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# JUSTICE IN THE STATE: THE CASE OF NYERERE'S PHILOSOPHY OF *UJAMAA* //

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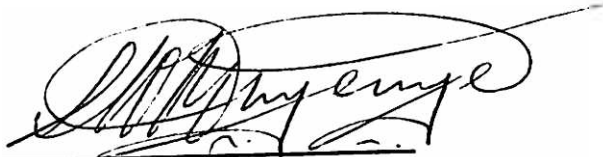
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15.11.94

# DEDICATION

TO ALL THOSE WHO ARE CONSTANTLY IN PURSUIT OF TRUTH AND  
UTOPIA

Shikuku for their great encouragement throughout my studies.

I wish to thank Mr. Seth Webuye and Evans Maturu for their good work. I should single out for special mention Ms. Susan Muthoni. Her time and valuable assistance cannot be quantified. That the work is complete at the time it did was due to her untiring efforts.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge the authors and scholars whose works have guided me in one way or the other. They are many and I cannot acknowledge them individually. Their works provided me with literature which if analysed in a context other than that in which they were originally meant, I take full responsibility.

For many others whom I cannot thank individually, God bless.

# ABSTRACT

This work puts forth ideas of a leading and arguably one of the most famous of African ideologue, Julius K. Nyerere, concerning the foundation of a State based on principles of justice.

The research begins with an examination and analysis of justice which provides a background to the understanding of the concept. The conclusion here is that justice is a scalar and yet a universal concept with an irreducible defining characteristic whose application is particular. This examination and analysis makes it possible for one to delineate particular concrete instances that would all fit in this general conceptualization of justice. This, it is concluded are the principles upon which just actions are founded.

Justice is a social concept but to actualize the best social conditions there is a need for the political to provide a rationalization, direction and authority to the social. This inevitably leads to ideas that try to put forward sets and precepts within which political life is possible, hence, the ideology of socialism, its conception of man and its general philosophy. The general conclusion here is that, man is basically a social being and if that be the case, then, any political organization is necessarily and essentially socialist. This is derived from the moral case put forth to justify this political doctrine. Socialism operates on the premise that all men are equal and are endowed with some inalienable rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. The moral justification for socialism is therefore its in-built theory of justice. It is

a universal doctrine which looks at man as a rational being who through his own efforts achieves development. Thus, socialism derives its moral worth from the fact that, it looks at man as a purely moral agent.

Although socialism is universal doctrine, local factors play a role in its development. Hence the search for socialism in Africa took mainly an existentialist dimension. The African sought to define himself in relation to the other races of the world. Given that discourses already existed pertaining to socialism in Africa (though not explicitly stated), it was not difficult for Africa to go socialist. Thus given all the choices available to Africa and Africans at independence, socialism was the only rational path. This for Nyerere was best brought out if the eventual society was based on the African theory and practice of extended family - *Ujamaa*, hence the political philosophy of *ujamaa*. This was a philosophy of human liberation (hence socialist) and was founded on the tenets of justice; that no man exploits another and that production and consumption be socialized from each according to his ability to each according to his needs. Together with democracy then, Nyerere set the stage for the construction of a model State based on principles of Justice.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM**

The history of man over the ages has been a history of the struggle for justice. Man has over time sought for a system that will enhance or increase his enjoyment of justice. Equality, freedom and liberty have thus featured prominently in man's struggle with a hostile environment.

With this in mind, it will be observed that, man has gone through pains of formulating and designing structures and institutions which can guarantee and enhance the same (justice). History is full of examples of man rebelling against one system in search of alternatives which he always hopes will offer him a better deal in terms of equality, freedom, liberty and consequently justice. One can mention the French Revolution in Europe and the movement from Agrarian to Industrial Systems as examples among others.

Africa and the African are not exception from this general rule where man is in constant search for an ideal society that offers justice to all. The nineteenth century saw Africa being acquired and partitioned as a formal colony of some Western powers. This meted so much injustice to the African continent and her peoples. What did it mean to be a colony for Africa or Africans? One, it meant that Africa had lost her sovereignty to a foreign occupying power. Two, that the power for Africa's self-governance was also lost. Three, that, with the power to self-governance lost, Africa and Africans had lost the power and ability to make independent decisions,

choices and forecast plans for development. This is the process that came to be known as colonization.

It should be noted here that, colonization came right after slavery and slave trade. In this, Africans had been reduced to a level of mere commodities that could be sold and bought in the market, bargained for depending on the economic forces of demand and supply in the same way rice is.

The immediate implication therefore is that, Africa's and the African's freedom and liberty was totally lost. If slavery and slave trade did injustice to Africa as a continent, and the African man in particular, colonialism removed Africa from any consideration and conception of justice. If any definition and conception of Justice existed, it applied to whites at one level and completely different to Africans at another.

One should note that this was not only confined to the social level, but also other levels, political (as noted above) as well as academic. In academic circles, the construction of the "primitive" and "savage" image of Africa especially within Anthropological and Historical literature was in progress<sup>1</sup>. In Art, Africa was best portrayed in most natural setting and as savage as possible.<sup>2</sup>

The period between 1930 and 1970 saw a reawakening, a new realization by Africans that had not been seen before. This period saw efforts which sought to place man (including Africans) on equal footing and thus sought to define man simply as a rational being who through his own efforts interacts with the environment to realize himself. Here Africans were to be judged using the same standards and parameters used in judging

Europeans and peoples of other races. This period of realization implied the search for justice for man as man.

Works in philosophy, Religion and Literature (Poetry) began questioning the authenticity of the alienated African and the discourses that led to this alienation.<sup>3</sup> It is at this point that literature on global verses international justice begins to emerge.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps as argued above, man rejects one system for another given the type and preference of a theory of justice manifest in one system than another. If this account is accepted as true, then man can be said to be in constant search for ways and means of enhancing and increasing his ability to be free. The movement of societies from primitive communism, through feudalism to capitalism can be attributed to man's search for suitable system that provides all men with equal freedom.<sup>5</sup> This sets a perfect scenario for the search for justice. The question which comes immediately to one's mind is, what the driving force behind this movement is. Appeal to Marx would show that, it is the economic base and the social relations of production which instigate change from one system to another. Thus, for Marx as for his predecessor Hegel, the movement will go on until man attains the realm of un-negated liberty. Here then man will experience a situation of absolute justice.

In Marxian literature, socialism is a system which approximates human freedom and consequently economic justice. With economic justice (resulting from a change in the economic base) there is a necessary consequent in the social relations of production which necessitates

movement to another system, communism, where social justice is attained.

But where does Africa lie in this? Does it mean that Africa was culturally barren? Does it mean that ideas like justice, law freedom, liberty, polity among others could not emanate from Africa?

The twentieth century saw the rise of movements such as Panafricanism, African Nationalism and Negritude among others which sought to assert the Africanness of the Black man. Africans sought to find characteristics in their own cultural scale of values which up to then were the exclusive property of the developed world. This was quite natural as it aimed at expressing symbols and impressions of the African reality. Africa sought structures and systems that would enable the creation of social order that was at the source common to all, and through dialectics, confrontations and assertion offer herself to the rest of the world.<sup>6</sup> Africans sought to claim legitimacy and their self-esteem as a part of the universal world civilization, a kind of re-invention.<sup>7</sup> Africa began a process of self-liberation, both physical and psychological. The situation of inferiority and superiority manifest in the world hitherto where Europeans (white race) was superior and Africans (black race) inferior completely worked against a coherent and universal theory of justice that could be applied on an all round basis (without discrimination).

One finds that today, western interpreters and African analysts still use categories and conceptual systems which place the west and western epistemological order at the centre and consequently there from other definitions and conceptual frameworks are derived. Given the power and

control of the epistemological Locus. the west is seen as the centre from which others derive their existence and reality.<sup>9</sup> This had a consequence of justifying all forms of subjugation of the black man under slavery, slave trade and colonialism.

The rejection and attempt at defining African reality using African standards, categories and conceptual systems and the rise of the movements mentioned above (Panafricanism, African Nationalism, Negritude, Black personality, African Traditional Religion and African Socialism) hoped to find a justification for a new world order and consequently the definition of justice that could take into account the contemporary reality.

A look at African philosophy today reveals that at the centre of it all, there is a question of how to retain the usable past in the process of reclaiming and reordering of African knowledge upon which rules of definition and conceptualization (concepts like polity, rationality, ideology, society, law, religion, god, democracy) are derived.<sup>9</sup> This literature attempts to show that universalism is possible, while retaining the valuable influence of a peoples' cultural uniqueness.

Africa therefore, at least in principle has sought ways and means through which her contribution and legitimacy could be felt in the world. In this, Africa and Africans sought to part ways with the western notion of categorization, polarization and dichotomization of reality. She sought to have dialogue with reality itself by going back to the roots, seeking a method that could ensure a universal application yet, taking into account peculiarities

of cultural differences.

It is in this frantic search that African Socialism emerged. This is a political doctrine that has been practiced within different frameworks, theories and exigencies. In Ghana under Nkrumah, emphasis was placed on industrialization and the African personality. In Guinea, Sekou Toure was an avowed Marxist-Leninist and therefore sought to apply Marxist principles to the African setting. In Kenya, in a Government paper (Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965) "African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya", Tom Mboya sought to blend both foreign private enterprise, African (indigenous) private enterprise and public investment with the State having a big role in the allocation of resources. In Mboya's paper for example as a show case of ambiguity in contemporary African thought system, there is no clear cut direction as to the use of concepts like African, socialism, social justice, equality and democracy among others.

On the other hand, *Ujamaa* in Tanganyika and later Tanzania seems to have had a direction as to its aims and objectives on what kind of society was to be built. However, all that has been described above qualified in one way or another to be subsumed under one generic term African Socialism. Perhaps one should add that Nyerere's *Ujamaa* seems to have been a wholesome consistent package for the construction of a socialist State.

But who is Nyerere and what is *Ujamaa*? Born in 1922, Nyerere is a former president of Tanganyika until November, 1985. He initiated the merger between Tanganyika mainland and the island of Zanzibar and Pemba to form the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964 and became the first

president of the new Union. Nyerere is an African Statesman and political philosopher who manifests some pragmatic tendencies in his approach to Socialism in general and African issues in particular.<sup>10</sup> His African Socialism, *Ujamaa* in a way qualifies as Socialist and African in a beautifully blended form. But what is *Ujamaa*?

*Ujamaa* when literally translated means *familyhood or a form of brotherhood*. As a political doctrine however, it means much more than this. For one, it rejects both capitalism (which seeks to build a happy society on the basis of exploitation of man by man) and doctrinaire Socialism (which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of inevitable conflict between men). Secondly, *Ujamaa* as a political doctrine seeks to create (build) a new society based on African traditional and tribal network of mutual relationships between men. Having realised a basis, Nyerere's *Ujamaa* was to move beyond the family, the village and the nation. Thus, *Ujamaa*, was a kind of constant development of communalism for all peoples of the world. The most cherished values of sharing, equality, rejection of individualism and exploitation of man by man were to be the mainstay of the doctrine.

Under *Ujamaa*, therefore, Nyerere was proposing a thesis, that the hitherto existing systems of social organization perhaps save for Socialism were devoid of justice. But Socialism in its western style made nonsense of a just social set up because it allowed the existence of social classes in the first place and that it matured in the womb of class struggle. This, he rejected. He thus proposed a blend between what was traditionally African



and the Socialist principles as practiced elsewhere and universally. This for him introduced an element of justice only possible within the social set up proposed under *Ujamaa*.

It should be observed further that *Ujamaa* seemed to provide a panacea for a world depicted vividly by novelist Ngugi wa Thiong'o in Petals of Blood as "... a world build on structures of inequality and injustice, in a word, where some can eat while others can only toil...."<sup>11</sup> Nyerere was therefore proposing an African theory of justice.

### 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The problem of justice has remained a subject of controversy in philosophy in general, and in particular, in Ethics, political philosophy as well as legal philosophy. The perennial question has been whether justice is universal or relative. Many a people will want to see justice to be a situation where they are right and their opponent in the wrong. So a person in the West would characterise the East as an unjust system while the Eastern will in the same way see the Western as being in an unjust system. Justice here then becomes "*I am right therefore just consequently you are wrong therefore unjust.*" Justice then becomes relative.

This research sets out to examine the concept of justice in the context of the political doctrine *Ujamaa*. The research will examine and make an analysis of justice, whether it is universal or relative as well as its application (i.e., its administration). The research will attempt an analysis and evaluation of socialism as a universally applicable political doctrine.

