Kikuyu and Kamba Reserves. However, it refused restitution for most land alienations, rejected *githaka* land title and ruled that squatter settlement on white farms in the European reserve would never offer them legal title. Kikuyu squatters were bitterly disappointed, as many had believed until then that they had customary land tenure rights. The real struggle over land had begun. From 1937 onwards, regulations defined squatters as labourers, not tenants and gave powers to settler district councils to regulate native stock and labour. Nonetheless, squatter numbers continued to grow. By the end of the 1930s, there were more than 150,000 Kikuyu living and working on European farms, many of who had lost land rights in the crowded Kikuyu Reserve. There were also communities of Kikuyu scattered across other reserves, living, trading and cultivating lands without formal title.

Meanwhile, Johnstone Kenyatta, now calling himself Jomo, lived and worked from hand to mouth in the UK. He studied in London and in 1938 wrote a well-received and well-publicised book on the Kikuyu people, *Facing Mount Kenya*, one of the first anthropological treatises on an African people written by someone from that community.[53] He represented Kenyan African grievances in London, though as the years passed he became isolated from events at home. While in Europe, his political views matured; he campaigned for African interests with European Christians and liberals and with intellectuals from other African countries, but remained something of a loner. He visited Moscow twice and spent 1932–3 in Russia, studying under a pseudonym and supported by Soviet funds.[54] Despite his apparent flirtation with communism, however, he was disillusioned by his time in the east, and was more influenced by the conservative, pragmatic and consensus-driven British approach to politics.[55] He even married a second, British wife. Kenyatta's lengthy absence from his home country, although it isolated him, also allowed him to escape the divisions in the KCA and pressures on it to compromise with the state. With the outbreak of the Second World War, the government banned the KCA and linked associations in Ukambani and Taita in 1940 as potentially subversive and detained 22 KCA officials without trial.

The war was the trigger for fundamental change in Kenya's economy and society, beginning a 20-year boom for the colony. The conflict with the Italians in East

Africa was swift and victorious, and King's African Rifles (KAR) units were freed for service elsewhere in the empire. The government supported agricultural exports in every way, including subsidies for settlers and forced African labour. Both settler and African agriculture blossomed, with the need to feed Allied armies abroad. Between 1942 and 1952, the output of large farms doubled, driven by mechanisation, high and fixed world prices and bulk export deals. Kenyan agriculture already had a large number of statutory boards, to develop and market crops, and the demands of war strengthened them further. With the dangers and costs of maritime trade high, the country was also forced to create several new import substitution industries.

Post-War Development and Change

After the Second World War, British involvement became more active, and grants, loans and investments poured into the colony. The period saw the fastest formal sector growth in Kenya's history, estimated at 13 per cent a year between 1947 and 1954.[56] The welfare state and the managed economy were the dominant political themes in Great Britain, and London encouraged the colonies to invest in development and social welfare for all their peoples (not just Europeans). In Kenya, however, a wealthy and assertive settler community increasingly dominated the governor and his Council of Ministers.[57] There were calls for settler self-government, and growing tensions between their demands, a sceptical Labour government and the interests of African farmers.

In the same period, state regulation of (mostly settler) agricultural crops was further institutionalised, with the creation of more regulatory and marketing boards, including the Coffee Marketing Board, the Maize and Produce Board, the Kenya Meat Commission, the Tea Development Authority, the Wheat Board, the Sisal Board and the Pyrethrum Board. The aim was the same: standardisation of product quality, support for distribution and marketing and price stabilisation, though the profitability of export crops depended on world prices, which the boards could not control. The settlers and government were convinced that this structure minimised price instability, cut out middlemen and increased the predictability of agro-industrial investment.[58] These agricultural parastatals (a form of state-owned enterprise) were also quiet vehicles for settler influence and state control of the sector. Kenya's agricultural sector did not evolve as a private sector capitalist system, but as an administered public–private partnership in which the private sector mostly produced, but the state priced, planned and marketed.[59]

The formal sector of the economy (recorded, taxed and administered) remained almost entirely immigrant owned and operated, with the Asian community dominating small-scale manufacturing and trade and Europeans owning most commercial farms and large businesses. However, a few African entrepreneurs were beginning to establish small businesses in the reserves. The labour force was changing too. By the 1940s, 30 per cent of men were in paid employment. Central Province – particularly Kiambu and Fort Hall (later renamed Murang'a) – and the Luo and Luhya were the main labour sources. Those with education, contacts or special skills could earn salaries vastly greater than those of labourers. As a result, by 1952, there

was a clear differentiation between the mass of peasants and pastoralists, and a small class of better-educated teachers, traders, clerks and workers with greater incomes and access to capital, and therefore to land. This emerging middle class was not a distant elite, but well embedded in their rural milieu.

The state still hankered after the simplicity of indirect rule. British administrators individually controlled their districts, trying to treat their peoples as if they were homogeneous and segregated tribes, but migration, landlessness and economic and social change were all undermining this image.[60] The Second World War introduced further seeds of change, with many thousands of East Africans serving outside Africa. Returning soldiers, their horizons widened, used to fighting alongside Europeans and with money to invest, started small businesses, challenging the status quo in the reserves. Differentiation was particularly rapid in the Kikuyu Reserve. The Kikuyu chiefs were the most obvious beneficiaries of economic change, and were lauded by the British as 'progressive' cash-crop farmers. Many of the new rural elite were also involved in the campaign for greater political representation.

From 1947–8, accepting the impossibility of retaining the African majority in a communal state, and desperate to rebuild the shattered British economy, the improvement of African agriculture became a priority. The population was growing and land in the reserves deteriorating.[61] Since there could be no African land ownership in the highlands, the state instead focused on improving the 'carrying capacity' of the reserves and again enforced terracing in Fort Hall and amongst the Tugen, Bukusu and Kamba. It also enforced African cattle dipping and compulsory destocking. This led to protests by a tiny but influential group of African proto-politicians, who opposed such improvements as racially motivated and diverting attention from the real problem of the highlands. The state ended most bans on African cultivation of cash-crops, which had kept incomes below those in neighbouring states. Tea, sisal and pineapple production were all encouraged, but coffee growing picked up most quickly. Racial discrimination remained institutionalised in jobs, housing and schooling, however, and the emerging African elite's resentment at their lower status was a source of enduring discontent.[62]

De facto individual land tenure was now widespread in Central Province, and landlord–tenant relations in Kikuyu areas deteriorated further, resulting in the expulsion of tenants, and frequent litigation. Increasing land sales combined with the forced return of squatters from the Rift to cause landlessness and tension. The growing number of landless was to be the main source of Mau Mau support in the reserves. This change was not unique to Central Province, however. By 1950, Gusii and Kipsigis farmers were also fencing 'their' lands even without formal tenure, agreeing with the settlers that this was the key to agricultural productivity.[63] There was still no legal basis for this, as Europeans had little confidence in the productivity of African agriculture, and a deep fear of both detribalisation and landlessness. Plans for formal individual land tenure trials began, but were slow to mature.[64]

Another source of tension was the changing attitude towards squatters. By 1948, there were 220,000 Kikuyu squatters, nearly one-quarter of the Kikuyu population, on farms in the white highlands and nearby forests.[65] However, agricultural

prosperity, closer European settlement and a shift to dairy farming were reducing settler dependence on their labour, and European farmers were forcing squatters off their lands and back to Nairobi and the reserve, limiting their cattle or turning them into wage labourers.[66] By 1948, facing the imminent destruction of their way of life, the squatter movement had become more militant. The failure of the 1940s settlement scheme in Olenguruone in Nakuru, where the government had settled 12,000 Kikuyu ex-squatters on land taken from the Maasai, was a key driver for anti-European oathing and subversion.[67] The same processes took place, in a more muted form, amongst the Kalenjin and Luhya of Trans-Nzoia and Uasin Gishu. Here, however, the commitment to squatter life was less permanent, there was more land in the reserves, settler influence was weaker and European dependence on squatter labour was greater.[68]

African pressure for political representation was growing. The governor appointed the first African, a British-educated teacher from Kiambu named Eliud Mathu, to the Legislative Council in 1944. In the same year, the Kenya African Study Union was formed – the first explicitly national African political organisation. It took a constitutionalist line in representing African grievances and supported Mathu. In 1946, with the war over, it was renamed the Kenya African Union (KAU), and became more assertive. Its leaders included another Kiambu teacher James Gichuru as president, journalist Francis Khamisi from Mombasa and J. D. Otiende, a Luhya teacher from Kakamega.[69]

Although KAU's leadership was moderate and well educated, the government had little time for such 'rabble-rousers'. Kenya was expected to remain a colony indefinitely. The administration believed that economic and social development must precede political development, and that premature African political activity would imperil their gradual advance towards civilisation.[70] Influenced by the new Labour government in the UK, the government granted greater African representation in the Legislative Council, with four nominated members by 1948, but there were no African elections. In April 1952, for the first time, the government decided that the LNCs might elect African candidates for six Legislative Council constituencies, from whom the governor would select representatives. The Emergency was to intervene, however.

Kenyatta, KAU and 'Mau Mau', 1946–52

The Kikuyu community was under increasing pressure from population growth, land shortages, squatter evictions, internal inequalities and settler proximity. Although banned, the KCA continued to operate amongst squatters and in the reserve. By 1946, Kikuyu were swearing new versions of traditional oaths to resist anti-squatter rules.[71]

In 1946, Kenyatta finally returned to seek a leadership role in the nationalist movement. With the Second World War over, as the exhausted British Empire gave up its crown jewel of India, Kenya too appeared ripe for change. On his return, Kenyatta received an overwhelming response from the Kikuyu. Local people had maintained his memory, and believed that he had returned to break European control over the

highlands and cash-cropping. He immediately resumed campaigning for change. He took the *mbari* oath (the main Kikuyu oath of unity) and a more aggressive KCA oath. He maintained close relations with the influential and increasingly anti-British Koinange family in Kiambu, both Chief Koinange and his American-educated son Peter Mbiyu.[72] To cement their alliance, Kenyatta took one of the chief's daughters as a third wife.

In 1947, Kenyatta was chosen to replace Gichuru as KAU's president, while also serving as head of the Githunguri Teachers' Training College. He used both positions to build African nationalist sentiment. Kenyatta was a natural leader, but some saw him as arrogant and dictatorial, an opportunist who had been parachuted into the leadership of organisations built by others.[73] Others noted his desire for money and his difficulties in separating his personal financial affairs from those of Githunguri College.[74] His strengths and weaknesses were to help set the direction taken by the independent state.

Gradually, the KCA and KAU began to merge in Kikuyu areas. The overwhelming majority of KAU supporters were Kikuyu, and KAU never established a mass presence outside the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru. Kenyatta certainly tried, and he built links into Luo, Luhya, Kamba, Ugandan and Tanganyikan elites. In practice, though, a mass following amongst the Luo and pastoral communities eluded KAU. Its key demand was the return of 'stolen lands', but this had less appeal in other communities, less affected by land alienation or economic differentiation. Growing Kikuyu violence did not elicit a positive response amongst other communities, while the colonial state did what it could to limit KAU's influence. The state restricted KAU's public meetings and prevented it from visiting the northern 'Outlying Districts'. These factors, plus the moderate nature of KAU's campaign, its shortage of money and the local nature of most African politics in the period meant that their mass support was limited.[75] By 1948, KAU was in decline, unable to show tangible gains for its campaigns and collections.

While change was occurring elsewhere, nationalist forces in Kenya were stunted by the settlers' influence over the state, and there were few avenues for legitimate protest. Administrators persisted in believing that political agitation was the cause of popular unrest, rather than a symptom of it.[76] By 1947–8, the result was organised underground resistance, inspired by long-running land and status grievances, given impetus by growing social and economic differentiation and the influence of younger, more militant Kikuyu. The fledgling African press (much of it in Gikuyu) challenged many of the precepts of white rule. Religious attitudes were also changing, with growing resistance to the European-dominated mainstream churches. New Christian sects and radical preachers preached 'liberation theology'.

Despite growing violence and pressure for change from London, the settler-dominated state was adamant. There would be no elections for Africans and no review of the land situation. Kenya would stay a 'white man's country'. There were moves for reform amongst some Europeans in the late 1940s, but they were too little, too late. Although decolonisation was beginning elsewhere, most Kenya settlers looked south for their inspiration. Partition was not feasible because of the dispersed geography

of the highlands. Instead, there was talk of a new East African Dominion, linked to Rhodesia and South Africa. To the settlers, Kenyatta represented a dangerous force, and as early as 1948 they were calling for his arrest. Rejecting the opportunity to incorporate him into the political system, and fearing his communist connections, the colonial government chose instead to believe that he was leading underground resistance to white rule.

In 1950, responding to the growing pressure for political representation, the government introduced true local government for Africans. The LNCs were reconstituted as 33 African district councils with significant revenues (from taxation, property leases and forest royalties). They were responsible for most government services, including roads, health services, water, education and agricultural extension. They also provided a legitimate outlet for political activity. However, there were no elections for the new councils until 1958 because of the Emergency. In the white highlands, the situation was very different, as the seven white districts had their own county councils on the British model. There, the voice of African squatters remained weak and their rights non-existent.

Meanwhile, Nairobi was growing, as both the landless and educated came to find work. The British king declared Nairobi a city in 1950, and by 1962 the population had reached 250,000. The city was a unique environment within which European, Asian and African ethnic groups (mainly Kikuyu, Kamba, Luo and Luhya) interacted, but its planners had given little thought to their accommodation or needs. Rising prices, poor living conditions, overcrowding and unemployment bred crime. By 1947, the administration had virtually lost control of the African areas of Nairobi to Kikuyu gangs and militant trade unionists.[77]

The late 1940s were years of rising tension amongst the Kikuyu, although most other Kenyans remained politically passive. Kenyatta and the ex-KCA leaders had oathed older, wealthier Kikuyu into KAU in 1947–8, and oathing amongst both squatter and reserve Kikuyu spread rapidly. By 1950, mass oathing was under way in Nairobi, Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri. A convergence of interest between squatters, the Central Province poor and Nairobi activists was emerging that was to lead to open revolt.[78] The consent amongst the people of central Kenya to be ruled was breaking down. In 1948, the Europeans first came to hear of a new movement, 'Mau Mau', a name of uncertain origin, which became shorthand for the growing anarchy, and which they believed was a revolutionary secret society. Although the administration was increasingly worried, it was out of touch with African opinion and unable to recognise the relationship between their policies and the growing dissent.

With colonial policy changing, trade unions were fully legalised in Kenya in 1942–3. Supported by the first minimum wage ordinances, Kikuyu- and Asian-led trade unions exerted their authority in mass general strikes in 1947 and 1950, with both political and economic objectives.[79] However, the nationalist movement was far from united. Kenyatta and the national party opposed the 1950 general strike and denounced violence, but behind Kenyatta were more confrontational figures. Demobilised Kikuyu ex-soldiers, including Bildad Kaggia, Fred Kubai, Waruhiu Itote and Stanley Mathenge, and Kamba such as J. D. Kali and Paul Ngei had been

liberated and radicalised by their experiences in the British army, and were ready to fight for land and freedom.[80] The Nairobi branch of KAU was the most militant. There was a tight relationship between trade union leaders and Nairobi KAU, with communists such as Makhan Singh working alongside 'hardliners' such as Kubai and Kaggia to rouse dissent. After the 1950 general strike and the banning of the East African Trades Union Congress, they infiltrated and took over the moribund KAU in Nairobi and initiated a campaign of mass oathing of Nairobi's poor and disaffected.[81] During 1951, the militants developed an underground network linked to Nairobi's criminal underclass and established a Kikuyu-only Central Committee (the *muhimu*) inside KAU to direct oathing, violence and anti-European activities.[82]

European concern at Kikuyu subversion was rising. By 1950, the British had already developed an Emergency Scheme for the colony in the event of mass unrest.[83] During 1950–1, oathing multiplied and killings increased in the Rift Valley, the Kikuyu Reserve and Nairobi as the radicals consolidated their hold. By 1952, between 75 and 90 per cent of Kikuyu men had taken some form of oath (many against their will) to support the movement and never to sell land to Europeans and Asians, on pain of death. Whatever their reasons for taking the oath, most Kikuyu believed it was binding, with death the inevitable consequence of betrayal (either supernaturally or at the hands of their recruiters). The most militant were taking *batuni* (platoon) oaths committing them to fight their enemies and recover stolen lands, although there was little true military preparation. European-owned cattle were mutilated and fires started, several Europeans killed or wounded and chiefs, police informers, non-Kikuyu headmen and oath-resisters were murdered.

By 1952, the frightened settlers were demanding sterner action and the repression of all African nationalism, though Governor Sir Philip Mitchell still believed there was no serious risk of insurrection. The state made little effort to win 'hearts and minds' or to build alternative non-Mau Mau Kikuyu alliances, but instead expanded its intelligence and security forces in order to disrupt the militants' oathing, underestimating their determination and support.[84] The European-led and mostly Kamba, Luo and Kalenjin police tried to restore order through curfews and mass arrests, and built a network of informers within the movement. By September 1952, the courts had jailed more than 400 for membership of Mau Mau. However, preparations for rebellion were advancing, and in August–September 1952 several groups of Kikuyu (including ex-soldiers) left for the Aberdare Mountains to prepare for war.[85]

Kenyatta, campaigning for non-violent change, found himself trapped, discredited amongst his supporters by the lack of progress in changing settler attitudes, but feared by the British. Under pressure from the authorities, he denounced Mau Mau at public meetings during 1951–2, but found his situation increasingly difficult, as a moderate leader who was losing control of a revolt that was using KAU as a cover. The radicals conceded that Mau Mau needed Kenyatta's experience and authority, and continued to support him in public, but privately they were contemptuous. His own involvement in oathing and meetings with young Kikuyu about to enter the forests showed that Kenyatta drew a fine line between violent and non-violent protest.[86] His speeches, monitored by the police,

similarly trod a narrow path between radicalism and moderation, demonstrating an ambivalence that led European observers to disbelieve his anti-Mau Mau protestations. In their view, Kenyatta and Chief Koinange were the masterminds behind Mau Mau, despite the fact that many Kikuyu saw Kenyatta as a force for moderation. As his denunciations of Mau Mau became more open during July and August 1952, however, the radicals insisted that he cease. In late 1952, Kenyatta was called before the Central Committee for the first time and warned he must fall silent or die. He cancelled his remaining meetings.[87]

The Mau Mau Rising

The Mau Mau guerrilla war of 1952–5 was a key event in Kenya's history, and shaped its future political, economic and social structure. It was an unstructured, violent revolt amongst Africans – mostly Kikuyu – against foreign rule, land alienation and political and economic inequality. It escalated rapidly with the detention of the nationalist leadership in 1952, but had been brewing for at least five years and its antecedents went back to the first European land seizures. It was an unconventional war, fought to win by any means by both sides. It was also a war of clashing moralities, as both the Europeans and the Mau Mau believed completely in the rightness of their cause. In the end, the British triumphed, but their victory had a high price.

The 1952 Insurrection and the Trial of the 'Kapenguria Six'

Once Governor Mitchell had retired and left Kenya in June 1952, the last impediment to a decisive strike against KAU was gone. Under intense settler pressure, led by European Legislative Council leader Michael Blundell, the government agreed to impose a State of Emergency and to arrest Kenyatta and other KAU leaders.

On 7 October 1952, activists shot dead Kiambu Senior Chief Waruhiu wa Kungu, a prominent Christian anti-Mau Mau leader. This was the final trigger for action. Believing they were facing a revolutionary movement and possible civil war, on 20 October Governor Sir Evelyn Baring, new to Kenya and with the unanimous support of the British Cabinet, declared a State of Emergency.[88] The state initiated operation 'Jock Scott' and arrested more than 180 political leaders across the country, and deployed a battalion of British troops on active service for the first time. Most African newspapers were banned. The Mau Mau Central Committee and the radicals were taken by surprise, and 'the secret organisation within KAU was decapitated'.[89] Amongst the detainees were six KAU Executive Committee members, arrested as organisers of the violence. The six – Kenyatta, Kaggia, Kubai and Kungu Karumba (all Kikuyu), KAU Secretary 'Ramogi' Achieng-Oneko (Luo) and Ngei (Kamba) – were soon to become a national symbol of resistance to colonial rule.

The British thought that the emergency would be short-lived, but they were wrong. After the initial chaos, during which the rebels engaged in brutal violence against Kikuyu unwilling to support them, the 'police action' became a guerrilla and civil

war. The mass arrests, troop deployments, punitive sweeps of Central Province and eviction of Kikuyu squatters from white farms resulted in open conflict in Central Province and the Rift Valley as thousands joined the rebel camps in the forests.

The war was fought mainly in the northern Kikuyu districts of Nyeri and Fort Hall and the mountains, particularly the dense bush of the Aberdares.[90] However, the Mau Mau maintained close supply and communication links with Kikuyu in the reserve and Nairobi. Up to 30,000 joined the struggle in various capacities. Some were landless or had been driven away from the white highlands; others were educated workers in Nairobi. Their reasons for involvement in the war varied and there was no single vision of the future for which they were fighting. Many of the most prominent Mau Mau leaders, including Kimathi, Mathenge and 'General China' Waruhiu Itote came from Nyeri, the most northern of the Kikuyu districts, which had experienced little land loss. The acephalous nature of the resistance caused confusion in the government and the enraged settlers. The rebels had few guns, bullets or reliable food sources and little national organisation, with their mostly illiterate leadership relying on personal or clan alliances for support.[91] 'Jock Scott' had seized most of their political leadership before they developed national communication and control structures. Although otherwise isolated rebel groups did cooperate in some raids, efforts to form a unified military command failed. The Mau Mau also failed to destroy key transport and communication services such as the railway.[92]

The rebels' main targets were those they could not trust within their own communities: those Kikuyu, Embu and Meru who worked for and with the government, who refused to take the oath, or who were on the other 'side' of fault lines that had emerged over the previous decade. In response, the government encouraged, then armed and financed a loyalist self-defence force, the Kikuyu 'Home Guard', recruited from amongst those who had the most to lose from a Mau Mau victory (or gain from its defeat), whose Christianity set them against Mau Mau rituals, or who opposed the corrosive effect of violence on Kikuyu social order. The initially inchoate, often personalised violence coalesced into a civil war, as individuals were forced to choose a side.[93] The conflict created and reinforced a division within the Kikuyu community that endured for decades, and propelled loyalists into positions of power after independence.

The government did not try to compromise, and despite doubts in Whitehall, they accepted the settler view that Mau Mau was a disease, and that honour and security could only be secured by its complete defeat. Following early Mau Mau successes, military professionals took over control of operations in mid-1953 and the experience gained in defeating insurgencies elsewhere in the empire was put to use.[94] In all, 55,000 British troops served in Kenya, along with RAF bombers and KAR units from other parts of East Africa. The British also made use of press censorship and relentless propaganda to convince both foreigners and Africans of the justness of their cause. Officially, however, there was no war, only a civil disturbance involving individual criminal acts, and the normal rules for prosecutions held.

The brutal violence of early attacks convinced the Europeans that they were dealing with people who were mentally ill, their minds warped by the rituals of

oathing. Every Kikuyu became a potential enemy, and Mau Mau fighters were systematically dehumanised as 'vermin' or 'animals', for whose condition death was the only cure. In the view of most Europeans, the revolt was not a nationalist movement but an 'African terrorist movement rooted in black magic', perverted and primordial, its origins unrelated to economic or political repression.[95] The beleaguered position of rebel groups after 1954 led to more extreme oaths involving sexual acts and cannibalism. These in turn provided ammunition for British propaganda and discouraged sympathisers.[96] If Mau Mau did have real roots, most white settlers believed they lay in the Kikuyu's inability to adapt to the demands of modernisation. The debate over why the rebellion occurred, and the roles of ethnicity, class and social differentiation in its origins, has continued for decades.[97]

The different experiences of different ethnic groups, robust government action and the violence and ethno-centricity of the revolt meant it did not become a generalised war of liberation, but remained centred on the Kikuyu community. They did not fight entirely alone. There were Mau Mau supporters from other communities in Nairobi, some Maasai and Ndorobo fighters, and the movement gained support amongst the Kamba in 1954, but most Kenyans watched passively or took advantage of the opportunities the conflict offered. Extensive use was made of Kamba and Kalenjin as soldiers, of Samburu as trackers, and of Luo, Nandi and Kipsigis as prison warders. The government watched the Kamba (Bantu neighbours of the Kikuyu, with a strong presence in the military) particularly carefully and invested heavily in ensuring the community remained loyal.

In January 1954, the military wounded and captured guerrilla leader Itote, head of the Mount Kenya forces. Itote led an attempt at a negotiated ceasefire in March–April, which proved abortive, but could have changed the face of Kenya if successful. He ended up in the same cells as Kenyatta in Turkana. By early 1954, the rebels had been driven out of most white farms, and the tide was turning in the government's favour. In April 1954, the War Council executed Operation Anvil, in which troops, police and the Home Guard seized and screened the entire African population of Nairobi.[98] Twenty-four thousand Kikuyu, Embu and Meru without proper papers or who were deemed potential Mau Mau supporters were detained without trial in special camps, set up to hold suspects who had not been convicted in court. It was a decisive blow. Soon after, the government began to cut the rebels' supply lines by enforced villagisation of the entire Kikuyu population. In 1955, on the offensive inside the forests, the government made use of pseudo-gangs, teams of ex-Mau Mau on death row who had been 'turned' by the Special Branch intelligence unit to hunt down their old comrades.

The war aroused concern in the emerging developing world and within the communist countries, which portrayed the revolt as a nationalist struggle. The United States (US) was ambivalent, sympathetic to anti-colonial revolts but fearful of both communism and barbarism. There was growing opposition to the state's repressive behaviour in the British Labour Party, resulting in angry House of Commons debates in 1955 over alleged atrocities, though most Britons believed the government line. Unlike many other guerrilla wars, Mau Mau received little or no external support.

Although they had agents abroad (including Mbiyu Koinange) and some funds may have made their way from India, they had no foreign offices or propaganda machine. Remote from supply lines, anti-European and with unclear aims, the movement found no foreign military ally. Forced to manufacture homemade guns in the forests, starving and hunted by counter-terrorist bands, the rebels could do little but survive. By late 1955, the war was over. It officially ended with the capture and execution of Kimathi, the most senior Mau Mau leader in October 1956, but bands of rebels continued to live in the forests, occasionally attacking others, until after independence.[99]

The war led to the death of at least 14,000 Africans, 29 Asians and 95 Europeans. Most were Mau Mau supporters. Although official figures in the Corfield Report of 1960 recorded 11,503 Mau Mau dead, the numbers were underestimated to disguise the ferocity of the state response.[100] A thousand were judicially hanged and many more were killed by troops in the forests, without any records.[101] There were extrajudicial executions by police and Home Guard units, and settler fury at the crimes of their enemies and the slowness of the law's response led to a collapse of legal standards. The beating and torture of Kikuyu suspects was commonplace, and the security forces murdered hundreds.[102] Particularly notorious were the white settler Kenya Regiment and Police Reserve, the police General Service Unit (GSU) and the Home Guard. The Home Guard in Central Province grew to 25,000 men by 1954, a formidable counter-insurgency force under the control of local chiefs, the provincial administration and local settlers, which used its power both to repress Mau Mau and to benefit itself.[103] Although it was never official policy, senior officials were aware of the police and Home Guard's excesses, but concealed their violence and acquisitiveness in order to maintain morale.