Among the issues of concern are whether local factors play a role in the development of Socialism, and if that be the case, whether *Ujamaa* as a theory of Socialism has been influenced by local African values.

The research problem therefore is whether Nyerere's model State, *Ujamaa*, is African, Socialist and based on principles of justice.

## **1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This research sets out to inquire into:

- (a) Whether justice by nature and manifestation is universal or particular (in its application),
- (b) The relationship between *Ujamaa* as a social system and the traditional African social organization of extended family unit,
- (c) The view that *Ujamaa* is a theory of Socialism, and;
- (d) The view that *Ujamaa* is based on principles of justice.

## **1.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

This research sets out to test the following hypotheses:

- (a) That justice is universal in form but its application is particular.
- (b) That *Ujamaa* is Socialist, is African and is based on principles of justice.

## **1.4 JUSTIFICATION AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

This research was motivated by the claim of Africa having been portrayed as culturally (read ideas) barren, that is, that Africa and therefore African's have contributed nothing to the world civilization save as objects

of study. The question that arises is whether Africa was just a consumer of culture (ideas) or whether she was capable of producing as well. For example, that to date all the literature that exist as pertaining to Socialism have a European import, none African. Could Africa turn Socialist without going through the Capitalist stage?

It should be noted right from the outset that the views of most African thinkers are often ignored<sup>12</sup> save for when they are within the Western epistemological *Locus*.<sup>13</sup> The creation of the Other by the West using Western paradigms assumed, defined and created the Other.<sup>14</sup> The Other in turn had to understand himself in the language, categories and systems of the same.<sup>15</sup> The effect of this was to divide the world into the West (SAME/CENTRE) and the Other (BLACK AFRICA).<sup>16</sup>

Nyerere's views seem to be a vindication of the Other's worth and value (the black African). His philosophy of *Ujamaa* is a political theory that emphasises the Other's originality and contribution to the world (universal) civilization. This research provides an analytic insight into one of Africa's renowned statesman, philosopher and intellectual. It seeks to provide his understanding of the traditional and normative African world view, that is, an African road to (achieving) socialism without class struggle. His was therefore a Socialism based on the (African) extended (family) kinship system - *Ujamaa* - that was constantly evolving and developing towards the society, the nation and finally the human society. This, in other words is a Socialism that is in constant development towards universal brotherhood. As a society then, Nyerere's State was modelled on the basis and principles

of justice.

It is important to observe that despite the many hindrances and obstacles in his way, Nyerere singled handedly propounded and sought to implement *Ujamaa* as a theory of African Socialism. The fact that Tanzania lacked able socialists was not a problem. He sought to use education persuasively to convert the many nationalists into able socialists.

The research it is hoped will significantly contribute to the study of African philosophy, social and political philosophy, African social and political philosophy, Ethics and legal philosophy besides providing a better understanding of Nyerere's philosophy.

## 1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As a concept, *Ujamaa* can be appraised both from its theoretical as well as its practical capability. In his book, *Ujamaa - Essays On Socialism*, Nyerere posits a system of social organization which aims at serving man. To this end, he makes pronouncements and statements which he hoped would ensure and enhance a system where men cared for one another, none exploited the other and that the nucleus family's love and solidarity would be maintained at this societal level - *Jamii*. What this amounts to is a theoretical endeavour. His definition of (African) Socialism is even more theoretical; that it is an attitude of mind.

The practical understanding and appraisal of *Ujamaa* can be seen in the actual organization of the State based on the ten cell household unit. This practice of *Ujamaa* was not new to Africa. African traditional social set

up showed a network of intertwining relationships between families, households, clans and even villages. This set up guaranteed the individual both the physical and psychological satisfaction required for a good and happy life. All in the society cared for each other and none went hungry when another had more than what he required.

At this point, a dividing line should be made between the theory and practice of *Ujamaa*. Many scholars have criticised the practice of *Ujamaa* on different grounds. Others have argued that the practice of *Ujamaa* has not borne much. Among the reasons advanced are that Nyerere seems not to have reconciled the demands of the individual with those of the corporate collectivity. It is also interesting to note that many a theorists do not quite manage to be implementers of their own theoretical programmes. One will tend to concentrate on either the theory at the expense of practice or vice versa. In this case, Nyerere devoted a lot more time on the theoretical underpinning of *Ujamaa* and gave less attention to its implementation or practice. The demands by Nyerere to use the many nationalists in Tanzania and therefore turn them into able socialists was a dream too high; a target too far.

As a consequence of the above, this research will be limited to the investigation of Nyerere's political philosophy of *Ujamaa* in as far as it is socialist, African and based on principles of justice. Any appraisal of *Ujamaa* therefore will be done with the theoretical aspect in mind. As to whether *Ujamaa* has failed or not, it should be pointed out that a theory is only appraised on the basis of its workability or not, hence, judgeable good or bad

depending on how it influences human action. But a theory *per se* cannot be said to have failed.

## 1.6 METHODOLOGY

The gist of this research is theoretical and it is hoped will influence practical endeavour. In this case, the philosophical methods of analysis and synthesis have been employed. The analytic method creates an understanding and clarification of the concepts under study in an *Ujamaa* State. These are, justice, socialism, African socialism and *Ujamaa* among others. Thus, an understanding of and the issues and concepts involved in *Ujamaa* will be made within the framework of justice, Socialism and African Socialism.

The need to analyse these and articulate their proper meanings arises from the frequency of their usage in this ethico-political system (The State of *Ujamaa*) while remaining significantly articulative in their own field. This research will make a critical analysis of the various claims by scholars on these central concepts. For instance, under what conditions is justice universal and when is it relative (particularly applicable)? The origins, dimensions and development of Socialism will be investigated. An analysis of the origins and bases of socialistic discourses in Africa and Nyerere's claims and assumptions that traditional Africa was basically and structurally socialist. This will throw some light on the argument that socialism through evolution and not revolution is possible.

After the evaluation and clarification of these concepts, the synthetic method will be employed in harmonizing the different views and thus come up with a synthesis which will consequently give direction on whether *Ujamaa* is socialist, is African and is based on principles of justice, besides providing a better understanding of Nyerere's political philosophy.

## NOTES

- 1 Cfr. R. Finnegan, 'Literary versus Non-Literary: The Great Divide?', in Modes of Thought: Essays on Thinking in Western and Non-Western Societies, ed. R. Horton and R. Finnegan. (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), pp. 112-144.
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- 2 Cfr. Hegel, *Op. cit.* pp. 91-99
- 3 Cfr. A.K. Armah, "Masks and Marx: The Marxist Ethos vis-a-vis African Revolutionary Theory," in Presence Africaine XL No.130 (1985), pp. 36-65.
- Cfr. J. Jahn, Muntu. Trans. Marjorie Grene. (New York: Grove Press Inc., 1961), pp. 12-13, 16.
- Cfr. J.K. Nyerere, Man and Development. (Dar-es-salaam: Oxford University Press), 1974). pp. 111-125.
- Cfr. P. Temples, Bantu Philosophy. *Op. cit.* This is classic book on issues and literature that admits pluralistic view to reality, thus admitting the alienation of Africa on issues of Ontology, epistemology among others.
- Cfr. K. Nkrumah, Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization and Development with Particular Reference to the African Revolution. (London: Panaf Books, 1970), pp. 56-77.
- Cfr. K. Thairu, The African Civilization. (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1975). This medical doctor discusses issue and concepts which tend to see Africans as objects hence define him (African) as a barbaric, forgotten people etc. This book is among the many works that provide the process of rediscovering the African root after identifying the conditioning factors.
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- 4 Cfr. L.O. Ericsson, "Two Principles of International Justice." Justice Social and Global ed. Ericsson, L.O. *et al.* (Stockholm: Gotab, 1981) pp. 20-31.
- W.K. Frankena, "Justice, Social and Global" Justice, Social and Global. *Op. cit.* pp. 32-52.
- 5 Cfr. A. N'daw, "Is it possible to speak about an 'African Way of Thought?', in Presence Africaine, XXX, No.58 (1966), pp. 32-45.
- 6 Cfr. J. Jahn, Muntu, *Op. cit.* pp. 12-13, 16.
- V.Y. Mudimbe, *Op. cit.* pp. 187 ff.
- Thairu, *Op. cit.* pp. 166-213.
- 7 Cfr. A.R.M. Babu, African Socialism or Socialist Africa? (Dar-es-salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1981), p.100.
- V.Y. Mudimbe, *Op. cit.* pp. 15, 19 & 25.
- 8 Cfr. D.A. Masolo, "An Archeology of Knowledge: A Discussion of V.Y. Mudimbe", in Callaloo. A Journal of African - American and African Arts and Letters, XIV, No.4, (1991): 998-1011.
- V.Y. Mudimbe, *Op. cit.* pp. 25-43, 187-203.
- Cfr. H.O. Oruka, Sage Philosophy: Indioenous Thinkers and Modern Debate on African Philosophy. (Nairobi: African Centre for Technology Studies, 1991), pp. 88-103; 106-121.
- 9 Cfr. R.S, Njoroge and G.A. Bennars, Philosophy and Education in Africa. (Nairobi: TransAfrican Press 1986), pp. 94.
- Cfr. D.A. Masolo, Some Aspects and Perspectives of African Philosophy. (Roma: Instituto Italo - Africano 1981), pp. 22-30.
- 10 J. Ngugi wa Thion'go, Petals of Blood. (Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya Ltd. 1977), pp. 240.
- 11 Cfr. J.K. Nyerere, Socialism and Rural Development. (Dar-es-salaam: September, 1967), pp. 1-5. n.n.
- 12 *Vide Supra*, pp. 2 ff.
- 13 The author has in mind African scholars who reside outside the continent and as a result of their scholarship and their presence in the West (Western epistemological Locus). they have generated a great deal of intellectual debate, unlike their counterparts in Africa. Prof. Mazrui's work should be singled out for special mention. Unlike Mazrui's largely theoretical work, Nyerere's is both theoretical (as a scholar) and practical (as a statesman) yet it receives little attention at all.



- 14 See Mudimbe, *Op. cit.* pp. 1-23.
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 Was the Other Created and defined purely on the basis of colour?

# CHAPTER TWO

## PROBLEMS OF JUSTICE

### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

Justice is the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims, that is, the assignment of merited rewards or punishment. It is a situation that obtains when people are dealt with in accordance with their merits or deserts. It is the principle or ideal of just dealing, or right action. This is when an action is determined purely by use of reason as authority.

Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines Justice as the maintenance or administration of what is just.<sup>1</sup> In this study, it will be argued that justice operates on the basis of some principles which are of irreducible quality, immutable and transcends cultural or regional boundaries. In short, justice being a scalar term is universal but its application is particular.

### 2.1 PLATO ON JUSTICE

Perhaps the earliest literature that has drawn much attention in ethical circles is found in Plato's The Republic. This book is basically about the discovery of the nature of justice in the individual and the State.

In Platonic literature, justice is the condition of harmony in the State. It is the harmony existing amongst its members when each citizen occupies a place in accordance with his merit. In the individual, justice is the harmony existing amongst the rational, appetitive and the spirited elements.

Plato, argues that, knowledge of truth is guided by ideas that are universal. Here he presupposes certain moral norms and ideas like the **Good**, the **Just**, the **Beautiful** and the **Pious** that are taken for granted without which no particular can be good, just, beautiful or pious.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the former category operates and applies to universal instances only. In The Republic.

Plato represents human life in a State perfected by justice and governed according to the idea of the *good*. The Republic is in other words a treatise on justice where the latter is shown to be a personal virtue based on Knowledge of the principle of good.

The conventional view of justice in ancient Greece was paying one's debt, that is, doing good to friends and harming enemies.<sup>3</sup> This position is represented by Cephalus and Polemarchus. For Socrates however, this view if held could prove inconsistent. For him, men cannot unite to commit a crime unless they are just to each other in the wrong doing.<sup>4</sup> Unity and purpose of action is only possible where there is justice.

On the other hand, the Sophists,<sup>5</sup> represented by Thrasymachus saw justice as the will of the strong.<sup>6</sup> This would mean that the powers that be look at their own interests as the yardstick upon which others are to be judged failure to which it shows inadequacy and consequently injustice. Socrates dismisses this view. For him given that rulers are fallible human beings, they too can desire what is to their disadvantage. Yet, if they did this, it would not be to their interest to desire evil upon themselves.

Plato then strikes an analogy between the human organism and the social organism (society). He argues that in justice lies the only remedy against the political and social ills of the society. Justice he says was visibly clear in the larger community than in the individual. Since the community originates from man's needs, it should be organised in a manner that it aims at satisfying these needs.<sup>7</sup> But as the community expands, conflict of interest and role usher in injustice. From the foregoing then, Plato concludes that justice resides in an ideally constituted community where there exists mutual relationship between the virtues of wisdom, courage and discipline, and temperance or self-control.<sup>8</sup> A good and just life is one lived in the State and justice demands that an organic unity exist in the State arising out

of a harmonious balancing of functions between the three classes in the State, the philosopher king, the guardians and the artisans.<sup>9</sup>

A closer look at The Republic reveals that, in the political sphere, Plato brings out in the highest relief two things. First, the necessity of an organic unity in social life and second, the importance of a systematic education, as contrasted with the haphazard legislation in regulating common interest. From the above observation it can be strongly argued that Plato's modelling of the State makes it acquire a personal existence of its own. This functionalist approach by Plato may sound interesting and convincing but it is quite inadequate. Why?

Plato's notion of justice, does not seem to provide for a clash of individual wills and interests but assumes a consensus. Thus, the theory assumes that there is uniformity and harmony in social life based on a theory of functional specialization hence it ignores the evils of society. The ideal one man, one work militates against the full development of one's personality and deprives the community of a full and rich variety of life. This alone makes the Platonic notion of justice a system of duties only, where rights are ignored. This is a major weakness in Plato's idea of justice.

## **2.2 ARISTOTLE ON JUSTICE**

Plato's student Aristotle attempted to salvage what good there was in his master's theory through his theory of *polis* where he discusses the functions of the State. Justice in Aristotelian literature is the practice of virtue towards others where virtue gives to each his due, hence, justice is the quality of conformity to positive, divine and natural laws. Justice means conformity to truth, fact and reason.

Like Plato, Aristotle saw justice as the very essence of the State where no policy can endure unless it is founded on a right scheme of justice. A just man is a virtuous man since justice is the great moral virtue and

excellence of character which is necessary for dealing with social and public relations.

However, in contrast to Plato, Aristotle used a distributive theory as the principle by which goods and services, honour and office are to be distributed among citizens. Man's contribution to the well being of the State is commensurate with the goods and services he receives in return. The formulation makes Aristotle's theory distributivist based on retributive principles.<sup>10</sup> For Aristotle, power should be given to the most virtuous. His principle of distribution is equivalent to proportionate equality which recognises and preserves the distinction between worthy and non-worthy, while in the process it redresses the problem of equality of the unequal. Man's rights, duties and rewards should therefore correspond to his merit and social contribution. In Aristotle's ideal *polis*, justice is absolute but relative to any other type of State (non-ideal).

Both Plato and Aristotle slightly differ in that whereas Plato emphasised a system of duties, Aristotle emphasised a system of rights. Aristotle based his argument on the principle that everyone should have his own. Here, one should note that Aristotle's justice is legal, that is, it is corrective justice unlike Plato's which is essentially moral and philosophical, based on idealism. Whereas Aristotle's notion of justice was both absolute (in the ideal State) and relative (in the non-ideal State), Plato's method for the derivation of a theory of justice shows that it is ideal, absolute and universal. It is however worth noting that both Plato and Aristotle converge on the fact that they both set out to discover the principles of capacity through which unity, harmony and happiness can be re-established and realised in the State.

Looking at the contemporary scene, Aristotle's theory is more relevant for its emphasis on rights and duties. Perhaps the only difference is

that contemporary notions of justice classify rights as social, political and economic, legal as well as fundamental while Aristotle makes no such distinction. However, both notions of justice are founded on the principle of equality and aim at a complete happiness, both legal and ethical.

### **2.3 STOICS ON JUSTICE**

Stoicism, the philosophical school founded by Zeno of Citium (340-260 B.C.) held that the aim of life was to achieve human happiness. Corollary to the concept of happiness in Aristotle, the Stoics argued that justice was embodied in man out of nature where a form of universal reason was at work. It is fixed and immutable. The ideal life was therefore that which conformed to this arrangement. The individual was a unit by himself distinct from society, while self sufficiency was an attribute of the individual more than that of the State, hence ethics or morality regulated men's life. It should be observed that for Stoics the good life was only possible in the State. Thus, the community determined the principles and aims of justice for the individual.

### **2.4 HOBBS ON JUSTICE**

Thomas Hobbes in his famous book, The Leviathan argues that liberty in politics is impossible as is case in Metaphysics and ethics. Might is right both in the State of nature and in the civil society. The State exist therefore to merely protect life and property of the individuals at a cost of passive and absolute obedience on their part. What the State commands is good and therefore just. What it prohibits is bad. The will of the State is therefore the supreme will.<sup>11</sup> Justice for Hobbes is identifiable with the will of the State.

Perhaps the most interesting idea to note in Hobbes theory is that, the requirements of Justice are limited. Justice simply require that members of the community who find it advantageous that everyone in the group

submit to certain rules, should take the necessary steps to ensure this. This then means that, there is need for an absolute sovereign in order that people may avoid war. People obey the dictates of the sovereign not because they are good but simply because they are the only alternative to the horrors of the state of war of all against all, in which the "life of man is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short".<sup>12</sup>

It will be argued that this contractual justice apart from being dictatorial assumes that men are so rational to keep agreements that are of mutual benefit with their sovereign. In fact Hobbes is silent on how an agreement ought to be of mutual benefit apart from the fear of war. The sovereign, as Socrates argued in The Republic, could desire what is harmful to himself due to his failure of grasping the good. This presents one with a dilemma that is difficult to solve. Is it possible for one to desire evil upon himself?

## **2.5 THE PROPERTY THEORY OF JUSTICE**

Of the liberal thinkers, perhaps John Locke is worth of being mentioned here. For him the State could be tyrannical in its dealing with its subjects. Be it as it may, justice can still be found in the synthesis of liberty and equality. Thus, through deliberate politically organised societies, political power can guarantee the innate human liberty and equality for all. The interplay of the two would therefore guarantee justice.

It is of interest to note that John Locke's theory of property comes out as the greatest opponent of egalitarian justice. For him, God who originally owned everything in the world including the political jurisdiction over everyone later gave the world to mankind as a community property. From this premise, Locke concluded that God must have intended that private property exists because people must survive and to survive they had to acquire those items as private property but added that the act of

acquisition should leave enough and as good for others so that the situation of others is not worsened. Here, one finds that, the theory of property was and will remain to everyone's interest and advantage. This is precisely because the act of acquisition is based on the morality of considering the interests of others too. If 'A' acquires property  $P_1$ , he must leave as much and as good for 'B' to acquire property  $P_2$ . In effect, this will mean that the process of acquisition is to everyone's advantage. Here-in lay justice.

## **2.6 JUSTICE AS THE METAPHYSICS OF MORALS**

Immanuel Kant separated justice from morals. Reason for him was entangled in the inevitable autonomies and involves us in doubt. "The will... is the source and... the natural guardian of morals".<sup>13</sup> The moral law does not compel but binds, hence, it implies freedom (liberty). For Kant, freedom though not provable theoretically is not doubtful to the will. It is a postulate of the practical reason, an immediate fact of the moral consciousness. Kant thus attributes justice to the governing of the external activity of men and morality to development of the inner life. Justice is therefore the external liberty of each individual limited by the like liberty of others.

## **2.7 A CONTEMPORARY THEORY OF JUSTICE**

In contemporary writing, perhaps the most notable and influential theorist on justice is John Rawls. His contribution to social, political and legal philosophy is summarised in his six hundred and over page volume, A Theory of Justice.<sup>14</sup>

In this book, Rawls argues that the principles of justice are the principles upon which the basic structure of society and the subsequent original agreement rests. In justice as fairness (egalitarian justice) social cooperators choose principles that assign basic rights and duties that determine the division of social benefits and settlement of claims such that



rational men must choose what counts to them as just and unjust. In other words, Rawls theory of justice is concerned with the just sharing of material goods as well as liberty, power, respect, privileges and social standing.

Rawls' work raises the contractarian tradition to different level where it ceases being merely an agreement to comply with societal rules and norms, that is, being ruled by government but the acceptance of certain pair of principles which are lexically applied so as to determine and govern the distribution of all social goods and services.

It will be proposed here that Rawls concern is mainly to provide a conception of justice for modern constitutional democracies but leaves unanswered the question as to whether justice as fairness can be extended to other forms of governments. Does this leave as Odera Oruka argues, open the question of whether justice as fairness can be applied to socialist oriented societies?<sup>15</sup>

In Rawls' formulation, justice as fairness originated from an environment of democracy and therefore it is justified, acceptable and reasonable to the extent that it is arrived at through consensus of all opposing views in society. Implicitly therefore, Rawls would not extend his notion of justice to societies in which consensus has failed to develop in favour of justice as fairness.

It is worth noting that justice as fairness is applicable only to the most homogeneous societies such that the requirements of justice exist only among people who cooperate. Like Hobbes, Rawls subscribes to the view that society is a "Cooperative venture for mutual advantage hence the principles of justice function only to define the appropriate distribution of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation."<sup>16</sup>

Does this view imply that there is no justice amongst non-cooperators? To what extend does Rawls' formulation bring justice on a

relative pedestal? One would want to argue at this point that purely using Rawls' argument, a group of people who are not cooperating, with each minding his own business, (for Rawls), the question of justice does not arise - because everyone is bound to natural obligations which apply to people without regard to peoples's voluntary acts, yet, justice is a voluntary act. Since natural duties obtain between all as equal persons and include the duty to assist the needy,<sup>17</sup> a duty to avoid harming others and causing unnecessary suffering, the duty of justice would demand that one supports and complies with just institutions that exist. It would also demand and constraint people to further just arrangement not yet established.<sup>18</sup>

Rawls' method for selecting the most just way of arranging the main social and political institutions of society whose citizens are willing and able to act justly consists in:

- (a) Assigning each person in society a representative in the hypothetical original position and,
- (b) Working out the selection those representatives would make under a veil of ignorance.

From this arrangement, Rawls' theory of justice consists of:

- (a) Liberty principle, which demands that each person to have an equal right to the most extensive total liberty for all, and
- (b) Social welfare (Difference) principle, which demands that social and economic inequalities are to be arranged such that they are:
  - (i) to the greatest benefit (advantage) to the least advantaged in society and,
  - (ii) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity.<sup>19</sup>

However, in this formulation, Rawls assumes that the representatives in the original position will not restrict our freedom far too much given that

they have the task of deciding on the principles of legitimate cooperation for the basic structure of society. It should be noted that in fact the representatives might not require citizens to contribute to the benefit of the worst-off. It is difficult to see how Rawls would defend the view that natural duties and principles of society be selected under the original position without allowing that moral principles should also be selected there.

## **2.8 THE ENTITLEMENT THEORY OF JUSTICE**

Robert Nozick in Anarchy, State and Utopia revisits Locke's theory of private property. In his theory of entitlement, Nozick argues that the theory of private property should be reformulated to be fair property acquisition. His formulation covers acquisition of unowned items so long as the act does not worsen the situation of others.<sup>20</sup> As Locke, Nozick argues that this system is in everyone's advantage but if it ever worsened people's situation, then property right theory is annulled.

Nozick argues that, individual rights are inviolable. This stems from the fact that people are ends and not means and it is not permissible to sacrifice or use people towards a goal without their consent even if the result is of benefit to others. This would mean that forcing people to aid others through taxing the relatively well-off in order to help the needy turns them, the well-off, into means though others benefit out of this particular arrangement. Therefore, only a minimal State is legitimate since a more extensive one violates people's rights. This minimal State, he argues, has a *de facto* monopoly on the use of force in protecting the rights of its citizens. A State then will violate people's rights if it redistributes goods for the sole purpose of achieving equity or any other pattern of distribution except by the consent of everyone.

Nozick's argument is challengeable on the grounds that, if this type of arrangement is granted it may end up justifying unfair temporary private

ownership of and when people are so few and resources abundant which in the long run will be a source of conflict. It should also be observed that force is force whether legitimized or not. If a more extensive State by use of force violates peoples' rights then what is the moral justification for its use in a minimal State? One however finds consolation in the fact that this theory works against any legitimated permanent transferable property.<sup>21</sup>

## **2.9 THE UTILITARIAN CONCEPTION OF JUSTICE**

Within the utilitarian tradition the best and just arrangement is one that would produce the greatest total amount of happiness or satisfaction to the greatest number.<sup>22</sup> But if this account is correct, then the world is so unjust since a considerable amount of redistribution ought to take place to bring forth more happiness.