The repression of Mau Mau was brutally effective, but the treatment of suspects and detainees was a stain on the British presence in Kenya. Between 150,000 and 320,000 Africans were detained for varying lengths of time in more than 50 detention and work camps.[104] A quarter of the adult male Kikuyu population probably passed through the system at some point between 1952 and 1958.[105] Treatment in the camps, staffed by little-trained non-Kikuyu, loyalist Kikuyu and European settlers, was often brutal. Information on what was happening there was carefully controlled, and the Colonial Office and the governor systematically denied reports of mistreatment.[106] The British relied on the Home Guard to run a 'rehabilitation pipeline' through which detainees passed until their release back into society as 'reformed'. The detainees were forced to undergo what was called 're-education', combining psychological warfare, violence, forced confessions, manual labour and inculcation in the virtues of Christianity.[107] Most of the camps – apart from those maintained for 5,000 or so 'hard core' detainees who refused to confess their sins and who were never expected to be freed – were closed down by 1958.

Views of the Mau Mau revolt have varied; while some have condemned its atavistic savagery, others hailed it as a war of liberation. Some have viewed it as a fundamentally Kikuyu affair, others as a prototypical nationalist movement. Similarly divergent have been the arguments as to its causes (though clearly land lay at the

heart) and its consequences. Some argued that Mau Mau was the cause of Kenya's independence, others that it delayed it. The British were technically victorious since the revolt was completely defeated, but the international attention it inspired, and the need to summon so many British troops, showed that the settler monopoly of power was unsustainable in the long term. The Corfield Report estimated it had cost GB£55 million to contain the Emergency, making the economic case for change unanswerable.[108] The state's response also damaged the moral legitimacy of Kenya's government in the eyes of Western liberals. Though Mau Mau did not lead directly to independence, it forced a reassessment of policy that set Kenya on that course and eliminated any remaining chance that Kenya might go the way of Rhodesia and South Africa to become an independent, white-ruled state.

While the British repressed the insurgency, Kenyatta and the other five senior Mau Mau suspects (the 'Kapenguria six') had been jailed in April 1953 after a show trial held at Kapenguria in Pokot, far from the nearest Kikuyu settlement (to avoid the intimidation of witnesses). Despite an internationally publicised trial, a strong defence case and expert legal assistance, the court found Kenyatta and the others guilty of oathing and leadership of an illegal organisation. Even though there had been years of surveillance, there was almost no evidence that Kenyatta had been the leader of Mau Mau, but colonial officials genuinely believed he was dangerous. The government therefore bribed witnesses to provide false evidence, and the ex-settler British judge was paid GB£20,000 (10 years' salary) to facilitate a conviction.[109] The government believed they needed such tactics to demonstrate their resolve and to counter the fear that Mau Mau created. Kenyatta, Kaggia, Kubai and the others were sentenced to seven years' hard labour, with indefinite detention thereafter.[110]

The Economic Impact of the War and the Swynnerton Plan

The war not only weakened settler rule, it also led to a restructuring of Kikuyu society, its fracture into hostile interests and the creation of a popular ideal of Kikuyu ethno-nationalism. The state's aggressive response wholly changed the shape of Central Province. The region was closed to visitors, and counter-terrorism techniques applied based on those developed in Malaya. These including the creation of stockaded villages from June 1954, within which the population could be better defended and controlled. By October 1955, the government had forced more than a million Kikuyu and Embu into 854 new villages, built by forced labour.[111] The land of at least 2,000 guerrillas and detainees was confiscated and their houses and shops demolished, and those who admitted taking an oath were fined.[112] The government closed all the Kikuyu independent schools or transferred them to the control of Christian missions. In the white highlands, most Kikuyu squatters were driven out or detained, and were replaced with seasonal labour from the Luhya, Luo, Kipsigis and Kamba. Funds flowed into Central Province, to offer inducements for loyalty. Coffee-growing licences and educational bursaries were available only to Home Guards, and medical supplies, sugar and other services were only offered to villages declared free of Mau Mau. Jobs in the administration and Tribal Police were for loyalists only.

The need to consolidate military success through 'hearts and minds' also inspired radical policy changes. Winston Churchill's Conservative government, more willing to use force, was also more favourable to individual land tenure than its Labour predecessor had been. The result was a land consolidation and agricultural improvement programme begun in 1954, known as the Swynnerton Plan. This would convert communal land ownership to individual land title, beginning in Central Province, where individual land tenure already informally existed, and where villagisation and unlimited state power had created an ideal opportunity.[113] This programme had explicitly political as well as agricultural objectives. The process of adjudicating 750,000 land fragments, consolidating multiple small plots into farms, demarcating the farms and registering individual freehold land titles involved a fundamental change to land law and to land tenure rights for Africans. The process was slow and marked by malpractice, especially in Fort Hall, where loyalists used their positions of authority to extend their holdings, but during 1956–60 it restructured Kikuyu society, creating a community of landholders who had a long-term interest in the development of their land, and who could use it as collateral for loans. The goal was a rapid increase in agricultural productivity that would divert attention from the highlands and provide a safe outlet for Kikuyu labour. This innovative but controversial programme gave Kikuyu loyalists a head start in the 'dash for growth' of the 1960s. It also implied that many would become landless labourers on the cash-crop farms of others. Land consolidation proceeded rapidly in Nandi as well, the most agriculturally advanced Kalenjin district.

The Swynnerton Plan also committed the state to support 'progressive' African farmers. Alongside land consolidation and registration, the state would provide agricultural assistance, marketing and inputs, and encourage African cash-cropping of coffee, pyrethrum, maize and tea. Government expenditure on agricultural administration and extension nearly tripled from 1952 to 1960. From the early 1950s, Arabica coffee production jumped, despite resistance from settlers still concerned about price undercutting and quality. The value of the cash-crops produced by African smallholders doubled between 1954 and 1963. While Nyanza and Central Provinces had been roughly equal in African cash-crop production until 1957, from that time on, Central Province took a growing lead.[114]

Perhaps strangely, despite the troubles, the 1950s saw heavy British investment and rapid industrial growth within a centrally planned framework. Many Kenyan household names date from that time, including Unilever's East African Industries, East African Tobacco, East African Breweries, Unga, Coca-Cola, Sadolin Paints, Schweppes, Bamburi and East African Portland Cement, Kabazi Canners and Metal Box.[115] Most were import substitution investments (which received tariff protection or duty refunds on imported materials) to produce consumer goods or to process agricultural products for export to the UK. Government policy was to make East Africa self-sufficient as far as possible. By the mid-1950s, manufacturing industry produced nearly 10 per cent of Kenya's gross domestic product (GDP), making it by far the most industrialised country in the region, though it produced few capital goods. There was a tendency for industries in East Africa to be dominated by one

or two suppliers, competition limited by the small size of the market. The influx of British capital also placed labour relations on a more normal footing.

Between 1945 and 1963, the African business community also grew, diversifying into commodity production, shops and trading. This was now encouraged by the state, which provided training and modest loans to African businesses, and by metropolitan capital, keen to build markets for their consumer goods.[116] However, such changes were still small-scale. More than two-thirds of the share capital of the businesses registered between 1945 and 1963 was European, less than a quarter Asian, and less than 1 per cent African.[117] Although there were a few well-known African businesses, most remained small or of extremely uncertain profitability. Kenya's various Asian communities still dominated local trade, acting as middlemen in the 'pecking order' between black and white and between the big European-owned industries and the farmer. They had not invested heavily in manufacturing industry until the 1950s, but there was now rapid investment from this community also. By independence, family-owned Asian manufacturers dominated textiles and clothing, furniture making, soap, metalworking and engineering sectors.[118]

Religion, Education and Social Change in the 1940s and 1950s

Meanwhile social change continued, with more women drawn into the money economy, and practices such as female circumcision and arranged marriages began to decline. Villagisation particularly accelerated change amongst the Kikuyu.

Most Africans were now Christian, and church attendance was high, although witchcraft and traditional religions remained widely practised, often in parallel. The churches provided health and education services where the government did not offer them directly. Politically, the churches took an uncertain course during the 1950s. They supported multiracialism and interracial cooperation, but also opposed Mau Mau, and Kikuyu Christians played key roles in the detention camps and the rehabilitation programme.[119] The main denominations were close to the settler establishment, although the umbrella National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) was more liberal.[120] The vast majority of Christian ministers were European, but in the late 1950s several young African ministers were appointed who – like the independence elites in other areas – were to dominate their respective churches after independence.[121]

Initially, Western mission education had been unpopular, amongst pastoralists, communities less integrated into the colonial economy and those who wished to avoid contact with the European invaders. However, attitudes changed as the financial benefits became obvious. Government and mission elementary, primary and secondary education spread, with 2,600 secondary students in 1956.[122] Four secondary schools for Africans in 1950 had become 82 by 1963. Chiefly families in every community were the first and most active in educating their sons. Girls were not seen as suitable educational material, as children and 'homemaking' were still their primary roles, and jobs were virtually non-existent. Education remained racially and religiously segregated, since most private schools were built and managed by

Christian, Islamic or Hindu groups. There was no post-secondary education in the colony, but from 1950 onwards Makerere College in Uganda (East Africa's centre of higher learning) began to offer a few degree places to Kenyans. In 1956, the Royal Technical College in Nairobi (which became a college of the University of London in 1961) began to meet more of the demand. For the richest, cleverest and luckiest Kenyans, however, a foreign university education was the real goal. By 1955, there were 902 Kenyans studying abroad, including 132 Africans.[123]

Africans also benefited from a dramatic improvement in access to medical services. Until the 1920s there were virtually no 'Western' medical services for anyone except Westerners, and the country had suffered from new diseases (including plague, sleeping sickness, smallpox and influenza). From the late 1920s on, rudimentary medical services reached Africans for the first time.[124] Conditions were still poor, but infant mortality rates fell dramatically. The result of this and of greater food production and economic opportunity was a rapid rise in population. Between 1948 (the first proper census) and 1962, the population grew by 3.4 per cent a year. At the arrival of the British, there were less than four million inhabitants within Kenya's borders. By 1963, there were nearly 9 million. This was an extraordinarily rapid increase, and was to have a profound impact on the independent state.

The Fight for Majority Rule, 1953–60

Until the late 1950s, political institutions had evolved as tools for the white settler community to influence colonial policy. They had been adapted to give a voice to the various Asian communities, but the African majority still had no direct representation, and in 1953 all African political organisations had been banned. From 1954, however, despite settler hostility, the British began trying to encourage 'responsible' and moderate African leaders. Their goal was to find a long-term solution to the crisis, through a three-pronged approach: military victory, agricultural reform and the encouragement of 'legitimate' African leadership and only then, substantive political change. By late 1956, there were eight nominated Africans in the Legislative Council, though few Africans saw them as their legitimate representatives.

Trade Unions and Mass Action, 1953–6

With political parties banned and a guerrilla war under way, trade unionism was one of the few legitimate avenues of mass protest. However, most of the existing union leadership was in detention. The resulting vacuum was the catalyst for the emergence of a new non-Kikuyu union movement, less militant but equally committed to change. They were determined to improve pay and conditions for African workers, but were equally determined to use the trade unions – which had hard-fought Western credentials as a legitimate expression of protest and economic power – to push for political change under the protection of Western liberalism.

Tom Mboya, a young Luo-Abasuba health inspector from South Nyanza, was at the centre of this process. In 1951–2, this gregarious student organiser had created,

from scattered staff associations, a new trade union – the Kenya Local Government Workers Union (KLGWU), and in 1953, he became its full-time General Secretary.[125] The KLGWU then affiliated with the Kenya Federation of Registered Trades Unions (KFRTU), formed in 1950. In a period of great difficulty, the British tried to foster what they termed 'responsible' non-political trade union activity. Mboya was always a politician, however. Incensed by the 'Jock Scott' arrests, he had joined KAU in October 1952, and had risen rapidly to become National Treasurer of the party, as arrests decimated the movement.[126] In October 1953, aged only 23, this outstanding organiser and speaker became the general secretary of the KFRTU, a position he retained until he joined Kenyatta's Cabinet nine years later.

Over the next two years, Mboya won a series of victories for trade unionism. As one of the few remaining voices for Africans, he propelled himself into the national spotlight, resolving a series of industrial protests in a way that promoted both union recognition and wage increases. Although he took pride in being a Luo, Mboya spoke Gikuyu and Kikamba, denounced tribalism and appealed to Kenyans of every ethnic group.[127] His colleagues and allies in the union movement included several figures who were later to achieve national prominence, including Clement Lubembe, Arthur Ochwada and Martin Shikuku amongst the Luhya, and in the Luo, Denis Akumu of the Dock Workers Union and Ochola Mak'Anyengo of the Petroleum Oil Workers Union. As a result of this activism, the need of international capital for a stable workforce and the government's desire to stabilise the country during and after Mau Mau, African real wages doubled between 1955 and 1964.[128] Increasingly, Mboya also led the KFRTU into politics, although national political organisations remained illegal. In 1955, with his dominance over the movement complete, the KFRTU was renamed the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL).

The Americans, looking for allies in a post-colonial world, identified Mboya as someone to watch, and he built close ties with influential African Americans and the American labour unions. The American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) was a major contributor to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), of which the KFL was a member, and which assisted the penniless Kenyan unions and Mboya both financially and morally. Mboya also built links with the British trade union movement, which supported African labour leaders to speak and study overseas. These links, which Mboya cherished, ensured that Africans retained a voice during the dark days of the Emergency, and that Western audiences heard a different side of the story from the savagery of Mau Mau. Mboya ensured that the labour movement retained enough support overseas to ward off an outright ban, despite settler hostility.

While the British did not find Mboya's ability comfortable, they recognised his importance. He was given a scholarship to Ruskin College in Oxford, which he took up in 1955–6.[129] By 1956, his vision for socialist, but not revolutionary, change in Kenya and the removal of European privilege was firmly established. He continued to run the union movement throughout the 1950s, though with increasing difficulty, and it remained his primary constituency. His close links with the AFL-CIO and his use of their cash in his conflicts with labour opponents gave him power, but also left

him vulnerable to accusations of being a tool of the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which was believed to be financing the moderate labour unions. However, much as Kenya's government was to do after independence, Mboya treated this relationship pragmatically; willing to say whatever was needed to persuade those with funds to provide them.[130] With money in short supply, access to resources for organisation, transport and publicity was key to political success.

New African Political Parties and the 1957 Elections

Following the British strategy of reform to win 'hearts and minds', Colonial Secretary Oliver Lyttleton forced through a new multiracial constitution in 1954, to take effect once the Emergency was over. All Kenya's races and religions would be represented, but with separate elections, privileges and roles. As well as restructuring the government into a formal ministerial structure, it introduced a (restricted) African franchise for the first time. In 1956, the details were published of this scheme to elect eight African members directly.[131] Although white members would still constitute an overall majority, many Europeans robustly opposed these reforms, and a struggle began within the white community, between 'moderates', led by Blundell, and a larger number of 'die-hard' opponents that was to last until 1963. Neither one thing nor the other, the Lyttleton Constitution was equally opposed by Africans as racially separatist and failing to reflect their overwhelming numerical dominance. A couple of nominated African Legislative Council members accepted positions in the government, but most African opinion was hostile.

By 1955–6, reform was under way in many areas of Kenya's society and economy, though the government and the settler-dominated Legislative Council seldom conceded it graciously. While some settlers still called for partition, a 1955 British Royal Commission declared the goal of eliminating all racial barriers to the free movement of land, labour and capital and called for an end to the 'white highlands' for the first time. There was a gradual diminution of the informal colour bar: moves to integrate the military and judiciary and the first professional and business appointments for Africans returning from European universities. Colonial policy was pushing Kenya towards a multiracial future whereby the 'races' would formally share power, maintaining the disproportionate influence of the smaller European and Asian immigrants.

With Mau Mau defeated and the first African elections in the pipeline, in June 1955 the government permitted the re-establishment of African district-based political parties, although national organisations remained banned. The colonial power wished to ensure that politics functioned on a sub-national and ethnic basis, while encouraging the development of new, moderate, local leaders. Dozens of ethnic and regional African political associations emerged (outside Central Province, where all political activity was still banned). The decision to direct African political activity through regional structures was to reverberate throughout independent Kenya, the foundation of the alignment of political orientation and ethnicity. Multi-ethnic Nairobi was the main place where a cross-ethnic organisation could exist. There, a

Luo lawyer named 'Clement' Argwings-Kodhek, the first Kenyan African to qualify as a barrister, founded the Nairobi African District Congress in 1956 (it had to be renamed from 'Kenya' to 'Nairobi' on colonial orders). It was challenged in 1957–8 by the Nairobi People's Convention Party (NPCP), the political wing of Mboya's labour movement.

Political activity remained regulated, however. Under the 1950 Public Order Ordinance and the 1952 Societies Ordinance, the state decided which entities it would register as political parties, and the registrar of societies could ban any organisation if in his opinion it constituted a risk to 'peace, welfare or good order'. Membership of unregistered organisations was an offence and unlicensed meetings of ten or more persons were illegal.

The first elections for African members of the Legislative Council took place in March 1957, less than seven years before independence.[132] There were 37 candidates for eight seats, elected by Africans on a complex and limited franchise, which gave multiple votes for wealth, age and military and government service. Amongst the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru, only those who could demonstrate their loyalty could vote, and constituency boundaries were designed to minimise the influence of Mau Mau.[133] There were no national parties and the key campaign platforms for candidates were their personal achievements, the encouragement of education as a route to modernity, access to land and racial equality. Most candidates supported a gradualist approach, with few calling for independence from Britain.

Two key figures entered electoral politics for the first time. Elected for the Central Nyanza seat was a 46-year-old Luo, Oginga Odinga. Already known for his anti-colonial zeal and anti-authoritarian attitudes, he was an Alliance and Makerere-educated teacher. He had come to prominence through his Luo Thrift and Trading Corporation business, the first significant African-owned commercial enterprise in Luoland.[134] Odinga also played a key role in the Luo Union, the Luo social welfare and cultural organisation, of which he had become leader in 1953. He began to be referred to as Jaramogi (following the ideals of Ramogi, the fabled leader of the Luo people). In Nairobi, the new councillor was Mboya, who defeated rival Argwings-Kodhek with the support of the KFL to become the sole African representative of the capital in the run-up to independence.[135]

No one was elected from the Kikuyu, one-quarter of Kenya's population. The veteran Kikuyu Mathu lost in Central Province to Meru teacher Bernard Mate, as the loyalty conditions were applied more strictly to the Kikuyu than the more accommodating Meru, leaving 20 per cent of the province's population with half its votes.[136] The Coast was now represented by Mijikenda headmaster Ronald Ngala, the Luhya by Bukusu intellectual Masinde Muliro, and the southern Luo, Gusii and Kipsigis by a Luo, Lawrence Oguda. Ukambani elected the little-known nominated member James Muimi. The only other survivor amongst the nominated African members was Daniel Toroitich arap Moi. A primary school teacher from Baringo, Moi won the Rift Valley seat on the votes of his Kalenjin community. The cast of Kenya's independence drama was assembling, though key figures – including Kenyatta – remained in jail.

The eight victorious Africans had little truck with multiracialism, agreeing before the polls that they would refuse office under the Lyttleton Constitution and would use their new platform to campaign for further reform. Although they had no common political party, they formed an African Elected Members Organisation (AEMO), with Mboya as secretary and Odinga as chairman, and used their elected status to challenge European dominance openly and as equals for the first time. Their defiance in refusing to join the government during 1957–8 and their eloquent speeches exposed the hollow nature of multiracialism.[137] The Kenya government under Baring now viewed Mboya with fear and dislike, referring to him as 'the Kenyan Nkrumah', and seeing the evil hand of the British Labour Party in his actions, reflecting the divide that existed between conservative settlerdom and more socialist Britain.[138] However, the AEMO's determination, the need to avoid another revolt, and pressure from home forced the government to reconsider. Following consultations, the Lyttleton Constitution was abandoned and Alan Lennox-Boyd, British colonial secretary since 1954, proposed a second round of constitutional changes.

The Lennox-Boyd Constitution and the AEMO, 1958–60

The resulting 'Lennox-Boyd Constitution' of April 1958 expanded the number of African elected representatives to 14, giving them numerical equality with European elected members. Multiracialism continued, however, with separate electoral rolls and racial representation. The new constitution also added 12 'Specially Elected' members to be chosen by the Legislative Council directly: four from each of the 'three races'. Both Britain and the white Kenyans still rejected absolutely a single common voting roll. Mboya, Odinga and the others, in contrast, continued to oppose piecemeal reform. They trod a narrow line between incitement of the African crowd (which might lead to their arrest and the loss of credibility with their international supporters) and acquiescence to European pressure (which would destroy their credibility with their constituents).

They took every opportunity to increase their numbers. Elections were held for the six new African seats in March 1958, which brought into national politics other figures of the independence era. These included loyalist and chief's son Jeremiah Nyagah in Nyeri-Embu, Justus ole Tipis for the Maasai, Kipsigis Council clerk Taita arap Towett and Julius Kiano for south Central Province, the first Kikuyu elected to the Assembly, a young academic and ally of Mboya. All backed the AEMO's rejection of the constitution. For the first time, their campaigns made widespread use of the slogan of *Uhuru* (independence) for Kenya.

Ghana was already independent, and in 1958, Tanganyika too started on the road to independence, but Kenya remained trapped in no-man's land by its history of violence and by the white settler establishment. Rather than leaving, Europeans were still arriving, taking the white population up from 42,000 in 1953 to 54,000 by 1956.[139] Racial segregation and European dominance remained entrenched. Both the settlers and the British expected that Kenya would remain a 'white man's country' for years.

In January 1959, the East African governors were expecting Kenya's independence to take place sometime after 1975.[140]

By late 1958, the AEMO was boycotting the Legislative Council to strengthen pressure for reform. The Kenyan government was frustrated by the ability of their opponents (particularly Mboya) to leverage British and American support to their cause. The AEMO and its Asian and European allies even travelled to London to put their case directly to the colonial secretary. Buoyed by his successes abroad, Mboya's NPCP was active outside Nairobi, building a national political party 'under the covers'. As a result, the government initiated a sweep against the NPCP in March 1959, and arrested 39 of its members, searching for evidence of sedition. Times had changed, however, and although several lesser leaders were charged, Mboya was untouched and unbowed.

However, divisions inside the AEMO were becoming apparent. The African members were each extremely influential, but had no common party or obvious common interests apart from hostility to the colonial state. There was personal resentment of Mboya by other leaders, particularly the older Odinga and Muliro. His brilliance and arrogance made Mboya the effective leader of the African members, assisted by a press campaign that left him internationally famous, but little liked by colleagues.[141] There were also tensions over the stance they should take on the future of the white highlands, particularly between Kalenjin and Kikuyu, and over the return of the Kikuyu to Nairobi, the highlands and active politics.

Between 1957 and 1960, two factions emerged from the network of district parties, trade unions and other African organisations, which were to prove the foundation of Kenya's political system. The leadership of the two largest ethnic groups – the Kikuyu and Luo – took a more confrontational stance against colonial rule than the less-developed, more fragmented Kalenjin, Mijikenda, Luhya and northern pastoralists. The split in the AEMO was formalised in 1959, and was encouraged by the Colonial Office, which was looking to create a new multiracial centre party to take Kenya to self-government. The largest faction, led by Muliro, Moi, Nyagah, Towett and Ngala, worked through the multiracial Kenya National Party (KNP), which included sympathetic non-African members and was allowed to establish itself as a national party. The other faction, known as the Kenya Independence Movement, consisted only of Mboya, Odinga, Oguda and Kiano, but – more significantly – all the Kikuyu and Luo members. They took a more anti-European line, denouncing multiracialism and demanding independence faster than the KNP. They called for the opening of the highlands to African settlement, but opposed any deal to sell white settler land to Africans. This split within the new elite was driven in part by differences of strategy and personality differences (particularly between Mboya and Muliro), but was underlaid by diverging long-term regional and ethnic goals. This confluence of ethnic, organisational and personal interests amongst a dozen individuals created divisions that were to dominate the next four decades.

Meanwhile, the 'Kapenguria six' remained in prison or in detention camps – as did 1,600 hard-core ex-Mau Mau. The Emergency remained in force. Even the

admission by the state's key witness in 1958 that he had been bribed to lie at the trial was unable to free Kenyatta. There was growing disquiet in liberal circles in the UK about Kenyatta's conviction, but in Kenya the settlers remained obdurate.

In 1958, this view was challenged for the first time. Odinga, who had met Kenyatta in the early 1950s, was the first member to call in the Legislative Council for Kenyatta's return to political life.[142] The Europeans and the government were horrified by Odinga's reassertion of Kenyatta's significance and the suggestion that he might return to lead the country. Odinga's call for Kenyatta's rehabilitation was not much more popular in the AEMO: either its members came from non-Mau Mau communities or, if they were Kikuyu, Embu or Meru (like Kiano and Nyagah), they had been elected by the loyalists, the only ones able to vote. There was no natural constituency for Kenyatta until Odinga created it. Between 1958 and 1959, Odinga led a reassessment of Kenyatta amongst the fledgling political elite that transformed him into a leader-in-waiting. For the ambitious Mboya to assert the primacy of Kenyatta and the old guard was a bitter pill, but one he eventually swallowed.[143] After 1959, most African leaders and pan-African conferences supported the cause of Kenyatta's freedom. Odinga later suggested that others had warned him that the real Kenyatta was not all that he hoped for, but Odinga chose to seek his freedom and leadership nevertheless.[144] Odinga's commitment was to change the direction of Kenya's history.

The Emergence of the Independence Elite

A few hundred young African men were now in a position of great importance. Having achieved a European-style secondary education, some had managed to obtain further education abroad, and the first students were emerging with degrees from Makerere, India or South Africa, and a very few from the colonial home itself. Many were the children of chiefs, such as the Mwendwa family of Kitui and the Njonjo, Koinange and Waiyaki families of Kiambu, or came from important Christian families, but others had achieved their goal purely through ability, family sacrifice, tenacity and good luck.[145] After completing their education, they had gone into the few professions open to them, as teachers, clerks, council officials, health workers or lawyers. They were far from conservative figures – their radicalism kept aflame by the racial segregation they faced – but most focused on the need for Africans to decide their own fate, rather than on a specific ideology such as communism. This community was to merge with a few dozen ex-Mau Mau detainees, a few elders and traditional chiefs, an even smaller number of self-made businessmen and the trade union leadership to create the cadre that led Kenya to independence and beyond.

With self-government moving closer, the British began to Africanise the senior civil service for the first time. In 1960, there were no African PCs, DCs, permanent secretaries, deputy secretaries or even under-secretaries, and very few district officers. From 1960 on, however, bright, disciplined young Africans were identified and sent for training in the UK, then appointed as understudies or assistants to white officials.