Peter Singer has argued that in a situation where there are the haves and have-nots, the more fortunate ones are duty bound to sacrifice so much in order to improve the situation of the less fortunate up to a point where any further sacrifices would make the misery of the less fortunate equal to those of the more fortunate hence in the process maximise the total happiness of the society.<sup>23</sup>

This utilitarian conception of justice seems to be a notion of doing good that is above and beyond the call of duty because doing as much as possible is everyone's duty.<sup>24</sup> This position clearly points to a situation where the utilitarian principles are more demanding than the universal (categorical imperative) law of Immanuel Kant since it (utilitarianism) tries to impose some limits on the amount of good we ought to do for others. Furthermore, under a strictly utilitarian principle, people's basic liberties are sacrificed for the sake of greater economic welfare of others which contrasts sharply with Rawls' principle of liberty. It would also seem to work against Kant's categorical imperative in that it is using a given group of people as a

means of achieving greater happiness for another group.

## **2.10 CONCLUSION**

From the foregoing, it is clear that justice is a concept with strong basic principles that are universalistic and whose application is particular. Without contradicting oneself, it is possible to argue that the principles of justice demand a certain measure of equality to all those who constitute an essential category. Justice therefore consists in a certain application of the principle of equality. This equality should not be taken to be identical treatment of all people. It is a fact of life that people differ in many and diverse ways. Consequently, the principle of justice as equalitarian should be taken to mean that people are treated "equally only in the sense that we ought to make proportionally the same contribution to the goodness of their lives, once a certain minimum has been achieved by all."<sup>25</sup> Here, what is important is the equal treatment of persons with regard to the intrinsic dignity or value of the human person. This principle simply put is that all men are equal (equal with regard to the intrinsic treatment of individuals as persons).

It is important however to note that the equality of treatment though a basic obligation is and remains an obligation which should be instantiated to form a basis for the application of concrete justice. For our purpose, justice has been taken to mean like treatment of the like.<sup>26</sup>

Justice thus requires equality of treatment in accordance with the classifications as laid down by the rules. Hence, justice is the similar and injustice the dissimilar treatment of similar cases. Of importance is the fact that though this formula provides the conditions for justice, it does not say what the rules of justice are or are to be. It is in the application of the rules (as laid down) that justice becomes instantiated (particular).

The idea of treating like cases in the same manner therefore revolves

around:

- i) the existence of rules laying down how people in these like cases (categories) are to be treated.
- ii) the existence of general rules that provide for and govern anyone who falls within them (the general rules).
- iii) the existence of rules that are impartially applicable. The authority or agency administering them must be impartial not discriminatory. Consequently, justice is only complete if and only if formal justice is complemented by:
  - a) concrete justice, and;
  - b) equity.

This then leads us to the political philosophy of *Ujamaa*. It will be argued that in the same way, justice is universally applicable, so is *Ujamaa* though cultural considerations come into play. For *Ujamaa*, man is man and that society is created purely to serve man.

It is interesting to note that, this view differs in profound ways from Western individualism which led to the birth of capitalism in Europe. In fact, *Ujamaa* is a communalistic view of man where the definition of man is incomplete if seen outside the community.

One would therefore wish to bring to the fore the two major functions as well as tenets of justice. That the idea of natural justice has been derived from the conception of natural law. Justice is inherently a human quality that influences the actions and interaction of man. This it has been argued, is a powerful influence in maintaining the idea of justice as a moral commandment of life.<sup>27</sup> This further means that justice is the highest and most noble of virtues. Perhaps this would account for Plato's assertion that the perfectly *Virtuous* man is also the most just since he knows the idea of the *Good*, which is immutable and transcends all possible worlds.

It should be observed further that by virtue of being a social being man necessarily interacts. In the process of this interaction, man makes claims to property, which (claims) in the long run make him aware of the competition between him and (those of) others. It is this realization that causes man to be moral, to be just and to be virtuous since the realization that no man can satisfy all his needs, forces men into mutual relationship with others. As a social virtue therefore, justice should aim at sustaining a state of balance in human affairs.

It will not therefore be an overestimation to state that, at least the running thread in all the works cited above is that, the concept and tenets of justice are universal. As Proudhon notes justice manifests itself under various names, and that is (the various conceptions) what governs the world, nature, logic and morality including art.<sup>28</sup>

For purposes of this research, it will be argued that Nyerere's *Ujamaa* is utilitarian in nature. That the definition of man out of society is completely inadequate and that; that is good which serves the interests of the greatest number and yields the greatest happiness. The unit of analysis in this work will therefore be the society. If justice is universal, then how can one account for the varying application of justice to different situations? In the next chapter attempts will be made to show that though variously called, justice manifested in different forms is reducible to one basic attribute, that justice demands a certain equality. That at least the essence of justice is universal but the concrete administration of justice is particular. That therefore the idea of justice contains an indeterminate element whose application varies.

## NOTES

1. That which has a basis *in fact, reasonable and/or well founded*.
2. R.P. Sharma, Western Political Thought. (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Ltd., 1984), p. 21.
3. Plato, The Republic. Trans. Desmond Lee, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1956), pp. 66-67.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 90
5. Sophist were the so called "Wandering" teachers in Ancient Greece who taught people rhetoric and could teach people how to succeed in life even at the expense of sacrificing truth.
6. Plato, *Op. cit.* p. 77.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
9. These three classes in the State correspond to Plato's division of man's soul into rational, spirited and appetitive parts. This analogy between man and the State was meant to make the concept of justice be more clearly manifested in the just State before it was seen in the *just man*.
10. For Aristotle, justice is the distribution of good and evil, i.e., the practice of virtue based on the comparative treatment of individuals according to their desert or merit. The criterion of merit is virtue.
11. T. Hobbes, The Leviathan. Intro. Herbert Schneider (Indianapolis: The Liberal Arts Press Inc. 1958) esp. Chapter 17.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 140
13. Quoted From A. Weber, History of Philosophy. Trans. F. Thilly. (New York: Scribners's 1905), p. 463.
14. Cfr. Mary Warnock. Ethics Since 1900. 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 136-137.
15. See H.O. Oruka, "Rawls' Ideological Affinity and Justice as Egalitarian Fairness". Justice, Social and Global. (Stockholm, Gotab, 1981.), pp. 77-88.
16. John Rawls, A Theory of Justice. (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 4.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
20. Robert Nozick. Anarchy, State and Utopia. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974), p. 178.



21. *Ibid.*, p. 208.
22. See Nerveson, Morality and Utility. (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), p. 16.
23. Peter Singer "Famine, Affluence and Morality". Journal of Philosophy and Public Affairs 1 No. 3 (1972), pp. 229-224.  
  
See also, Steven Luper-Foy, "Introduction: Global Distributive Justice," in Steven Luper-Foy, ed. Problems of International Justice. (London: Westview Press, 1988), p. 15.
24. Steven Luper-Foy, *Op.cit*, p. 15.
25. William K. Frankena, Ethics. 2nd ed. New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Private Limited, 1988, p. 52.
26. That for all those (anyone) classified as belonging to the same category for a particular purpose should be treated in the same way.
27. F. Ochieng' - Odhiambo. On Justice and Justice in Law. Unpublished M.A. Thesis. (Nairobi: University of Nairobi, 1985), p. 86.
28. Proudhon. Dela Justice dans la Revolution et dans. (Brussels: 1868), p. 4.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**

### **3.0 THE NOTION OF LIMIT IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**

To most people, the idea of justice suggests a notion of a certain equality. As already outlined above, from Plato to Aristotle, through St. Thomas Aquinas, to the jurists, moralists, and contemporary philosophers, runs a point of universal agreement; that the notion of justice consists in a certain application of the principle of equality. However, the immediate problem that one ought to address himself to is to define this application such that while constituting an element common to the various conceptions of justice it leaves scope for their divergences. This can only be possible if the definition and the idea of justice contains an indeterminate element, a variable whose specific application will produce the most contrasting formulae of justice.

This study will adopt the notion of limit as put forward by Tourtoulon.<sup>1</sup> For him the different conceptions of justice can be bridged by use of the notion of limit. Perfect justice while consisting of complete equality for all mankind, is a dream to realise hence it can only constitute an ideal towards which men strive, a sort of limit towards which it can be approached only within the bounds of the possible. Given Tourtoulon's position, men can only try to bring about partial equality which is the easier to attain. This means that, the various conceptions of justice as equality far from being contradictory, are essentially the same but only differ in their potentialities, whereas perfect equality being a limit-idea, the potentiality for

its realization is nil.

At this point in the discussion, it is important to distinguish between justice manifested as charity, distributive and commutative since this distinction is basic to the understanding of the various conceptions of justice as it shall be outlined later.

Justice is seen as charity when it comes to the aid of the less fortunate members of the society in a bid to secure for them the largest possible share of the satisfaction being enjoyed by others. The best example that can come to mind are the donations to children's homes during christmas festivities. These donations are normally supposed to redress the imbalances existing in the enjoyment of happiness between family children and children who are housed in charitable places.

Justice is distributive when equality which takes account of individual capacities and efforts confers benefits to each man according to his merit. The logic here is that; if one merits it, then he deserves it.

Finally, justice is commutative when it is not concerned with individual life taken as a whole but when it seeks to establish equality in each and every juridical act. This latter conception of justice ensures that a contract does not ruin one party while favouring and enriching another. It should perhaps be added that in his conception, Nyerere was bent towards a commutative notion of justice especially as regards the relationship between developed and developing countries.<sup>2</sup> His was therefore a problem of global as opposed to international justice. It has become common knowledge that apart from impoverishing more the less developed countries, aid contracts

lead to loss of freedom by the said countries who are manipulated at will by the industrially advanced nations. Perhaps commutative justice is best manifested in compensatory instances where an equality prejudiced by the fault of others is redressed hence also called compensatory justice.

### **3.1 FORMAL VERSES CONCRETE JUSTICE**

The idea of justice has been more widely extended and applies to all mankind. The main reason here being that man has come to the realization that he needs his fellowmen in the realization of his aims hence the emergence of the idea of humanity. In this case, to have a precise formula of justice that is common to the various conceptions, one has to go back to a definition that is both;

- (a) Formal or abstract, and
- (b) each particular, that is, concrete formula of justice should include one of innumerable values of formal justice. It is therefore possible to argue that to act justly is to treat in equal fashion. That is, to treat alike all those of like nature.

One wonders however, whether all should be treated in the same way or distinction ought to be made along some line. If the latter, what is the exact line where such a distinction should be drawn? Answers to this question are diverse and varied. Different people advocate for different systems and no one system can win the support of all. Some argue that regard ought to be put on the individuals' merits, needs, origin, rank, or religion among others. Ultimately, whatever difference they might have, this

school of thought argues that, to be just is to give the same treatment to those who are equal from a given point of view, that is, those who possess some similarity in their essential characteristics.

This line of argument draws heavily from Perelman,<sup>3</sup> who argues that formal or abstract justice is a principle of action in accordance with which beings of one and the same essential category ought to be treated in the same way.<sup>4</sup> This definition however does not lay down the categories that are essential for the administration of justice hence remains formal. It is therefore possible for differences to come into play at the point of transition from a common formula of justice to different formulae of concrete justice. What then exists as points of controversies are the different points at which the question concerning the criteria essential for the administration of justice is settled.

In discussing the various conceptions of justice one must bear in mind that though justice manifests itself in different ways, there is something central: a common element that runs through all the various conceptions.

In the Nicomachean Ethics, book v, Aristotle characterises this running theme in the various conception of justice as proportion or relationship between individuals. Being a relational concept, it is something that ought to be maintained or in case it is disturbed, to be restored in the three cardinal currents of social life namely, distribution, compensation and exchange.

Justice being a concept of complex structure in which constant formal and varying material elements can be observed. A distinction ought to

be made between the constant definition of justice and varying criteria for its application in different situations or to different subject matters. This constant formal or defining element is the principle that "all like persons be treated alike." Later in outlining the principles of justice; it will be argued that in fact running throughout the different conceptions of justice is the maxim "all like persons be treated alike."

Though this maxim is plausible enough, one cannot use it to characterise any arrangement as just or unjust since all human beings are alike in some respects and different in others. It therefore follows that there is need to supplement this maxim by a variable material criterion upon which one should determine the resemblances and/or differences by which human beings are to be regarded as relevant hence further maxims will come up, "to each according to his deserts," "to each according to his legal rights" which becomes essential formula of concrete justice since they are different specifications of the formal principle that like persons be treated alike. This formulae brings out the classification of human beings made by reference to it as an essential category.

It should be borne in mind that disagreements concerning the characteristics to be taken as essential in the application of formal justice may arise, but these disagreements will only result in different concrete formulae of justice like the maxims quoted above. It is important to note that any choice of an essential characteristic used in classifying men as alike is a value judgement and as such is quite arbitrary since it means that any parameter may serve as a foundation for a system of justice.

It is not an overestimation to say that justice and morality have been so often confused that in ethical and religious literature, the just man is often seen as the most honourable and given to well doing. This makes justice a common name of all forms of merits hence the argument that "moral science has no other object than to teach that which is just to do and that which is just to forbear."<sup>4</sup> This argument is strengthened by the fact that, in moral science, reason ought to teach the distinction between the just and the unjust, a distinction in which the whole science of good and evil consists.

For Proudhon;

*"Justice under various names governs the world, nature, logic and morals, political economy, politics, history, literature and arts. Justice is that which is the most fundamental in society, most sacred among ideas and what the masses demand. It is the essence of religion yet a form of reason, the secret object of faith, and the beginning, middle and end of knowledge. What can be imagined more universal, more strong, more complete than justice?"<sup>5</sup>*

In the above argument, one has in mind warring factions who all invoke the name of justice. Advocates of a revolution in need of new order and defender of the old order all invoke with their prayers the necessity and reign of justice. An intermediary who intervenes and proclaims the necessity of a just peacefully settled resolution will have all the warring factions agree and affirm that this *just* peace will come about only when the enemy has been crushed and annihilated. The end result is not a *just* resolution but actually a conception of justice that puts one in the right and his opponent in the wrong.

Given this situation, various conceptions or formulae of justice arise such that arguments that tend to invoke the name of justice fall in one

category or another. These conceptions differ but have one common theme; the need for equality. These different manifestations, it will be shown are only different faces of the same thing and therefore form a whole system of what one may call the principle underlying the application of justice. These material conceptions of justice underlie the formal nature that is characteristic to all formulae of justice.

### **3.2.0 JUSTICE AS A FORMAL CONCEPT**

From the foregoing, justice is manifested in different forms. It is important to add that these different conceptions seem to create different formulae of justice. Yet, basically these are the points at which all come to recognise the necessity and essential characteristics for the administration of justice.

#### **3.2.1 TO EACH THE SAME THING**

This conception of justice holds that all people taken together should be treated in the same way without regard to their varying distinguishing particularities of age, state of health, material status, criminal record, sex, colour of skin etc. Yet, it is quite in order for one to argue and plausible for that matter, that here-in lies the controversy in administering justice; treating the just and the unjust alike or treating the like and unlike justly (in the same way).

This formula of justice is said to be purely egalitarian and calls for certain degree of proportionality. It views all beings to whom it aims at



administering justice as forming one single and unique *essential* category of say, family, kinsmen or mankind. When one speaks of *each* here, one means the single characteristic that distinguishes this particular group from any other given group. From this point of view then, the differences between persons within this group are not essential. Thus, there are some secondary qualities which are irrelevant for the administration of justice that need to be left out.

This formula of justice it will be observed coincides with an egalitarian conception of justice but not egalitarian humanitarianism, otherwise it would require that the class of beings to which it was desired to apply should consist of all mankind. This conception it should be pointed out that, far from manifesting an attachment to humanitarian ideal may constitute nothing better than a means of strengthening the links of solidarity within a class regarding itself as superior. Can this perhaps be used as justification for talking about justice within the apartheid system of South Africa or Nazi Germany?

### **3.2.2 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS MERITS**

This conception does not demand universal equality but treatment proportional to an intrinsic quality - the merit of the human person. But can there be a common measure for what the merits of all the people are?

People's merits and demerits from the standpoint of this conception are established by means of a balance and the result of this indicates automatically the fate in store for them. This is a view that is commonly

held by religious fanatics who believe that life beyond the grave, that is, in heaven or hell constitute a just compensation for life on earth. This for them is a confirmation that beings are treated in proportion with their merits. That is, beings that form part of the same essential group so far as their merits are concerned, the degree of merit will serve as a criterion for settling the essential categories when judgement time comes.

It should be noted here that to be part of the same essential category is not a matter of possessing one identically given characteristic, but the possession must be in the same degree. There is therefore a need for a criterion that will enable us to either measure the degree of merit to be able to compare numerically or range beings according to the size of their merit in effect show that the highest merit should receive the highest rewards. For the sake of proportionality, the reward applicable in every essential category should vary to the same extent as the merit. It is possible then that this conception of justice can be used to punish hence the idea of merit will include demerits as well.

### **3.2.3 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS WORK**

This formula does not call for equal but proportional treatment. The criterion here is no longer ethical but the result of an action. This formula deals with elements that can be reckoned up, weighed and measured. For instance when paying salaries, consideration is put on time taken (hence time rate) or pieces of work done, (piece rate). In examination on the other hand passing the examination is more important than the efforts exerted.

It should perhaps be mentioned that what is considered as essential category are those whose production or knowledge have equal value for the judge. From a certain point of view therefore, given certain works or piece of knowledge that are regarded as equivalent, then they must be accorded the same treatment. For example during marking of examinations, grades are awarded equally and people are ranked such that one either passes or fails depending on the one's score.

In the case of labour, the common measure, money, gives one what would constitute a just pay or a just price. In an ideal situation this is the application of the formula to each according to his work, where one is strictly rewarded on the basis of his production. In the case of examination, instead of testing the industry and ability of the candidate, only the knowledge of what they can remember is tested hence the result is a reproduction of work rather than originally produced work. It must however be observed that the application of this formula makes claims that are more modest and of more immediate use. The problem arises especially on how to rank reproduced work. What are the points of considerations for example in determining the correct application of this conception?

### **3.2.4 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS NEEDS**

This formula instead of having regard to the merits of man or output, it seeks to lessen the sufferings which results from the impossible position in which one finds himself, of satisfying his immediate essential needs. Yet, for it to be socially applicable, it must be based on a formal criterion of

needs of each person, hence, the divergence between these criteria give rise to the different and variants of the formula.

Regard is put on some basic minimum of which each man must be assured, for instance to his family responsibilities, to his health, the care and affection they both deserve. Perhaps it is from this formula that labour has come to be treated as an article for sale in the market, subject to the laws of demand and supply. To compound this, is the protection of labour. All these arises out of the desire to assure each individual human being the satisfaction of the most common basic needs.

It will be observed that this formula of justice seems to call for like treatment of those who form part of the same essential category as per their needs. Care should be taken not to consider individual whims and petty desires but only the most essential needs. Yet, a close analysis of this formula leaves unanswered the question as to what exactly is meant by "*essential need*," hence depending on the answers received, different conceptions will come out from this one formula. However the problem here is what to do where the needs are important but not immediately realizable or discoverable? Take the case of a child for example, dolls and toys make them feel happy but a beginner's book in logic would sharpen their intellectual capacity. In this case what is their basic essential need?

It must however be borne in mind that statistics in social affairs are always problematic since when it comes to investigating into personal details and given more than one person, it becomes quite difficult to predict the trend such that the inquiry only takes into account measurable indicators of

age, type of dwelling, hours spent on work, rest and leisure act. This tends to blur what would be considered as basic.

This formula then works to show that justice can be applied only to beings considered as elements of the whole, in the essential category. It discounts uncommon elements of, and in persons. It therefore follows that to apply this formula, one has not only to make a distinction between *essential needs* and other needs but also arrange the essential needs in order of importance. This will ensure that due priority is given to those that require first and immediate attention.

Controversial as it may look, this formula works towards settling societal obligation towards its members. Society through its own mechanism allocates priority to the attainment and satisfaction of basic needs before taking care of the surplus. Perhaps Socialism as a social concept has succeeded more in applying this formula than any other political doctrine.

### **3.2.5 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS RANK**

This formula ranks human beings not in accordance with the criterion intrinsic to each individual, but, according to how they belong to prior determined categories of human beings. That, instead of being universalist, it divides men into categories that are treated differently. When thinking about categorization, the immediate example that comes to mind is the different treatment accorded to blacks and whites during the colonial era - and more recently in Apartheid South Africa. In the world all over, in the

military forces, different rules are applied to different groups occupying different levels in the hierarchy of the armed services. Officers and soldiers are treated differently.

Distinction can however be based on race, religion or even wealth. This conception of justice it should be noted, has marks of social nature and hereditary as characteristic criterion which are independent of the will of the individual. It should also be observed that this view is always maintained and defended bitterly by its beneficiaries who demand or enforce favourable treatment for the categories of beings whom they put forward as being superior. This view is also held and sustained by force - whether by force of arms or by the fact of being a majority against a defenseless minority.

This has led to its being criticised for assuming justice in a divided situation of the same which immediately smacks off cries of segregation and inequality, a concept inherently opposed to justice as equality. Though others will argue that, the beings in respect of whom one would wish to be just are divided into classes that are not necessarily hierarchical. Thus, the latter argument would lead naturally to the conclusion that it is just to adopt a different attitude towards the members of the various classes provided those in the same group are given equal treatment reserved for that essential category, for instance, on considerations of colour of skin, religion, language or social class. It would therefore mean that this formula emphasises and rewards the societal responsibility carried by the upper class of the society where rights accorded to them flow directly from the burdens laid upon them.

### **3.2.6 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS LEGAL ENTITLEMENT**

According to this formula, to be just is to attribute to each what is his own. Here the problem is that of defining what is each man's own. The adoption of a juridical definition, that which the law entitles to a man is too mechanical. For example a judge will be just if and only if he applies the same laws to the same situation all the time. But is this justice?

Perhaps it should be emphasised that this conception is quite problematic in that it admits as many systems and variants as there are laws. What is just under one code may not necessarily be so under another. In effect to be just is to apply the rules of a given juridical system, and to be unjust is to misapply them. Notably, its application is simple in that, it binds the judge to choose only from the established rules. The rules of classification, and division into essential categories are laid down for the judge and therefore he is compelled and bound to take them into account.

One can however argue that this conception of justice seems so static that it is based on the maintenance of the established order. This view sharply contrasts with the other conceptions which are capable of modifying and improving that order.

It is fitting to observe that in this conception, there is a clear distinction between ethical and juridical formulae of justice. In ethics, one is free to choose a formula of justice that is appealing to his conscience - and interpret it. In law on the other hand the formula is laid down and its interpretation is subject to the control of a higher authority as is the case in

Kenya where Lower Courts are subordinate to the High Court and Court of Appeal respectively.

### **3.3 CONCLUSION**

It should be clear from the foregoing discussion, that, it is the distinction between the valuable and the valueless that bring out a given conception of concrete justice. Therefore, any moral, social or political evaluation that modifies the scale of values will at the same time modify the characteristics regarded as essential for the application of justice hence bring out a reclassification of man kind into fresh essential categories. The immediate example that comes to mind is the way christianity distinguishes between a believer and a non-believer in terms of divine justice. In independent Africa, governments regrouped their various nationals into one single essential category hence all the citizens of one national were equal before the law and this differed radically from the colonial regime where blacks and whites were subject to different juridical systems.

In the world today, modern civil rights movements have sought to reduce national as well as religious distinctions to the minimum and adopt the maximum civil rights accorded to all the inhabitants of a State. Civil rights laws flow directly by the fact and virtue of the rule of natural law, that is, from the simple quality of being human. It is therefore the humanness that matters hence rights are classified on the basis of man versus any other creature, living or non-living. It should however be observed that the confusion that exists in the definition of justice is a result



of the desire by each individual to define concrete justice which carries with it the determination of the categories regarded as essential; at least to that particular individual. In defining concrete justice, it was shown that, there is need to include formal justice as a basic form and a particular view of the world, hence, the result is the divergences, misunderstandings and confusion.

In principle therefore, a person is not unjust simply because he applies a different formula of concrete justice. Since injustice as outlined above would mean violating the rules of concrete justice in accordance with which one is supposed to be basing on his judgement, an act cannot be unjust if the formula of justice employed to criticise the judgement is not that of the judge.

The case for acting justly only demands that two people having the same notion and conception of justice having facts as submitted to them and given all other considerations accord the same degree of merit to the same acts. This will make their system of rewards and/or penalties equivalent.

Consequently, a judgement would be unjust if:

- i) it applies a formula of concrete justice that is not accepted,
- ii) its conception of the same formula of justice is a different one,
- iii) it is founded on an inadequate statement of facts, and
- iv) it infringes the specifications of formal justice that require the same treatment for beings that form part of one and the *same essential category*.

One is therefore unjust if and only if, him as the judge violates the rules of concrete justice that he himself has accepted and/or helped to formulate or subscribe to.