By independence three years later, Africans held roughly 19 per cent of senior posts.[146] As the pace of change speeded up, so did the careers of this alternate elite. Key individuals groomed by the British to run the country included Kenneth Matiba, Simeon Nyachae, John Michuki, Charles Koinange, Jeremiah Kiereini, Geoffrey Kariithi, Robert Ouko, Paul Boit and John Matere Keriri. Again, many came from the educated loyalists of Central Province or from chiefly families elsewhere. The exposure of this young cadre to colonial administration was brief, with most holding a bewildering array of short-term posts over three to four years before being elevated to leadership roles at independence. Nonetheless, they emerged with a belief in law and order as a precondition for development and an ethos of discipline, hard work and public service.[147]

In the same period, a major expansion was taking place in the future size of the African elite, driven by the Cold War between communism and capitalism. External interest in Africa was growing, particularly in the US. With four successful lecture tours and meetings with American dignitaries including Senator John F. Kennedy and Vice-President Nixon between 1956 and 1960, Mboya built tight relations between the US and Kenyan nationalism.[148] Between 1958 and 1961, Mboya, helped by Kiano and others, organised mass airlifts of 'O'-level African students to US universities on scholarship programmes. Despite some harassment from the colonial government, they sent more than 1,000 students on programmes funded by American donations. The Kenyans were given free or subsidised tuition, and lived in local communities. The spirit of pan-Africanism contributed immensely to this intellectual enfranchisement of the future leaders of Kenya, and cemented Mboya's political credibility. These American 'airlifts' produced many of the second-generation elites of the 1970s and 1980s, including politicians, academics and journalists such as George Saitoti, Elijah Mwangale, Josephat Karanja, Zachary Onyonka, Joseph Kamotho, Wangari Maathai, Jonathan Ng'eno and Hilary Ng'weno.[149]

In response, building on the pro-African liberation stance of the Eastern Bloc countries, Odinga sought similar assistance. During 1960, he travelled extensively in the East, visiting China, the USSR, East Germany, Yugoslavia and Nasser's Egypt, much to the disquiet of the British. During these visits, he arranged for a similar, more controversial, study programme, in which between 500 and 1,000 students were sent to study in the Eastern Bloc.[150] By July 1963, there were 400 students in Russia, Poland, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia who had travelled there secretly (as the British denied Africans any direct contact with the communist states). Amongst those who went overseas on Russian scholarships – most to Moscow – were Kipng'eno arap Ng'eny, Moses arap Keino and Oburu and Raila Odinga, Jaramogi's sons.[151] Odinga also arranged scholarships to Indian universities. As a result of all these programmes, by 1963, there were 3,900 Kenyan students studying overseas, including 1,900 Africans.

The Return of the Detainees and the End of the Emergency

Kenya was gradually returning to a peacetime model. During 1956–8, 55,000 detainees were freed, to return to Central Province and the highlands.[152] Many came back to find their assets gone and their lives transformed, fertile ground for legal and illegal protest. By 1958, rural Kikuyu and Embu were organising once more, with a new secret society known as Kiama Kiu Muingi (Society or Council of the People) opposing land consolidation and representing a continued thread of support for the ideals of Mau Mau. Kikuyu oathing again became widespread. As they returned, ex-detainees became increasingly influential in local politics. Concern at the risk of insurrection lay behind many of the reforms in the Legislative Council in 1958–9. At the same time, repression in Kikuyu areas reintensified, with detentions, loyalist screening committees and curfews re-established.[153]

To assuage discontent and help build the moderate middle class they believed would provide Kenya with stability, in October 1959 the government finally lifted the ban on African land ownership in the white highlands. The 'colour bar' was replaced by a 'good husbandry' rule, which permitted only a tiny number of wealthy allies to acquire land. However, the pace of change was growing. The Conservative government of Prime Minister Harold Macmillan recognised the changes sweeping through the world and the decline of British imperial power, and pushed a hostile Kenyan settler community and administration into a rapid programme of reform. A key event in this reappraisal was the beating to death of 11 hard-core detainees by warders at Hola detention camp in Tana River in March 1959 and the subsequent cover-up. When exposed in the House of Commons, it forced a fundamental reassessment of Kenya policy, a change also driven by imminent independence in Tanganyika.

In January 1960, the governor finally lifted the State of Emergency and released most remaining detainees. Restrictions on Kikuyu movement ended, leading many to travel to the highlands seeking work. However, the squatter system was gone, providing only 4 per cent of agricultural employment in 1963.[154] Rural wages fell and social conditions were difficult, leading to labour unrest and illegal squatting. Many Kikuyu ex-squatters were returning to the highlands not only to work, but to establish their land rights in the expectation that these would be confirmed after independence by the subdivision of European farms. By this time, African elites too knew that a redistribution of the white highlands was inevitable, and were positioning themselves for the competition. While the Maasai and Kalenjin based their claims on pre-colonial usage, the Kikuyu based theirs upon their colonial tenure. Kikuyu squatters now moved north-west as far as Uasin Gishu and Trans-Nzoia, which had previously hosted few Kikuyu. The experience of Mau Mau appeared to have changed Kikuyu perceptions of the Rift Valley, creating a more expansionary view that treated much of the white highlands as theirs, by virtue of their struggle and sacrifice, despite the historical record.[155] Recognising that any subdivision based on pre-colonial occupation or spheres of influence was unlikely to give them the lion's share, senior Kikuyu began to consider 'willing buyer, willing

seller' options. Well before Kenyatta's release, Gichuru and others were clear that, after independence, there would be no free land.[156]

Lancaster House, the 1961 Elections and the KADU Government

The First Lancaster House Conference, 1960

African pressure and changing British attitudes now led to a moment of sudden, shocking change: the first Lancaster House Conference in London of January–March 1960. Macmillan, a reluctant Conservative Party and the new British Colonial Secretary Ian Macleod agreed that Britain could no longer withhold independence in Kenya simply because of the white settlers. Although the Conservative Party was the 'party of empire', Macmillan had no personal loyalty to Kenya's Europeans. Since multiracialism could not offer a long-term solution, the legitimacy of African nationalism must be accepted.[157] Liberated by his October 1959 re-election, in February 1960 Macmillan declared Britain's intent to withdraw from all its remaining colonies and recognised a 'wind of change' blowing across the continent that the colonial powers could no longer hold back. Although they feared their African colonies were not ready for independence, the British judged the dangers of delay – violence, radicalisation and a turn to communism – to be a higher risk. As part of the package of changes under way, a newcomer, Sir Patrick Renison, replaced Governor Baring.

The Lancaster House Conference saw the Legislative Council meet with Macleod to chart a new course. Ngala, Muliro, Odinga and Mboya led the African delegation. To some surprise, even amongst African members, the conference laid down the goal of Kenyan independence under majority rule for the first time.[158] It restructured the Legislative Council, establishing an overall African majority of one, with 33 open seats, 20 seats reserved for Asian, European and Arab candidates, and 12 national members elected by Parliament. Macleod also widened the African franchise significantly. Although the African councillors were not happy, they accepted the plan. European opinion was not so forgiving, and die-hards bitterly criticised Blundell on his return. Many settlers felt abandoned by the British, with no guarantees of what would happen to their land. Unless they were willing to resort to violence, however, the colony would move towards majority rule.

Although independence was almost guaranteed, the British and Kenyan governments were still concerned to halt the spread of Soviet and Chinese influence, which would weaken Western leverage as well as (in their view) threaten Kenya's prosperity. To do this, the British steered African nationalist opinion towards moderation and sought opportunities to bring more moderate Africans into positions of influence. Four elected AEMO members (Ngala, Muimi, Kiano and Towett) now joined the government. The harder-line members led by Odinga, in contrast, rejected this arrangement until Kenyatta was free.[159]

The Formation of KANU and KADU

The state also relaxed the ban on colony-wide African political parties. At Lancaster House, the African elected members had agreed to unite under the banner of a new party, but such ideals swiftly evaporated. Instead, two new parties emerged, centred on the existing groups within the African members.

On 14 May 1960, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) was founded, in its symbolic home in Kiambu. Its name, black, red and green flag and symbols were chosen as a direct successor to those of KAU. KANU's leadership was dominated by representatives from the larger, land-constrained, more rapidly differentiating Kikuyu, Luo, Embu, Meru and Kamba. It favoured rapid decolonisation, social reform, a prominent state role in the economy and open competition for land and resources, unfettered by ethnic boundaries, in which their communities would perform relatively well. Gichuru was chosen as its acting president, while Odinga was the prime mover in the party's formation, and was elected vice-president. Mboya, with some reluctance on all sides, brought in his NPCP and was elected secretary-general (by only one vote). However, there was little love lost between Mboya and the other founders, and had circumstances differed only slightly, Mboya might have struck out alone, creating a three-way (rather than two-way) split, which would have changed the shape of the independence settlement. As it was, the meeting not only founded the alliance that was to seize power; by choosing Gichuru as president, it also raised expectations that, once free, Kenyatta would become its leader.

Fears of Kikuyu and Luo domination, desire for personal status, and European encouragement had already deepened the division within the African leadership to the point of no return. Ngala and Moi were elected *in absentia* as KANU officials, but the decision to split had already been made. Immediately after the formation of KANU, negotiations began to establish an alternative party. On 25 June 1960, the leaders of four regional alliances – the Kalenjin Political Alliance of Moi and Towett; the Coast African People's Union of Ngala; John Keen and John Konchellah's Maasai United Front; and Muliro's Kenya Africa People's Party – plus Somali leaders agreed a merger to create a competing national coalition: the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU). The new party chose the 37-year-old Ngala as its leader, Muliro as deputy leader, Moi as chairman and Keen as secretary. As with KANU's leaders, each politician's district parties followed their leaders *en masse*.

Both parties were unstable, temporary structures, built in the expectation of power, centred around a few national-level 'champions' and supported by their various local ethno-regional bases. Because of the significance of ethnicity as a point of political cleavage, the personalisation of politics around a few leaders, and the low level of awareness amongst most voters, KANU always had the support of most Africans. KADU was also hampered by its lack of a clear ideological position, relying on 'protection for minorities' and by its more ambiguous commitment to the release of Kenyatta. Its key assets were its position on land, and the desire of the (more socially conservative) coastal and pastoral communities to avoid dominance by the Kikuyu and Luo – themes that continued to dominate post-independence

politics. KADU also had European backing. It appeared supportive of liberal economic policies and willing to grant more protection to the settlers than KANU. Ex-Governor Baring and Blundell were amongst those Europeans who quietly assisted KADU, seeing it as a bulwark against Kikuyu radicalism and as more likely to 'do a deal' on the settlers' land.[160]

The situation on the Coast was particularly complex because of the size and influence of the Muslim Arab-Swahili community, many of whom saw little future in an African-dominated Kenya, and who campaigned from 1957 for coastal autonomy or *Mwambao*.[161] Roughly half the coast was Christian, half Muslim; a complex mosaic that made any coordinated political position difficult. Ngala represented the Christian Mijikenda community and, increasingly, a middle ground of regional autonomy. However, his remit amongst Muslim Arab, Swahili, Shirazi and Bajuni peoples was weaker, since he supported the integration of the coastal strip into Kenya proper. These communities represented the dominant economic, political and cultural force in the region, but were divided and uncertain as to whether to back union with Zanzibar or Ngala's regionalism.

Meanwhile, Kenyatta and his compatriots remained in Turkana. He had completed his prison sentence, but remained subject to indefinite detention. The government remained determined to erase Kenyatta from Kenya's memory. They had destroyed his house and dispersed his family. Most officials remained convinced that he had masterminded Mau Mau and believed that moderate leaders such as Ngala and Mboya should be encouraged instead. In May 1960, Governor Renison, new to Kenya and under pressure from settler leaders, reasserted that Kenyatta would remain under restriction and would never be permitted to re-enter politics. To Renison, Kenyatta was a 'leader to darkness and death'.[162] Such obduracy only reaffirmed Kenyatta's legitimacy in African eyes. The pressure grew on the British (at the United Nations and elsewhere) to release him.

For Kenyatta personally, these were difficult times. Relations had deteriorated between the Kapenguria prisoners as the years passed, and the elderly Kenyatta had become isolated from the younger, more radical, detainees.[163] He had narrowly survived an attempt on his life in 1957 by a young Mau Mau prisoner, Kariuki Chotara (probably organised by his prison colleagues), during which Itote and Ngei saved his life, which cemented Kenyatta's loyalties to these two individuals thereafter.[164]

Immigrant Fears, Economic Crisis and the First Settlement Schemes

Kenya's Asians and Europeans were now facing the prospect of radical change. African calls for imminent independence roused fears amongst the security forces and the 61,000-strong white community. The violence of the Congo in 1960 after Belgium's withdrawal deepened these fears. In 1961, more than 6,000 Europeans left, and in 1962 and 1963 the annual outflow was more than 8,000 (although 3,000 immigrants also arrived each year).[165] Political uncertainty hit the economy hard. New capital investment and building virtually ceased in 1960, British money began to shift back home and unemployment increased.[166] Share and land prices fell, and

agricultural production declined with reduced investment and a severe drought in 1961. The idea of eventual independence also exposed the fragile nature of Kenya's economy, dependent on a few cash-crops and on external financing to cover even current expenditure.[167]

Politically, the white community remained divided between those who believed change was inevitable and hoped to manage it, and those who remained committed to a white dominion for East Africa. Many Asians were equally concerned about the future. Some had supported African nationalists financially and morally, but the community included many wealthy and privileged individuals and had a poor reputation for business ethics and the treatment of Africans. They too began to cut their investments. The avoidance of mass emigration, in order to preserve the technical and material basis of the colony, became a key objective for both British and African leaders. Mboya, Gichuru and others saw how dependent they were on European support to avoid collapse during the transition. The British too were extremely concerned to avoid 'another Congo', and to ensure that a future African-led government would respect the rights and interests of British citizens who chose to remain.