It should not be taken that, these formulas form a coherent whole. Many loopholes exist. For instance, on a purely logical pedestal, faced with the various view points that form these principles (of justice), the arbitrary choice of a single one is and this seems with good reasons, quite unacceptable to very many if not most consciences. For instance, should all men be treated in the same fashion without regard to their merits, deeds, origins, needs, talents or vices? Equally important is, if the function of the different points of view is to project a partial equality in terms of essential characteristic, then either they should flow from one another like syllogism in logic or be capable of complementing each other. For example, how does one reconcile "to each according to his merits," and "to each according to his needs?"

Historically it can be argued that justice began by being administered to members of the same family, then later extended to members of an ethnic group, then inhabitants of a territory before finally reaching mankind. There must therefore exist between individuals something in common to establish a partial identity in order that one may realise justice between them. In the above discussion this partial identity appears here as the *essential category*. This argument if extended would mean that without a common measure (meaning there is lack of partial identity), the question of realising justice does not arise as in the case of the relations between animals and plants.

This research was undertaken during a time of great environmental awareness with a call for dialogue between man and nature. Is this call not far fetched? Assuming that a tree is so bend that it can fall and destroy a house. In this situation what is the only rational and logical choice? To cut down the tree and preserve man and his property, or let the tree live to later fall on the house and kill man?

Given that what has been said so far, it will be agreed henceforth that justice is a universal concept whose application is particular. The next chapter is mainly concerned with clearly identifying this concept (justice) in the political doctrine that is Socialism. A concept of justice begins with an assumption of the fundamental equality of persons, that is the equal worth of every individual in society. From yet another point of view given the various arguments that have been presented, it would be a 'just desert' to reward individuals paying regard to their contributions to the society. But this, on the whole will assume that individual contributions can be isolated and subsequently compared.<sup>7</sup> It is therefore important to observe that the wealth created by any person is dependent on the work of many others and the structure provided by the society. This in essence is what Socialism is all about. The attempt to look at man as part of the whole and his contributions seen in the light of the contribution of others as well. The next chapter will try to identify the elements of justice that characterise this great political ideology, its conception of man and the basis upon which it is founded.

## NOTES

1. P. Tourtoulon, *Les Trois Justices*. (Paris, 1932), p. 16.
2. This should not read to mean that we discount other notions of justice in Nyerere's theory.
3. Cfr. Perelman, *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963). pp. 12-24.
4. *Ibid.* pp. 46-60.
5. *Ibid.* p. 5.
6. Proudhon, *Dela Justice dans la Revolution et dans l'Eglise*. New Edition. (Brussels:1868), P. 44.
7. I.G. Barbour, *Technology, Environment and Human Values*. (New York: Praeger Publishers 1980), pp. 63-69.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **WHAT IS SOCIALISM?**

### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, the problems involved in the administration of justice were discussed. Prior to that in chapter two, it was argued that Plato's conception of justice was that of a holistic organic unit in social life. Plato it was observed does not provide for a clash between individual will and interest but assumes a harmonious co-existence. In Aristotle, justice is the practice of virtue towards others, where virtue gives to each his due. The modern era in philosophy provide some very interesting views and conceptions of justice. In Thomas Hobbes for example the State exists merely to protect life and property of the individuals. This of course assumes that, individual men live together in a group or community. The State's might was therefore right and since what it wills is right, it follows that it is also just. All that is needed for Hobbes is that, those who find it advantageous to submit to certain rules need to go a head and establish them. That is justice.

In all these views the argument points to a situation of social co-existence and man's relation to others and the society at large, a kind of community. This social co-existence in turn presupposes a social group which in turn necessitate that more emphasis be placed on the social than the individual in the study of society. This leads to the concept of Socialism. But what is Socialism?

Socialism as a concept was first used in France in 1832 to describe followers of St. Simon known then as *Socialistes*. Another version has it that, some six years before this, in 1826, the word had been used in the London Cooperative Magazine to mean collectivities as opposed to individualism. In and about 1840s, Socialism was widely used to refer to a system of ownership and control of the means of production, mainly land and capital, that is, a system in which the productive forces were held and administered in the interest of all. Thus, until and around 1840 Socialism was a group concept mainly sociologically used to designate a socio-economic system. This argument however does not in anyway invalidate the ideological tag that has been grafted on the concept Socialism.

Labels such as African or Scientific Socialism are only used therefore to describe the grafting of indigenous and local traditions on an ideological doctrine that is in fact universal. It thus becomes impossible to account for the spread of Socialism in terms of economic or class notions alone. The Socialist movement has assumed the character of a secular religion and only then from this point of view can one explain its development and vicissitudes.

This study will adopt the Marxian view of Socialism as outlined by Karl Marx. The study will therefore rely on The Communist Manifesto and Capital, The Critique of Political Economy, since these seem to present and provide a comprehensive argument on Socialism in particular and the general historical progression and change in society.

#### 4.1 THE ORIGINS AND DIMENSIONS OF SOCIALISM

At this stage, it is important to consider the origins of Socialism as a doctrine as this will assist in the understanding of what the moving spirit in Socialism, that which has been described as liberating and what the conditions of the time were that necessitated its rise.

Socialism arose out of the attack on the gospel of individualism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. It then asserted that, man exists and only has a meaning in the context of society. In the Socialist doctrine, the concept of *Laissez faire* was seen as being responsible for the ruthless exploitation of man in modern society. For Friedreich Engels,

*"... the brutal indifference, the unfeeling isolation of each in his private..., the dissolution of mankind into monads of which each one has a separate principle, the world of atom is here carried to its utmost extreme."*<sup>1</sup>

It is against this background of atomization and egoism in society by individuals that critics proposed a new order based on association, harmony and altruism. That order was contained in the Socialist doctrine. Here in its origin, Socialism was seen as a doctrine immersed in the democratic ideal of equality. It was seen as a panacea to all the ills caused by Capitalism. That it would restore glory to humanity where communal enterprise and the idea that men can only realise their full potential and can only be emancipated in a situation of community life through cooperation as against the capitalist atomization mood of the time.

Socialism thus acquired the meaning of collectivism as opposed to individualism. It was seen as the panacea to the atomization of the

industrial society which had reached its peak in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Its aim was to redress the gap that existed under the exploiting atmosphere of Capitalism.

Socialism is theory of government postulating and articulating conditions under which society is (to be) governed. It prescribes conditions under which the social order integrates the functions of various societal institutions.

In Marxian literature Socialism is a State based on the dictatorship of the workers. Usually it is considered as a way of life whose general features include collective ownership of the basic means of production, distribution and exchange. This system of ownership has the advantage of abolishing social classes. There are as varied schools within Socialism as there are Socialists. They include, Marxism-Leninism, Social democratic(ism) and African Socialism to name but a few. The first two and to a larger extent the third are all agreed upon the fact that the major means of production in a Socialist State should be owned and controlled by the community. They are also agreed upon the fact that planning is central in controlling these means of production, distribution and exchange for effective allocation of resources where they are needed most. Socialism seen from this general view aims at serving man.

A close analysis of the foregoing reveals that Socialism rejects the polarization of society into bourgeoisie and proletariat or those who have and those who do not have. This analysis somehow ties in with G.D.H. Cole's definition of Socialism, that it is:



*"... a form of society in which men and women are not divided into opposing camps but live together under conditions of approximate social and economic equality using in common the means that lie in their hands in promoting their welfare.... Socialism means a human fellowship which denies and expels distinctions of class..., a social system in which no one is so much rich or poor than his neighbour.... Socialism means the common ownership and use of all the vital apparatus of production, distribution and exchange.... Socialism aims at a classless society and must therefore be democratic."*<sup>2</sup>

One will easily notice that the foregoing definition portrays Socialism as a political concept. By this it is meant a theory of government postulating and articulating conditions under which a particular society (Socialist) ought to be governed. The argument then as whether Socialism is purely a political, social or economic concept has all a long been postponed and therefore still controversial. Douglas Jay has argued that the case for Socialism is mainly economic.<sup>3</sup> In his argument Socialism fundamentally rests on the desire to root out the following:

- a) the arbitrary effect of free exchange.
- b) the peculiar character of unearned incomes (interest) or surplus (profit).
- c) the profoundly antisocial consequences of the institution of inheritance.

Perhaps this argument should as Jay rightly points out be understood mainly from an economic perspective. In correcting the economic anomalies, he argues that it is the duty of Socialism also to correct the social imbalance that results in this kind of economic arrangement. But he completely relegates the political dimension to the periphery.

From the foregoing, it should be clear that the history of Socialism

has all along emphasised collectivism, harmony, equality, the idea of community and social justice. The question to ask here is what the basis of the other is, or rather which is the most central concept? Individual or society? These and many others are some of the issues that this study will address.

Webster's an unbridged International Dictionary defines Socialism as:

*"A political and economic theory of social reorganization, the essential feature of which is government control of economic activities to the extent that competition shall give way to cooperation and that the opportunities of life and reward of labour shall be equitably apportioned."*<sup>4</sup>

In this definition one easily recognises that basic to Socialism, are some very important and key concepts among them, reorganization, government control, (competition to give way to) cooperation, and equality. These are the pillars of Socialism as a doctrine as well as pillars of justice as a social concept.

Following the Marxian argument, many Socialists have drawn upon the works of this great thinker to support their own. Marx delineated two stages in the evolution to Socialism by any society.

- a) ***Democratic revolution:*** This signifies the victory of the middle class over Aristocracy. It also signifies the clearing of feudal remains to achieve the successful development of capitalist production and of political rights for all in the society. The aim of the democratic revolution then is to reorganise the societal institutions to achieve equality by redressing the disequilibrium existing before the revolution.

b) ***Social revolution:*** For Marx, the democratic revolution is followed by a social revolution. This is an economic victory of proletariat over the bourgeoisie and signifies the proletariat take over of the means of production.

The success of the two revolutions show that there is a need in society to usher in classless society whose means of production are controlled by all for the sake and in the interest of all as Maria Nzomo calls it popular democracy in Marxian Literature.<sup>5</sup>

Since Socialism has to take account of the whole of man as he is and since not all men are made of one piece the concepts of emulation and competition become vital as life devoid of competition is too dull and boring. However competition under Socialism can be conditioned such that it is within certain limits, and it is consistent with the principle of mutual aid and benefit to all. This requires that competition be tagged to the maxim "from every man according to his ability to every man according to his needs." Men must therefore cooperate in the production process. Thus, Socialism ought to emphasise the necessity of the democratic processes in all government control while supporting legitimate competition, though the principle of cooperation should be overriding. Whereas a government ought to be just and give to each according to his needs, its control of means of production ought not to mean government ownership. It should on the contrary mean the central or local planning of location, provision of capital to intended investors and the creation of an atmosphere suitable for investment. The basic and guiding principle in the economy for Socialism

should be to oversee production and distribution of goods and services. This will then bring out the atmosphere Norman Thomas calls the end or goal of Socialism which is "a fellowship of freemen, who will use their resources and skills no longer for war but for the conquest of bitter poverty and remediable diseases."<sup>6</sup>

#### **4.2 THE INFLUENCE OF MARX AND LENIN**

The Critique of Political Economy (1859) may be said to be perhaps a summary of Marx's analysis of historical change and the relative significance of various social forces and institutions.<sup>7</sup> For Marx the anatomy of a civil society is to be found in the political economy.

This position stands contrary to the pre-Marxian philosophy which apparently emphasised laws and politics as the determining factors in the society. For Marx the social relations of production form the economic base upon which law, religion and ideas are build (the super-structure). The mode of production, distribution and material means of existence condition the whole process of social, political and intellectual life of a society. Marx predicted a stage in the development of society when the material productive forces of the society come into contradiction with the existing productive relationships or what is but a legal expression of these (production relationships) with the property relationships within which they have moved before. If change occurs in the economic base, the whole superstructure is bound to be transformed. Thus, when the productive forces have outstripped the productive relationships (in the Capitalist

System), a revolution is imminent and must therefore occur as a logical necessity because these productive relationships - that is, law of property, production for private use etc. all stand in the way of technological forces that are permitted to be utilized. For Marx, the remedy was the introduction of Socialism which will bring about a new system of productive relationships that will therefore match the tremendous forces of production already existing and known to man.

In The Communist Manifesto, Marx argues that a Socialist revolution occurs when the Capitalist forces of production outstrip the methods of production.<sup>9</sup> But these legal relations and other forms of the State cannot be understood by themselves nor from the general development of human mind. They can only be understood by grasping the material conditions of life.

It should be observed that, the modern bourgeoisie society that sprouted from the ruins of the feudal society has not in fact done away with class antagonism, but has only established and enhanced new classes with new conditions of oppression and created new relations of production. It has simplified class antagonism such that two distinct camps now exist, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie has created new dependence syndrome such that rural depends on urban, peasant on bourgeoisie, east on west, south on north, third world on first world, etc. This polarization and dependence has marginalized the weaker forces even further such that it has had the effect of centralizing political and economic decisions including the forces of production.

Thus the intensification of the ideological struggle in most of the Twentieth Century has tended to heighten the significant role played by the bourgeoisie in international capitalism. The proletariat has increasingly been marginalised. Yet, Marx and Lenin in their works regard proletariat internationalism as a vital and integral part of Socialism and the ideological basis for the leadership of the proletariat in their struggle within the revolutionary process of remodelling the society.<sup>9</sup>

Internationalism in Socialist literature is inherent in the workers by their very nature, by reason of their origin, the role they play and the place they occupy in the social productive relationship and development of society. The role of the proletariat therefore is simply to transform a capitalist society into a Socialist one as a result of bitter class struggle against the bourgeoisie. This is only possible given the principle under which international proletarianism works.

First, international proletarianism requires unity, solidarity and fraternity among the workers of all nations in the fight for their common aim, towards Socialism.<sup>10</sup> Second, it requires proletariat solidarity in the struggle against the exploiters for national liberation of the enslaved peoples. To do this calls for a spirit of class consciousness of all the proletarians of the world. Third, it calls for equality of nations which in turn guarantees that the freedom and sovereignty of each individual is genuine and fully enjoyed. These principles in the history of Socialism have acquired an enlarged meaning to include the discharge by the working class of every country of its international duty towards the international proletariat.

Together with the proclamation "workers of the world unite," they (principles) have acquired an enlarged slogan that is all inclusive and calls for the unification of the tactics and organizational unity among the proletarians of all nations under the yoke of one and the same despotic State, for freedom and Socialism.<sup>11</sup>

It has been argued that, the Russian (Bolshevik) Revolution of 1917 inspired and gave impetus to the revolutionary struggle all over the world especially to the various national liberation movements among the colonized peoples. This seemed to enrich the content of proletariat internationalism and its forms of manifestation. This in turn changed the Socialist appeal from "workers of the world unite," to "workers of all countries and all oppressed people, unite."<sup>12</sup>

In the struggle against imperial domination and oppression throughout the world, three great forces seem to have operated hand in hand namely;

- a) the world system of Socialism,
- b) the international working class, and,
- c) the international liberation movement.

These three combined and aimed towards the call for people of the Socialist nations, workers, democratic forces all over the world, the newly liberated peoples and the oppressed to come together, unite in their common struggle against imperialism for national freedom, social progress, democracy and Socialism. In the writings of Karl Marx, proletarian solidarity is the principle and for Lenin the most important and inexhaustible source of strength for proletarians and the Socialist revolution in the world.<sup>13</sup> The

Socialist principle therefore require one to defend liberty national independence and Socialist future of their people hence the reason for demand for national independence. One can easily draw a parallel between this and Nyerere's vision of an *Ujamaa* society and particularly his argument on the demands for independence.

#### 4.3 SOCIALIST'S CONCEPTION OF MAN

In the Principles of Political Economy John Stuart Mill argued that the "laws of property have never conformed to the principles on which the justification of private property rests."<sup>14</sup> He argued that these laws have in fact intentionally encouraged in-equalities and prevented all from starting at par. Perhaps one would dismiss this at first sight. But this argument is a powerful contribution to the freedom of the individual, his position in society and the demand for just returns for one's labour. It has to be borne in mind that Mill's treatise on individual liberty is probably unrivalled in the history of political philosophy. It should also be observed that Mill's Principles of Political Economy outlines reasons for inequalities in social life. In this work then is found the reasons for inequalities in society. It is at this point that Socialism comes in to correct just that, inequality.

Parekh argues that, a political doctrine like Socialism is broadly speaking an attempt to present a specific conception of man and society.<sup>15</sup> It attempts to show the type of creature man is, his basic needs and motivations, his relationships to and with other men as well as the role of the government in the community. He might be right. But to understand



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man, there is the philosophical level which is the level of justification and the level of implementation which would pass for ideological or programmatic. This notwithstanding, one political doctrine competes with others thereby creating the need to justify itself and show cause why it should be accepted in preference to others. At the same time political doctrines as will be noted later in Nyerere's (African Socialism), *Ujamaa*, are practical oriented and aim at achieving a given type of society by:

- a) working out concrete policies and
- b) working out proposals and the organizational structure needed to realise them.

A political doctrine consists in more or less a well articulated metaphysic, a general view of the universe which provides a justification for its conception of man and society which should constitute its core. A political doctrine is therefore programmatic in content and aims at showing how its view of man and society is to be realised.

Socialism arose out of the exploitative tendencies that developed in the Capitalist societies. One can now for sure assert that Socialism arose as a revolt against Capitalism. The Socialist's view of man has thus been developed as an alternative to that created by Capitalism.

Capitalism has been described as a system of government that is characterised by private ownership of capital goods "whose production, distribution and pricing are determined by the capitalist, motivated by the profit he envisages to make in the bargain, in a free market and without unreasonable State interference."<sup>18</sup>

Capitalist sympathisers argue that it has the advantages of creating an atmosphere of free competition and this acts as an incentive to efficiency. The results are enormous; better products, lower prices, better and high quality services which all add up to higher standards of living. The argument here is that since the profit motive is inherent in human nature, Capitalism is more in keeping with human nature. They argue that a free market economy is much more natural and more preferable than a common market economy. The former is voluntary and democratic, the latter is mandatory and authoritarian.

Capitalism is characterized by individualism, privacy, self-enclosure, social exclusiveness and egoism. Under capitalism, the individual is the master of himself hence the phenomenon of private property acquires a status more or less of a natural right. Competition is the order of the day, and the government is seen as only a source of security, liberty and order. The government in other words cannot be looked upon as an agent of social change. Under capitalism, misfits suffer to compensate for the benefits of the prosperity derived from capital accumulation. In other words, capitalism has a dominant law; that, its main catalyst is production for profit.

Critics of capitalism on the other hand argue that, in spite of the advantages of a free market economy, lower prices and higher standards of living, capitalism is an unjust system which encourages the exploitation of man by man and its removal was a matter of urgency to restore humanity in society. On a purely economic pedestal, workers in a capitalist society are enslaved and are not rewarded justly for the worth of their labour but are

paid only enough to keep them alive. The system has also been accused of rendering intelligent planning impossible with the result of extremes in society of too rich and too poor as well enormous waste and scarcity existing side by side.

These inadequacies made people turn to Socialism. This is a system that discourages private property where the means of production, distribution and exchange are owned and controlled by the State. In this case, one can argue strongly that Socialism is a system which tries to promote social equality and the welfare of all in society. It is altruistic in content and desires the expansion of State activities to assure freedom and justice to individuals. The State in a Socialist system is a fraternal, cooperative commonwealth that seeks to remedy injustice and wastefulness created by capitalism. Thus, the aim of Socialism is to eliminate social inequality which many social analysts argue is the root cause of poverty. But this alone does not justify Socialism as it has been said to be authoritarian, totalitarian, undemocratic and anti-development.

In Socialist literature, man is necessarily interdependent, materially, culturally and spiritually. Man is dependent on society in the acquisition and development of skills and abilities necessary for self-fulfillment. The individual is thus a social product who owes his existence to others as well. Thought, language, mannerisms, knowledge, both formal and informal and the cooperative enterprises are all products of social institutions. Socialists also argue that the incentive, encouragement and opportunities to work are all socially provided. Ambition is therefore inherently a product of the social

structure.

Man as a social being is profoundly and totally unintelligible outside society. The fact that abilities, skills, and humanity have a social basis means that they are not man's private property but he holds them only in trust for society.

The underlying concepts in Capitalism, that is, selfishness and individualism are a perversion of human nature. Socialism has thus been seen as diametrically opposed to individualism. It rejects competition and self-interest but affirms and emphasises cooperation. Competition leads to exploitation of man by man while in the process creates discord, conflict and disharmony in human nature.

Cooperation on the other hand creates concord, unites, is economical, expresses and develops man's social needs and nature.<sup>17</sup> The Socialist doctrine affirms that man is one who plans his life, makes choices and consciously regulates, organises and reorganises his environment. Planning then becomes an essential element in the growth of a rational man. To be human, is then equated to being rational where the latter is simply one's ability to plan his conduct and manipulate his environment on the basis of his ability and given resources in a bid to realise one's consciously formulated purposes in harmony with his goals in life.

#### **4.4.0 DISTINCTION BETWEEN SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM**

Socialism as a political doctrine requires among others, that it be preceded by a highly developed and organized capitalist system. It also

requires that there exist a well organised, intelligent and class conscious working class. Here then one notes that economic conditions to a large extent shape the course of history although modern Socialists would argue that the ruthless and determined possessor of political power can shape the course of economic development and therefore history.<sup>18</sup>

For Karl Marx, Socialism was a transitory period from capitalism to communism. While Socialism was only a stage in the development of society,<sup>19</sup> communism was the undefined realm of man's freedom.

Daniel Bell, writing in the Encyclopedia of Social Science, argues that Marx never took a dogmatic view to any single course which the Socialist revolution could take.<sup>20</sup> He further observes that in several instances Marx felt that Socialism might be achieved peacefully in the Western countries where democratic institutions were being established. Yet, he never ruled out the possibility of and even the need for violence should the occasion demand. It should be noted that Marx and Engels only insisted on the necessity of revolution in so far as it overhauled completely the existing institutions of society. That once Socialists ascended to power, private property would be abolished, an end would be put to social privileges and political power of the ruling class would be broken. One should equally note that whether this could be achieved by peaceful means or otherwise is not quite clear and remains an ambiguity that may be the root cause of the major doctrinal splits in the Socialist camp. However, Socialism as a socio-economic doctrine recognises the changing phases of the industrial society and is principally concerned with social reform.

It has however been argued that, with all its strength and appeal, Socialism has only remained a pressure group that seeks social concessions from the State for the immediate benefit of the working class.<sup>21</sup> From this point of view Socialism is no better than a trade union. Contrary to many observers, Socialism has neither an economic programme nor any clear cut idea of planning once in power. It therefore comes as no surprise that Socialism has remained in the minds of many, a mere social concept more of a trade union than a political doctrine with a programme of action.

After the second world war in 1945, two main themes dominated the socialist literature:

- a) ***Revisionism***: This theme de-emphasised the highly centralised command in decision making. The centralized economies were modified by the trend towards market and profit making system to suit the post war social demands. Under revisionism, dogmatic ideology was discarded and replaced by pragmatic and instrumental policies. Force and violence were discouraged or discarded altogether as a means of fostering revolutionary change in non-socialist countries.
- b) ***The rise of the peasantry as revolutionary force***. This theme dominated mainly in colonial countries where a new theory that emphasised revolutions not by the proletariat but the peasantry was upheld.<sup>22</sup>

One therefore finds a completely new doctrine dominating the Socialist literature on matters of history, the peasantry as a class and the

proletariat.<sup>23</sup> The peasantry (in whom Marx only saw 'rural idiocy') were reactionary, small minded and mainly preoccupied with material property hence not capable of a Socialist revolution.<sup>24</sup>

But close look at events in the world and a few examples will show the opposite. Mao Tse Tung following the destruction of his urban base of support turned to the rural peasantry and won power by enlisting peasant support. Fidel Castro belonged to the middle class, yet, he made a revolutionary appeal through the peasantry as the urban working class coexisted comfortably with (dictator Batista) the ruling clique.<sup>25</sup> In Kenya, Algeria, Vietnam and in Countries of South America, it is the peasantry and not the middle class that has been the focus of revolutionary appeal.

One possible explanation to this turn of events is that Marx's predictions were based on a two class structured society, the working class and the bourgeoisie. He had predicted long before this (1945) that Socialist revolutions would occur in Capitalist and highly industrialised societies due to the contradictions and crises inherent in the capitalist mode of production. Notably however, this triumph has only been recorded in backward, less industrialised and basically agrarian societies. Thus, seen from this point of view, socialism is protest against the course of industrialization, as well as a creed of social justice, welfare and the equitable distribution of society's products, a rationale for centralised controls, postponement of consumption and rapid economic growth and development.

In The Future of Socialism. C.A.R Crossland argues that the main aim of Socialism is not economic but social welfare.<sup>26</sup> Socialism for him seeks



an equitable division (read distribution) of wealth by reducing the role of inherited property as a means of achieving a privileged position in society. Socialism thus aims at erasing the social class distinction.

It should however be noted that Crossland is in no way negating the economic factor in Socialism. This argument could be interpreted to mean that it is only by releasing talents which remain untapped and unfulfilled under the social class system that can any society hope to eventually find a new vigour in its industry and culture.