From February 1960, the key issue for the European settlers was land, and the need to agree a programme of land purchase and African settlement that would either buy them out entirely or permit them to continue farming safely after independence. The creation of such a programme was one of Blundell's conditions for his support for the transition to majority rule. There were approximately 3,600 European-owned agricultural holdings, of which 2,680 were 'mixed' farms, the remainder being ranches or plantations. However, progress was slow. African leaders were unwilling to agree to settler demands for financial guarantees for their land, though their own policies were not yet fully developed. The government struggled to develop proposals that could satisfy everyone, as both they and the settlers were opposed to mass land subdivision and settlement, believing it would destroy the economy and the value of the land for those Europeans who stayed on. South African-born Minister of Agriculture Bruce McKenzie's first settlement proposals in 1960–1 were small, concerned the highest-quality land, and were based on a large-farm model, which would never meet the political demand for land. However, they contained the key ingredients of the final deal. The funds to buy out the white farmers would come from British and international loans, and the loans would have to be repaid by African farmers.[168]

After months of negotiation, two further schemes were established. A total of 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) would be settled at a cost of GB£6–8 million. Britain would provide the money for land purchase, two-thirds by loan, one-third by grant. Loans to fence and improve the properties would come from the World Bank (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development), West Germany and the British-funded Commonwealth Development Corporation.[169] A new Land and Settlement Board would choose settlers (who would later have to be 'confirmed' by the presidents of the regional assemblies). Candidates had to have capital and farming experience, and the schemes were not designed to settle the landless but to Africanise the highlands, mixing African and European farmers and stabilising

the land market.[170] The designers planned two main types of scheme. The 'yeoman' scheme would create large farms for experienced farmers, to which the recipient had to contribute GB£500. The 'peasant' scheme was designed to create smaller farms, to which the settler contributed GB£100. While the yeoman farms would be interspersed with European farms, the peasant schemes were planned for the borderlands between the reserves and the highlands. In practice, by 1962 the two schemes had merged. The schemes were small scale and the land quite expensive, partly because they had to meet World Bank economic (rather than Kenyan political) criteria, and probably favoured European sellers over African buyers. The land was priced on its 1959 value, before the economic crisis had cut prices in half.

The state had also resettled several thousand families in small land settlements in non-European lands. The government used detainee forced labour during 1956–62 to build three high-density settlement schemes based on irrigation. The largest, the Mwea rice irrigation scheme, eventually supported 20,000 Kikuyu families, mostly ex-detainees. There were other less-sensitive settlement schemes, settling vacant Crown land with people from elsewhere in the country, such as the Shimba Hills and Baringo settlements, but most attention was on the well-developed white farms.

The 1961 Elections

The February 1961 elections were Kenya's first true national elections and produced the first African majority on the Legislative Council. They reflected and reinforced the growing polarisation in the country. Although both parties were committed to independence, the numbers were in KANU's favour. Nonetheless, Kenya's first African government was not formed by the winners, but by the losers. The polls began four years of confrontation between centralism and federalism and saw the entrenchment of ethnicity as the key driver of political preference. They led inexorably to the release of Kenyatta, but also deepened the divide in KANU between Mboya and Odinga, which increasingly aligned with a division over future economic policy and Cold War alliances.

The polls were the first fought on a common voters' roll, though Africans did not yet have universal suffrage.[171] The boundaries of the 33 open seats (effectively for Africans) were based on the existing districts. The effect was to over-represent the larger, lightly populated pastoral regions in the number of voters per seat, a disparity that was to continue for decades. To counterbalance this, the most densely populated districts were allocated two seats.[172] In the 20 seats reserved for non-Africans, only candidates from one 'racial' group were permitted. Europeans would represent the highlands from Uganda to Ukambani, while most of the coastal strip was reserved for Arabs and Asians. Here, there would be a racially or religiously 'pure' primary, after which everyone, including Africans, would choose from amongst the candidates who had received at least 25 per cent support in the primaries.

KANU's rallies focused on the release of Kenyatta and immediate independence, while KADU called for much the same, but in more moderate, pro-Western terms.

Blundell's New Kenya Party (NKP) quietly supported KADU. During the campaign, there was no real national contest, and neither KADU nor KANU made significant inroads into each other's core ethnic areas. In KADU-dominated areas, KANU could muster virtually no candidates, and KADU was in a similar position in Central Province and Nyanza. The power of ethnicity and regional alliances was so strong that in only 10 of the 33 open seats did both parties even field a candidate, and in only six was there a true contest.

2.4: 1961 election results

Source: Adapted from Republic of Kenya, 1961 Constituency Boundary Map

KANU was widely expected to win, but the party was divided internally. There were already policy disagreements over the importance of Western capital investment, the means to acquire land from the Europeans, and how to distribute this land thereafter. While Gichuru and Mboya were willing to compromise with the British in the interests of economic efficiency and a secure transfer of power, Odinga and others demanded rapid nationalisation, land expropriation and a commitment to socialism. Odinga and some members of the Kenyatta family also believed that Gichuru and Mboya were equivocal over Kenyatta's release, as they would have to surrender their hard-fought dominance to the ageing detainee. The conflict within KANU grew to the point where Gichuru suspended Odinga from the party, and he and Mboya demanded Odinga's expulsion just before the election.[173] The crisis was papered over and Odinga's vice-presidency of KANU reaffirmed, but Odinga's 'ginger group' of activists were increasingly influential. The battle was as much within the party as between KANU and KADU. In 'KANU zones' pro-Odinga KANU supporters stood as independents against pro-Mboya party nominees, and vice versa. Munyua Waiyaki, a young radical doctor from a well-known Kiambu family, opposed Mboya in the Nairobi open seat. Odinga backed him quite openly.

The poll itself saw mass voter illiteracy, and presiding officers ended up marking the ballots for most voters. There was a huge turnout of 885,000 voters, nearly 84 per cent of the electorate. In the African open seats, KANU won a decisive victory, with 19 seats and 67 per cent of the vote, while KADU took 11 seats with only 16 per cent of the vote. Minor parties and independents took the remaining three seats (see Figure 2.4). Patterns of ethno-regional political alignment were crystallising and would endure for decades. KADU secured the support of the Kalenjin and Maasai, the coastal Mijikenda and sections of the Abaluhya. KANU took the votes of the Luo and the Kikuyu, and most of the Taita, Gusii and Kamba. In the urban seats, Mboya routed his opponents in Nairobi, supported by what was now a mostly Kikuyu electorate. KANU won the open Mombasa seat, while KADU's Wafula Wabuge, a Luhya, won multi-ethnic Nakuru Town.

In the European seats, honours were shared between the NKP and the anti-independence Kenya Coalition. As a result, the small parties, the independents and the white, Arab and Asian councillors held the balance of power between KANU and KADU.

KADU Leads Kenya's First African Government, April 1961

Victorious in the elections, KANU expected that a deal for the release of Kenyatta would follow. However, Renison (with the support of the British Cabinet) refused to release Kenyatta until an African government had been established and 'found workable'. KANU therefore declined to form a government. The result was deadlock. Officials privately approached both Mboya and Gichuru to become prime minister, but they refused.[174] Renison did, though, move Kenyatta closer to Nairobi and allowed visits from politicians, churchmen and journalists, in an attempt to reduce the political significance of his detention.

After some manoeuvring, KADU broke the deadlock. In return for a promise to build a house for Kenyatta, his release 'in due course' and effective control of the government, on 18 April 1961 KADU joined an alliance with the NKP and the Kenya Indian Congress to establish Kenya's first African-led government. Ngala became leader of government business (the title that Nkrumah had held in Ghana). Moi, Muliro and Towett joined him as ministers, alongside white and Asian leaders. In order to provide this curious alliance with a working majority in the council, Renison nominated 11 more appointees.

Kenyatta, meanwhile, had been allowed to give his first press conference in April 1961, which was covered by the world's press. He emerged as a very different figure from the bogeyman constructed by the settlers, smart, eloquent and reasonable. He denied association with Mau Mau and committed himself to non-violence and constitutional independence. He also rejected any Russian associations, stressing there was no place for communism in Africa, denied he had ever demanded the eviction of Europeans from the highlands and stated that the land titles of productive European settlers would be secure under an independent Kenyan government.

Meanwhile, Ngala's government could not re-establish confidence. Its survival rested on the support of the governor and the settlers, and KADU found itself voting against KANU motions to release Kenyatta.[175] In parallel, Blundell, the NKP and white farmers were negotiating directly with the British for money for large-scale land purchase and African settlement. Neither KANU nor KADU's land position was yet clear. In August 1961, a series of meetings between the parties concluded with a resolution supporting the sanctity of both ethnic and private property rights and the need for fair compensation for any land acquisitions.[176]

Kenyatta's Release, August 1961

Mounting African discontent forced the British to accept the inevitability of KANU's taking office. Kenyatta's detention, however, remained an insuperable obstacle. As the government prevaricated, Kenyatta entertained a series of visitors, playing the role of leader in exile. By July 1961, Renison and the Macmillan government were convinced that his release was essential to an orderly transfer of power and that his continued detention was more risky than his release.[177]

Finally, Renison announced Kenyatta's release on 1 August 1961. Soon after, Kenyatta returned home, to a hero's welcome. The British also freed the last remaining hard-core detainees. Many thought Kenyatta would reunify KANU and KADU and create a united nationalist party once more.[178] He even considered creating a third political party. However, he was eventually persuaded to accept the leadership of KANU. On 28 October 1961, Kenyatta duly replaced Gichuru as president of KANU, a post he held for the rest of his life. He felt little loyalty to the leaders who had campaigned for his release, though, and tried to maintain a balance between the Odinga and the Mboya factions. He soon proved to be more politically conservative than either Mboya or Odinga.[179]

British opinion was becoming used to the idea that Kenya would not remain a colony for long, and negotiations began for a faster transfer of power. In November 1961, Macmillan commented, 'it is quite impracticable to contemplate ruling Kenya for an extended period'.[180] Hostility to Kenyatta was still strong, but colonial officials could see little chance of bringing forward alternative leaders in time. Although the British Cabinet remained deeply unhappy with the idea of this 'evil man' leading an independent Kenya, they recognised his presence was essential to any settlement.[181] As a result, they followed a twin-track policy. Within weeks, they were speeding Kenyatta's move to the Legislative Council, changing the rules to allow the ex-detainees to register when the voters' rolls were closed, and changing the law barring prisoners convicted of sentences of over two years from standing for the Council. In January 1962, Kenyatta duly took a seat in the Legislative Council unopposed.[182] In parallel, they tried to limit the risk that KANU and Kenyatta posed by encouraging federalism, both within Kenya and across East Africa.

The Majimbo *Debate and the Struggle for the White Highlands, 1961–3*

The campaign for federalism had already begun. In September–October 1961, advised by the NKP, KADU's Peter Okondo put forward proposals for an entirely new constitutional structure. Recognising that they were unlikely to win power at the centre, KADU proposed that independent Kenya should adopt a federal system under a *majimbo* (regional) constitution, which would create elected regional assemblies with taxation powers and responsibility for housing, local government, social services, education and the police. This would leave the National Assembly with control only over defence, foreign affairs, macro-economic policy and the national budget. This Swiss- or American-style arrangement promised to leave KADU in command of the Rift and the Coast even if KANU came to power in Nairobi.[183] This was critically important, as a Rift Valley region would probably include most of the ex-white highlands. Many white settlers supported such an arrangement, partly for their own protection, partly in order to avoid a violent confrontation over control of the unitary state.[184] Colonial officials in contrast were sceptical, as they believed regionalism made little economic sense. KANU, too, was entirely opposed to any form of regional autonomy. The same debate – between region and centre – was to take centre-stage again in the late 1990s and 2000s, with many of the same forces arrayed against each other. Notions of efficiency, individualism and the free movement of peoples warred with the concepts of communal land rights, local government as more accountable and the need to share resources equitably.

While the political sphere took most attention, serious economic, social and security problems continued in the highlands. Land was the real issue underlying the *majimbo* debate, and the white farms and unoccupied Crown lands were becoming a battleground between settlers, the landless and the new African leaders. This competition for land increasingly took on an ethnic flavour, just as politics was doing. KADU's position was that the sanctity of land titles should apply to ethnic

communities as well as to individuals.[185] Tensions mounted between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin and in 1962, Kipsigis leaders ordered all Luo workers in Kericho to leave the Rift. The first sales of white farms under the settlement programme in November 1961 led to unemployment for existing workers. There was deep concern amongst Kikuyu farm workers that regionalism might mean their expulsion from the Rift, and they were determined to seize what they believed was theirs while they could.

The result in 1961–2 was the growth of informal radical Kikuyu groups, a continuation of the activities of the Kiama Kia Muingi, sometimes known by the old Mau Mau name, the Kenya Land and Freedom Army (KLFA).[186] Again, landless Kikuyu in the Rift oathed, protested, and stockpiled arms, and there were isolated killings. Their goals were now *Uhuru* and the expropriation of land from the whites without payment. Evictions proved futile and white farmers were told in 1962 to abandon attempts to remove these squatters. With the prize of independence moving closer, the landless in the forests and villages of Nakuru and Thomson's Falls were increasingly unwilling to obey European authority. More and more KLFA supporters in the Rift were also KANU officials, much as the KCA and KAU had interrelated a decade before. Radical Kikuyu activists such as Mark Mwithaga and Kaggia (freed from detention) took up leadership roles in KANU branches in Nakuru, Naivasha and Laikipia. These branches supported mass squatting on white lands that were due for sale, threatening the government's gradualist plans.

On land, KANU remained divided. Only gradually did the majority come to accept settler proposals for a large-scale, foreign-funded buy-out. In contrast, Odinga, Kaggia, Ngei and others opposed any pre-independence deal, since they believed it would entrench European interests, and they campaigned against the sale of any European land to Africans.[187] The economic importance of the European farming sector was demonstrated by the rapid decline in land prices and productivity during 1961–2, as white farmers cut plantings and investments. By January 1962, Kenyatta was clear that a deal must be done. The British must fund a large-scale resettlement programme that would settle the landless, using long-term loans with easy repayment conditions.[188] He, Gichuru and other KANU leaders needed a deal urgently to begin resettlement and had reluctantly concluded that land would have to be bought. They were therefore unhappy with the promises by some KANU branches of 'free land' at independence. In their view, this threatened the deal with the British, the resettlement programme, their own personal authority and the economic stability of the country. Kenyatta's explicit opposition to 'free things' reflected his view of Kenyans as hard-working, self-made people. From his release onwards, Kenyatta also made clear that law and order was a priority, and that his would not be a 'gangster government'. As he warned people, 'If you cannot obey the present laws how will you be able to obey our own laws when we have them?'[189]

Concerns over the risk to the transition eventually led the government – by now a coalition – to intervene. In September 1962, police raids arrested dozens of Kikuyu and found homemade guns and ammunition. Hundreds of Kikuyu were expelled from KANU for supporting the KLFA. KADU demanded even sterner action in the

Rift Valley, but a full-scale security crackdown was politically impossible, as it would have broken the shallow consensus between KANU and the British. Instead, the state used the land settlement programme to divert the political pressure.

A New Constitution and Coalition Government, 1962–3

Meanwhile, the 'wind of change' blew through Africa. Most of British-ruled West Africa was independent and Somalia, Tanganyika and Uganda had all followed suit by 1962.

The Second Lancaster House Conference, 1962

In November 1961, the British agreed to a second constitutional conference on Kenya. They were increasingly concerned that the political impasse and weak KADU-led government would drive KANU left into the arms of Odinga, the Eastern Bloc and communism. From 14 February to 6 April 1962, the second Lancaster House Conference took place, under another new colonial secretary, Reginald Maudling. The conference saw lengthy disputes between the two main African parties, now led by Kenyatta and Ngala. Despite British doubts and KANU's hostility, the conference hammered out a deal for self-government based on KADU's regionalism. The British government favoured KADU's views, mostly because of concerns at the future of the white settlers and the economy under KANU, but also because KADU represented the ethnic groups that had remained loyal during the Emergency, and had taken office when KANU refused. It also represented many of the most warlike of Kenya's peoples, and Maasai and Kalenjin leaders including Tipis, William Murgor and Marie John Seroney threatened civil war if their demands were not met.

The new structure devolved substantial powers to six regions (excluding Nairobi), with most civil servants and the police employed by the regions and much of the state's revenue directly accruing to them. The 1962 agreement also transferred much of the 'Westminster model' of parliamentary government to the soon-to-be independent state, including the role of a prime minister and single-member 'first past the post' constituencies. It converted the Legislative Council into a bicameral National Assembly, with a Senate alongside the House of Representatives, and the Council of Ministers became the Cabinet. The 41 districts would continue to serve as the basis of representation, each with a senator and one or more MPs, with constituency boundaries drawn to reflect ethnic boundaries as far as practicable. As a result, the semi-arid districts had a representation far outweighing their population (Kakamega had more than 10 times the population of Samburu, for example).

The idea of the second chamber was KADU's, and was supported by both European and Asian communities, to protect minorities and safeguard the Regional Constitution. According to Maudling, its goal was 'partly to ensure proper representation of geographical views and interests, partly to act as a revising and reforming house, and also, possibly most important, to act as a fundamental protector of individual rights and liberties'.[190] Based on the British House of Lords, the Senate had limited

ability to initiate legislation, a limited veto and no power to choose the government. However, it required 75 per cent of senators to support any change to the Constitution and 90 per cent to change the specially entrenched provisions defining the regions, districts and 'tribal authorities', individual rights and citizenship. There was a detailed Bill of Rights, including protections against discrimination and nationalisation. The Constitution was to be overseen by an independent judiciary little different from that of the colonial era. The Constitution was said to be the longest and most complex created by the British for a newly independent country.[191] Many British civil servants were sceptical, but political necessities dominated the debate.

The conference also agreed the outline of Kenya's independence land deal. KANU and the settlers agreed there was a desperate need for the rapid expansion of the land purchase and settlement programme. While Rift Valley KADU leaders, including Moi and Tipis, defended the historical right to land of the Rift Valley peoples and the centrality of community land rights, which would give the Maasai and Kalenjin most of the white highlands, KANU and especially its Kikuyu supporters (both loyalists and ex-detainees) were implacably opposed. They argued that historical claims to land ownership were of little interest; that Kikuyu labour had helped develop most of the farms; and that only central control of land would ensure that it would be freely available to all.

The deal (which was based on a proposal from European farmers) was that regionalism would be accompanied by a dramatic extension of settlement. While most ranches and plantations would remain intact in European hands, a million acres of mixed farms (half the total) would be taken over and used to settle Africans. This would be funded by British and international loans, and executed through private land purchase. Both KADU and the settlers had favoured a more limited settlement approach. KADU also feared that the Central Land Board that was proposed to manage the transfer of white-owned lands would favour the Kikuyu, and it therefore ensured that the regions would play a role in this board.[192] Crown lands became the responsibility of the regions, and the un-demarcated ex-reserves were handed over to the new county councils to allay fears about their future. The Maasai, who attended the conference in a unique status because of the 1904 and 1911 treaties, were left with little apart from promises of the ethnic purity of their districts. Their delegation refused to sign, claiming a second British betrayal, although this had no practical effect.[193]

This compromise suited the British well, as failure to resolve the issue before independence would have left them with serious liabilities in the event of future expropriation.[194] Kenyatta and KANU reluctantly agreed. Not only was there a risk that some of their allies might defect to join KADU in government if they did not take office soon; they had successfully retained key elements of a central land distribution system. They also believed that they would be able to change the Constitution once they took power, and that power would soon come.

In April 1962, the KADU-NKP government resigned, to be replaced by a KANU-KADU coalition, which would supervise the transition to self-rule, headed by the governor. British hopes of splitting off 'moderate' KANU leaders such as Mboya from 'the extreme group – men of violence and of Communist contacts – led by

Kenyatta, Odinga and Ngei' came to nothing.[195] Kenyatta became minister of state for constitutional affairs and economic planning. He brought with him Gichuru as finance minister, Mboya as labour minister and Lawrence Sagini from Kisii, Timothy Chokwe from the Coast, Fred Mati from the Kamba and white settler McKenzie as minister of lands and settlement. As minister of state for constitutional affairs, Ngala's ministers were Moi, Towett, Muliro and Mate. Despite his importance, Odinga was excluded from the government on Maudling's insistence, partly because of his opposition to African land purchase, but mostly because he was in contact with and receiving money from communist governments.[196] Odinga had been open since 1960 that he received financial support from the Russians.[197] The British believed he represented both Russian and Chinese interests, and the consequence was a campaign against Odinga in the settler and international press, which accused him of seeking revolution. Odinga's failure to receive a ministry in the coalition was a defining moment, with Kenyatta accepting his exclusion as a price for power. In Odinga's words: 'Kenyatta succumbed. He did so without even a single fight to uphold our position.'[198]

Over the next year, the coalition government did its best to administer Kenya during a difficult transition, and to prepare for another round of elections. Each new minister now had to lead and Africanise bureaucracies that were almost entirely European and Asian in the middle and upper ranks, and contained many who were hostile to their objectives, while at the same time maintaining their party and nationalist credentials. The economy remained shaky, dependent on Asian and European capital and expertise, and its agricultural performance dependent on the settler farms. The country faced an uncertain political future, with an under-defined system of regional government, little money, few experienced African administrators or professionals; no clear political settlement and facing a loss of investor confidence.

Kenyatta's Deal with the British

Kenyatta was now the dominant figure in the emerging independence settlement, and the British saw him as a man with whom they could do business. It was now clear that Kenyatta was a relatively conservative nationalist, without strong ideological views. He had been propelled by force of personality, his demonisation by the British and the efforts of others into a position of critical importance, but was perfectly suited once there to secure his position and to work without prejudice with those willing to support him.

The colonial government's change in attitude between 1961 and 1963 was extraordinary, and preceded the conversion of the settlers to Kenyatta's cause by at least a year. The secret of much of Kenya's future lies in this change of relationship between colonial state and African political prisoner. Neither Kenyatta's biographers nor historians have given a full explanation of this volte-face. The key probably lies in Kenyatta's 'forgive and forget' attitude and his genuine respect for the British. From the moment of his release, he showed himself committed to a moderate course. It also lies in Realpolitik. Kenyatta was willing to compromise over the economy and

land in return for power and for British support for Kenya. Odinga, less happy to make such an arrangement, suggested that the British had promised Kenyatta their support in return for their remaining his chief advisers and their continued military presence.[199] Whether such a conversation ever took place is doubtful, but the evidence suggests Odinga was correct in his summary of the arrangement that was reached.

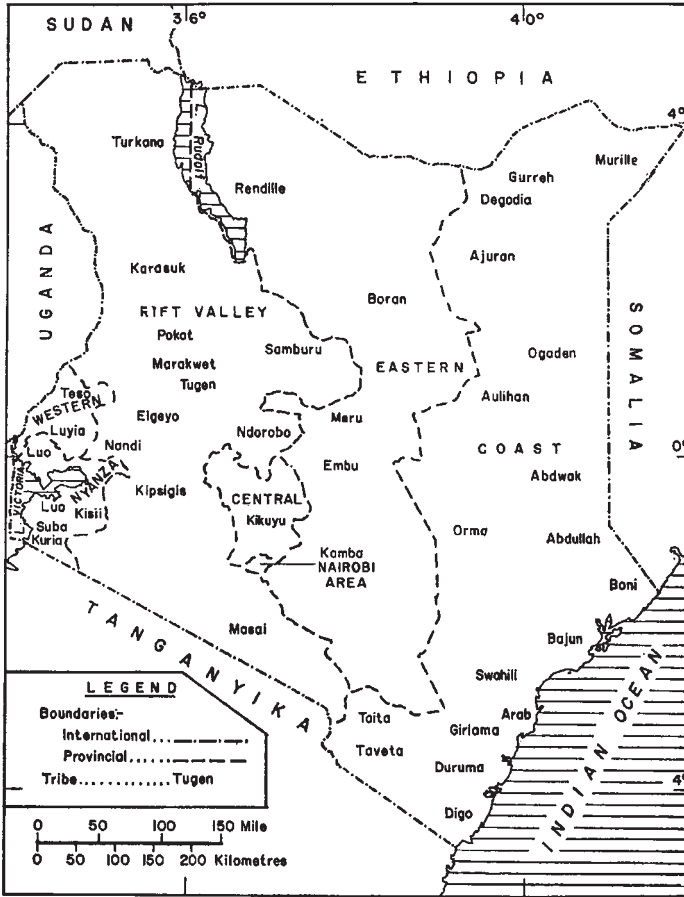
New Regional Boundaries, 1962

It was now necessary to resolve some of the thorny issues that might hinder Kenya's advance towards independence. Key among these was the determination of the regional boundaries that would accompany the introduction of *majimbo*. In July 1962, Colonial Secretary Maudling appointed a commission to redesign the old provinces to create six new regions. This was a critical moment in the evolution of the independent state.

The Regional Boundaries Commission, which took testimony from many delegations and all parties, rejected KANU's appeals to leave the existing provinces intact and gave greater weight to KADU's claims and to the importance of ethnicity in defining administrative boundaries.[200] They abolished the Southern Province, and created a new Eastern Region with the Kamba joining the Embu, Meru and the Oromo-speaking peoples of the north. They shrunk Central Province to move the Embu and Meru out, at the request of these communities, who were claimed to fear the radicalism and numbers of the Kikuyu. This left the Kikuyu alone in Central Region, but the Commission added to it European areas in Thika, Nyeri and the Aberdares (and ruled that the people of Kirinyaga should henceforth be treated as Kikuyu). However, they moved settler Nanyuki District out to join an enlarged Laikipia in the Rift Valley. Maasai claims to Laikipia were disregarded.

Western Region was carved off from Nyanza, separating the Luo and Gusii from the Abaluhya. Fragments of settler lands were transferred into Nyanza to alleviate land shortages, but they were small. Small areas of Maasailand were also transferred into Luo Nyanza to reflect their long-standing occupation. The Kamba of Machakos acquired European lands to the south and east of Nairobi. The Luhya obtained their own Western Region, extended to include some European farms in Kakamega and Bungoma, but most of Luhya-dominated Trans-Nzoia remained in the Rift Valley. The Rift Valley was extended by the addition of the Maasai, the Samburu, and the Kipsigis from Nyanza, which brought all Kalenjin-speakers together, bar the Sabaot. Most of the former white highlands remained in the Rift, leaving it dominated by KADU and the Europeans, to KANU's discomfort. The Coast remained intact. The Somali, who had declared that they did not wish to be part of Kenya at all, were designated part of Coast Region in the interim (see Figure 2.5).[201]

The boundaries created by the Commission were to prove extraordinarily long lasting and drove regional politics. The creation of a seventh North-Eastern Region in March 1963 was the sole major change in the next 45 years. The 1962 redistribution also had huge implications for land rights, as the restructuring gave de facto control to the ethnic groups who dominated a particular region over ex-settler land placed



2.5: New regional boundaries and ethnicity, 1962

Source: Report of the Regional Boundaries Commission, 1962

within it. While the newly titled Nyandarua District (the Aberdares) was given to the Kikuyu, the Commission left Nakuru and Laikipia as Kikuyu-dominated outposts in the Rift Valley, a curious decision. This was probably part of a broader exercise to provide security for the white farmers, as observers expected the Rift Valley to remain KADU-dominated. It also asserted clearly that the Kikuyu did not have pre-eminence in land claims on these areas.

The 'Million-Acre' Scheme, October 1962

With independence coming close, the British government came under intense pressure from Africans, white farmers and British politicians alike to speed up the land transfer plans. After lengthy negotiations, they agreed the details of their new larger scheme. Its objectives were explicitly political: to secure an orderly transition to independence without destroying the large farm sector and foreign aid opportunities, and to avoid a land grab or a new emergency.

The October 1962 agreement established a 'million-acre' scheme for land purchase and settlement, to take place between 1962 and 1967. This was to be financed mostly by the British and staffed mainly by British officials. The goal was now to buy and subdivide nearly 1.5 million acres (0.5 million hectares) of European-owned mixed farmland, roughly one-sixth of the total, into 'high-density' subsistence farms. Another sixth would be sold intact to wealthy Africans. There would be no 'free land' and the 35,000 or so families to be settled would have to repay the loans they received. Settlers were supposed to be landless and unemployed, but long-term workers on the farms purchased had priority, provided they were 'acceptable to the regions' (i.e. of the right ethnic group). The provincial administration selected the remaining settlers by lot.

The cost of the various programmes was now estimated at GB£25.5 million, of which the British would give or loan GB£21 million for the land, to be repaid over 30 years. West Germany, the Land and Agriculture Bank, the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) and the UK contributed development loans, but the World Bank declined, uncomfortable with the proposals. One-third of the cost ended up as a grant, while the settler had to repay the remaining two-thirds. The situation was confused by the continuation of the older schemes, which merged in practice with the high-density scheme.

The administration of this settlement process was central to the new government's survival. In the new KANU-led government of June 1963, the Agricultural Settlement Fund trustees (Minister of Finance Gichuru, Minister of Lands and Settlement Jackson Angaine and Minister of Agriculture McKenzie) would liaise with the British and control the fund into which all settlement money was paid. The purchase of land was the responsibility of a nominally autonomous Central Land Board, chaired by a Briton and with regional representation. The settlement of the landless was the role of the Ministry of Lands and Settlement, though in practice the ministry took over most of the functions of the Land Board. As well as appointing McKenzie, Kenyatta ensured that a European farmers' leader became parliamentary secretary for lands and settlement, to reassure the UK and white settlers.

Reflecting the increasing tension around land allocations, the million-acre scheme took an ethnic approach to the high-density schemes, allocating European land within their 'sphere of influence' to each of the major ethnic groups. Few if any schemes were multi-ethnic. The farms chosen for purchase and subdivision were selected less by which Europeans wished to sell, than by which ethnic group's land hunger needed assuaging first. At least 40 per cent of the land was reserved for Kikuyu settlement in the Aberdares and Nyeri in the new Central Region, and 20 per cent for the Abaluhya within Western Region.[202] There was a strong theme of ethnic partitioning; with Kikuyu squatters and workers evicted from the Lugari settlement scheme in Western to make way for Luhya, and non-Kikuyu in the Aberdares were similarly removed.[203] Reflecting their numerous, landless and angry status, the scheme was put into effect first in 1963 to settle the marginal lands of the Aberdares. This 'accelerated Kikuyu settlement scheme' aimed to compress all the land purchases for Central Region within three years.[204]

Most of the central Rift Valley around Nakuru, Kitale and Eldoret remained as large farms. The new government and its colonial masters agreed that, for these, a 'willing buyer, willing seller' arrangement was the only practicable one. Despite the ethnic orientation of the high-density schemes, this land would not be reserved for specific communities, but would be sold on the open market. The UK made extra funds available through the Land and Agriculture Bank to provide loans for Africans to buy these farms.

The land deal remained an uneasy compromise. The fact that land loans needed to be repaid remained infuriating to many Africans, who believed that it had been their land before colonial rule, and that African labour had developed the farms to their current productivity. Many Kalenjin and Maasai, meanwhile, saw the farms as stolen goods, and were unhappy about the possibility of their purchase by people from other ethnic groups. As most of the land purchase payments left the country, the result was a net drain on the economy, which had to be matched with productivity increases. Many experts doubted that these smallholdings could be more productive than the large farms they replaced. These early loans, massive by contemporary standards (roughly equivalent to GB£350 million) began a cycle of reliance on external financing for development that was to dog Kenya for decades. The four-year delay in beginning repayments, though it dulled this pain, stored up problems for the future, as some senior Kenyans did not actually expect to repay the foreign loans. Many African settlers did not intend to pay the government back, either.

The reasons for the African leadership's willingness to make this deal, which was to drive post-independence politics, remain controversial. In part, the land deal was the price Kenya had to pay for the support of the West and the peaceful and rapid departure of the British. The land transfer programme was proof that the new government was a trustworthy client to the international financial and political network to which it sought membership.[205] It remains uncertain, however, whether Kenyatta, Kiano, Mboya, Gichuru and Koinange would have sought any other course even if it had been possible. They genuinely believed this was the only stable and prosperous future for Kenya. The new government also believed that the economic interests of the country lay in a gradual transition to black land ownership. The country was in crisis. After a decade of growth, Kenya had lost over 80,000 formal sector jobs between 1960 and 1963. The European-owned farms, ranches and plantations produced 80 per cent of exports and employed nearly half the workers in the country. Kenyatta and his allies had to demonstrate a commitment to a managed land-acquisition programme to avoid a panic, mass abandonment of farms and a collapse in land prices.[206] There may also have been an inverse political effect amongst more conservative KANU leaders, as to support expropriation without compensation would have raised the standing of their more radical opponents. The agreement ensured that Kenyatta and those around him would eventually have to take on the radicals.

On the ground, the situation was still difficult. The police continued to hunt the Land and Freedom Army, but the betrayal of their hopes of free land put

further power behind the movement. There was harassment of those who took the government's terms for settlement plots, and defiance of eviction orders, forcing a heavy police presence in some areas. The security forces specifically targeted KLFA activists to exclude them from land settlement programmes.[207] In December 1962, African and European members of the government discussed the KLFA and its links with Kaggia, who – like Odinga – had been left out of the coalition. They were concerned that the KLFA was planning to put up candidates in the 1963 elections to compete against KANU's candidates, especially in Central Region.[208]

Meanwhile, new Colonial Secretary Duncan Sandys, unhappy with the lack of progress, had replaced Renison with Malcolm MacDonald as governor. MacDonald, who took up his post in January 1963, had little experience of Africa, but played a key role during the transition and in maintaining relations between Britain and Kenya after independence. He drove an immediate escalation of negotiations and preparations for a rapid transfer of power.

Labour and Employment

Another risk to the fledgling government came from the trade unions. The industrial sector in Kenya was still tiny and the number in formal employment small – 50,000 in urban-based industrial manufacturing, 150,000 in the public sector, plus plantation and other agricultural workers. Politically, however, it was a key constituency. In 1962–3, with African rule coming closer, there was a new outbreak of militancy. Mass strikes with both political and economic objectives were the result, putting the economy and Mboya as labour minister under severe pressure. The 'poacher turned gamekeeper' Mboya was adept at balancing the interests of workers against that of the wider economy, but he risked being outflanked by the radicals, who were associated with Odinga through trade unionists such as ex-detainee Kubai.[209]

One of Mboya's key achievements was the creation in 1962 of an Industrial Relations Charter. This formalised a three-way negotiation process between government, Kenya's 68 trade unions and employers, and provided a structure for wage negotiations, of which the independence government would make full use. The right to strike remained, but only as a last resort. In 1963, after joining the government, Mboya finally handed over his decade-long leadership of the KFL to a supporter, Nairobi Senator Clement Lubembe.

Although there were no proper records of the unemployed or underemployed, it was clear that the economy was expanding too slowly to accommodate the number of school leavers entering the labour market. The population had grown very rapidly in the 1950s, creating an inflationary boom in people, concealed by the dislocations of Mau Mau, which bubbled through the education system in the 1960s and the labour market in the 1970s. This demographic time bomb was a long-term risk to Kenya's stability and in the short term, tens of thousands of educated unemployed were a threat to any government. Little could be done, however, but to hope for rapid growth after independence.

Borders and Boundaries

As if the struggles over policy, land and power were not enough, Kenya also faced a potential secessionist threat. In 1962, the British Northern Frontier Commission had surveyed whether the peoples of the north wished to join Somalia or Kenya. It found that while other northerners wished to remain Kenyan, over 85 per cent of Somali wanted union with Somalia.[210] However, with independence imminent, the British decided to leave the issue in Kenyan hands. On 8 March 1963, under pressure from African politicians who were determined to take over Kenya intact, Sandys decided to support a Kenyan future for the Somali.

The result was mass protest in the Somali-populated districts of Wajir, Garissa and Mandera and in the town of Isiolo. The government of Somalia, committed to creating a 'Greater Somalia', including all ethnic Somali in Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, broke off diplomatic relations with the UK in March 1963.[211] The GSU was deployed in North-Eastern, but the situation worsened. All the Somali chiefs resigned their posts in March, and no one stood in the elections for the National Assembly or the North-Eastern Regional Assembly.

Calls for armed secession began in April, and attacks on police camps began at the same time. Somali murdered a DC in July, all firearms licences in the area were withdrawn in August, and by October 1963 there were regular attacks on police, officials and other communities. In response, the KANU government moved more troops to the Somali border and detained without trial several Somali separatist leaders. Somalia was reported to be increasing its army to 20,000 men, with Russian support, while Mogadishu accused the Kenyans of genocide. Although Kenyan and British ministers discounted the possibility of war, the stage was set for a confrontation at independence.

Two other boundary issues also created problems in this interregnum. The first was whether Luhya-dominated Trans-Nzoia and Kitale should remain in the Rift Valley, as the Regional Boundaries Commission had decided, or join the rest of the Luhya in Western Region. Muliro and the Bukusu Luhya campaigned to have Trans-Nzoia transferred, but Kalenjin KADU leaders were opposed, as there were many Kalenjin in the east of the district. On 8 March 1963, Sandys announced that Kitale would stay in the Rift, as the two parties could not agree. A revision of boundaries was agreed later in the year, but Odinga as home affairs minister vetoed the change at the last minute, following attacks by Sabaot on Bukusu around Mount Elgon. This decision was to remain a vexatious anomaly for Luhya 'nationalists' for the next 45 years. On the same day, Sandys also announced that the 10-mile coastal strip, still legally the property of the sultan of Zanzibar, would become a full part of the independent state in December. Kenya needed the coast, and particularly Mombasa, too much to risk a federal model. The Arab community was abandoned to the mercies of the new government, in return for guarantees of freedom of religion to Muslims and the entrenchment of Arab land ownership in the coastal strip, at the expense of local Mijikenda. Issued at the same time as the announcement of self-government, both decisions passed without crisis.

Party Reorganisations, Splits and Manoeuvres, 1962–3

With the lure of imminent power, KANU and KADU skirmished while they worked together in the coalition government, preparing for the showdown. Talks about the *majimbo* constitution proved divisive and unproductive, and faction fighting in the parties also intensified, particularly within KANU, as both West and East identified KANU as most likely to lead Kenya to independence. Mboya as secretary-general was the key figure in preparing KANU for the polls. He was assisted and shadowed by Joe Murumbi, KANU's national treasurer and executive officer, but no friend to Mboya. Odinga remained party vice-president to Kenyatta's president, his socialism tinged with Luo nationalism, just as Kenyatta's nationalism was Kikuyu-oriented.

There was no simple East–West divide, however. Kenyatta was increasingly concerned about Mboya's pre-eminence, and worked with the radicals to control him. Odinga was still receiving funds from Communist countries, some of which ended up in Kenyatta's hands. Odinga and Kenyatta ran a secret joint bank account, used by the radicals, including Odinga's Luo allies, Murumbi, Asian ex-detainee Pio da Gama Pinto and Kaggia. Between August and October 1962, Kenyatta also denounced those who accepted foreign money as 'insects' at a rally in Mboya's constituency, then helped Kubai in an abortive coup against Mboya in the KFL. In response, Mboya threatened to take the Luo and the labour movement out of KANU, a gamble that he won since his position was reaffirmed.[212] Nonetheless, there was little love lost between KANU leaders.

Even in 1962–3, it was clear that Kenyatta was looking to the state as his primary source of authority. From the moment that he assumed KANU's presidency, he saw the party as a political not an administrative entity. By early 1963, despite the funds that were making their way to the future leaders of Kenya, the party's credit had been exhausted and its organisation consisted of virtually nothing apart from the personal machinery of the three key leaders – Odinga, Kenyatta and Mboya. Weak, ethnically based and personalised political parties were part of Kenya's history from the first.

In November 1962, intrigue burst into the open, with the establishment of a new political party. But it was an ethnic, not a policy-based, fracture. Ex-detainee Ngei abandoned KANU to form the African People's Party (APP). The primary drivers for Ngei's actions were personal. KANU had been reluctant to accord Ngei the position to which he felt entitled after his release. He had been refused permission to attend the Lancaster House Conference, and the Kamba leadership declined to vacate a seat for him as had been done for Kenyatta. Ngei also saw the opportunity to hold the balance of power between KANU and KADU.[213] KANU lost the support of most of the Kamba community, a serious blow. However, the APP had little impact outside Ukambani, and Ngei's decision was probably a mistake. It was not the last time, however, that a trans-ethnic coalition would be split by the defection of a single leader.

Inside KADU, there were also tensions, with the Luhya's commitment to the party uncertain, given their potential land conflicts with the Kalenjin. However,