In fact on the economic side proper it should be noted that towards and in the middle of the Twentieth Century, Socialism became a major economic doctrine. The Frankfurt Congress of 1951 seems to have emphasised and provided some doctrinal identification and pronouncement for Socialists the world over. Its declaration of principles adopted and stated the new common view, that;

*"Socialism aims at liberating the people from dependence on a minority which owns and/or controls the means of production.... It aims at putting economic power in the hands of the people as a whole and to create a community in which freemen work together as equals"*<sup>27</sup>

The idea of economic equality and communality then were or became at least the major preoccupation and points of focus among Socialist in this era.

So far, private and public have remained the points of demarcation throughout this discussion between what is Socialism and what is not. Private control should not be identified with private ownership and State control should likewise not be identified with State ownership. As argued

above, government control ought only to mean central or local planning of location, provision of capital to intended investors and the creation of suitable atmosphere for investment. Of course, from the economic point of view the basic and most important principle should be the government's ability to oversee production and distribution of goods and services.

Yet, one can still within this broad outline delineate and thus be able to pinpoint clearly what ought to form the dividing line between Socialism and Capitalism. Among these one can be able to talk of:

#### **4.4.1 OWNERSHIP AND PRODUCTION**

Capitalism encourages exploitation of man by man while Socialism rejects this as a form of injustice to humanity. The question here should not strictly speaking be one of ownership. What should be a point of concern ought to be the question of what exactly can be owned as private property. One can own a pen, a ruler, a child as his private property. But can one own the society's means of production which incidentally are the main source of the society's revenue? How much for example, can the society's common goods be owned by one person without denying the rest their fair share? How far can one practice the maxim "to each according to his needs?" Given these considerations then what is of fundamental importance is the effect this arrangement will have on society and not ownership *per se*. Thus, Capitalism allows a few to own and control the means of production hence control the livelihood of many in the society while Socialism does not.

#### **4.4.1 DISTRIBUTION**

In considering the distribution of the society's goods and services should they for example be equitably distributed? The question here in fact should be how to determine the needs of each member of the society so that a situation of scarcity existing side by side with waste is avoided. For Capitalism those who can manage to reach the final product can appropriate it all for themselves. Socialism on the other hand tries to encourage the equitable distribution of societal goods. After all, human intuition and natural justice demand that common goods be equitably distributed to all members of the society. This then means that no selfish tendencies should be allowed to develop and it is upon the society to curb that or prevent them from developing.

#### **4.4.3 COMMUNALITY**

Socialism is based on principles of communalism. Capitalism is based on selfishness and egoism. It would thus seem that Socialism is more to keeping with the concept of society or community. Capitalism by its very nature does exactly the opposite. It encourages accumulative tendencies for profit. Socialism discourages.

The above notwithstanding, a human society is basically political. Thus, by its very nature and purpose, a political society is essentially Socialist. What this means is simple; that Capitalism is a perversion and a degeneration of the political society proper and a negation of its goals and objectives since men do not constitute a community, live and work together

for the benefit of a few among them. Of importance then is the fact that Socialism aims at creating a classless society that is characterised by abundance of material as well as spiritual well being that is distributed and shared by all members of the society, each according to his needs.

#### **4.5 THE MORAL CASE FOR SOCIALISM**

It was noted above that a political doctrine competes with others. That therefore, upon given principles a political doctrine has to show reason why it should be preferred against any other. This section will present a case as to why Socialism ought to be preferred against Capitalism (or any other political doctrine for that matter) as a political doctrine and a theory of social organisation

Karl Marx predicted that the collapse of Capitalism will automatically usher in Socialism. That was a prediction. C.B. Okolo has argued that Socialism is an ethical ideal with a definite action programme for self-realization particularly for the oppressed and the down-trodden.<sup>28</sup> One cannot say more. Marx's notion of man and his place in the universe seems part of his vision of a particular future. His revolt against God or other worldly existence is simply an account of the world and man in particular. Thus, Marx's works provide the ethical impulses that guide man's hope . His study was a vision and theory of human freedom, of man as a maker of himself, of nature and of history.

Marx's image of man was that of full social man with fully developed potentials, made himself the aim and measure of all things, subsumed them

to his human needs and purpose.

Under Socialism, Marx argues that man enjoys a unique dignity and superiority over other things in nature. That the root of man's dignity is his labour, the ability to interact and transform the environment in the service of mankind. Man thus enters into dialectical relationship with nature for purposes of production. Socialism makes man dynamic and interactive hence achieves his freedom which in turn is based on his standing on his own feet, using his own power, and relating him to the world productively. This concept of freedom follows from Marx's view of man as a subject and transformer of nature. Here then, freedom become synonymous with independence and mastery of other obstacles in nature. This theme is emphasised more when Frederick Pollock observes that "the element of truth in Socialism long before socialist were born is that monopolies viewed as necessary must be under public control whether it be central or local."<sup>29</sup> What should be central here are the interests of man and how they are met.

Therefore, unlike Socialism, Capitalism has immense material achievement to its credit, but its failures are also enormous.

Since Capitalism developed out of the industrial revolution in the Nineteenth Century, it has had crises time and again. Under Capitalism for example, one can predict that for sure after a war involving a superpower, the world must undergo an economic recession or even a depression.<sup>30</sup> The problem here is simple, that man cannot control the economic forces, such that one knows for sure that there is a problem to be attended to, yet, one accepts the situation hands down and argues that it is beyond human

control to apply any remedial measures. This argument that man should submit to automatic economic forces of demand and supply leads to economic hardships of unemployment, low savings, low investment, low capital generation which leads to low standards of living. The argument therefore that man has to resign to the latter ills as the corrective measures of a system is denial of the fact that man is a rational being who plans how to overcome obstacles to achieve his objectives. Granted that man cannot apply corrective measures to a given system is in fact making non-sense of planning if it is beyond human control.

It should also be borne in mind that it is during these hard times in society that people desperately look out for workable solutions hence any man promising exactly that is bound to get a following. Perhaps this accounts best for the rise of the worst philosophies of Fascism and dictatorial Communism as witnessed during the era of Hitler, Musolini and Stalin among others.

This argument is offered as evidence to show that at least in principle man under Socialism appears to affirm the right and ability to have control over societal forces including economic systems. In other words, man has control over nature.

It has been observed that capitalism turns man into a mere economic agent who has only to fit within a given system including that of demand and supply. But the treatment of man as a mere economic agent other than a moral being is wholly against the principles justice, freedom and human nature. In simple terms, it is a violation of human existence and

consequently a negation of humanity itself.

Socialism denies therefore that economic motives although have their part to play in human affairs are the primary forces that should govern human society. Under Socialism as opposed to Capitalism, cooperation among individual men can produce a better society than can economic war where the strong survive and the weak are either absorbed into the system or left to die. It is therefore not personal economic interest but ethical compulsion that drive men into trying to build moral societies.

One can therefore convincingly argue that, Socialism is a creed based on a philosophy of optimism about human nature as is democracy. Democracy from this point of view is simply a belief in the ability of man to govern himself better than a hereditary or self-appointed ruler. Socialism as democracy therefore is based on the belief that however much men differ, they are equal in their membership of a human society.

The human personality is a unique feature and character whose value cannot be judged by the standards of worldly success but (by) the standard of common humanity. Thus, one finds that Socialism treats human beings by the standards common to all humanity, irrespective of race, sex, colour, creed, religion and other physical characteristics.

Socialism strives to achieve equality, while capitalism aims at inequality. Thus, if one can, (then) he is at liberty to deprive all others in the ownership of the universe, capitalism will reward him for the hard work!

In putting up a case for Socialism one must start from the premise that all men are equal. Granted then that all men are equal and endowed

with certain inalienable rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, there arises a need for a political system that will facilitate the achievement of these. The political system that is so instituted ought to derive its just powers from the consent of the government.

Democracy just like Socialism judges men by their common membership in human society. The end of Socialism is therefore the achievement of a democratic society which aims at recognising the dignity of the human person and the uniqueness therefore of man as an individual. Socialism it should be noted derives its moral worth from the fact that it looks at man not as an economic but moral agent who is moved by ideals and aspirations that are more satisfying than those of the materialistic conceptions which govern other great political creeds of the world.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

The aim of Socialism is fundamentally communal. Socialism socializes the means of production and the State directs production, exchange and distribution. It is a State based on the dictatorship of the proletariat. Under Socialism men have a fundamental desire to cooperate and work together for the well being of the society. Under capitalism, the acquisitive instinct is primary upon which a civilised community is build. On the other hand communism is kind of a social communalism. The State has withered away and a class antagonism done away with. It is a State of total human liberty.<sup>31</sup> Socialism rejects this view as it is too skeptical and pessimistic a view of life and human nature.



On the contrary then, the desire for cooperation is quite central upon which a Socialist community is built. In Socialism then lies a political method capable of achieving the good society because for Socialists, economic interests although important are not sufficiently absolute to justify the suppression of political and intellectual freedom and the concentration of power in the hands of those who claim to represent the interest of the strongest economic class. Capitalism denies social control over an economic system thereby reducing the effectiveness of the very political liberties it claims to defend. Under Capitalism, things work only when there is a reservoir of economically powerless and expendable mass (labour reservoirs) hence it justifies unemployment just as the existence of a politically powerless and expendable mass is vital for the proper functioning of a communist State.

It should by now be clear that Socialism is not concerned with systems but with human beings. Any system that dehumanises man either mentally or materially is therefore immoral and has no business claiming to represent the interests of man since it has lost sight of the true value of human life. The moral case for Socialism then is rooted in the very nature and purpose of man and society.

Socialism however, as outlined above has been said to be too Utopia to be realised. But the permanent nature of Utopian Socialism is a quest as ancient as man's fall from grace, to unify himself with an ultimate and to find a world of freedom. After all who does not aspire for perfection?<sup>32</sup> The utopia nature of Socialism however underlines its universalism. When

local factors when in play, Socialism manifests itself differently to reflect these local factors. In Africa the attainment of independence was accompanied by the rejection of Europeanism. Scientific Socialism was thus seen as being European in nature, hence African Socialism arose to fill this ideological gap. This was a Socialism that sought to engrave the African identity and mode of thought on this universal doctrine.

## NOTES

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10. Here one is particularly concerned with Marx's appeal to the "Workers of the World to Unite," in The Communist Manifesto *Op. cit.* p. 118.
11. Cfr. J.K. Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism - A Selection of Writings and Speeches - 1965-1967. (Dar-es-Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968). This book by Nyerere is basically about the relationship between independent African nations and their choice of political ideologies.
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13. Cfr. V.I. Lenin, Collected works. (New York: International Publishers, 1916), Vol. 22.
14. J.S. Mill, Principles of Political Economy with Some of Their Application to Social Philosophy. J. Ashley (London: Longman, 1909), pp. 208-209.
15. Cfr. B. Parekh, ed., The Concept of Socialism. (London: Croomhelm, 1975).
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17. The Concept of Economies of scale is a purely capitalist term though it can be smuggled into the Socialist literature. That by cooperation and knowing each other's (man's) potential each person in the society specializes in the production of that which he has an advantage over all

the rest and therefore can do better. In the process it is believed, the total societal production is on the whole increased. The difference comes at the point of distributing the final societal product. The profit motive and the desire to monopolise markets is overriding for capitalists.

18. Refer to works on Lenin, Stalin and even Castro among others.
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22. Strictly speaking, in the Third World Countries the concept of proletarianism as a class does not make sense as it has not yet fully developed into a class conscious group. Instead there is the rural proletariat better called, the peasantry, what Frantz Fanon would call "the Wretched of the Earth, or the rural idiocy Marx. See Fanon, The Wretched of The Earth. (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1965), pp. 86, 91 & 93.
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25. Shevtsor, *Op. cit.* p. 415.
26. C.A.R. Crossland, The Future of Socialism. (New York: MacMillan, 1957) p. 67.
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30. An economic recession is simply a period of reduced general economic activity marked by a decline in employment, profits, production. A depression is normally experienced when economic activities have hit the lowest level.
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# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **THE SEARCH FOR SOCIALISM IN AFRICA**

### **5.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO AFRICAN SOCIALISM**

The development of African political thought could be said to have begun by the advocates of Negritude<sup>1</sup>. This (Negritude) was only instrumental in searching for an African identity and the place Africa occupied in the Global Civilization. Was the Black man (read Negro-African) only a consumer of culture (read Ideas) or was he capable of producing them as well? The development of African political thought therefore sought to articulate the movement of political and economic structures in their full complexity and relevance to Africa. This re-definition of the Africanness has been attributed to a number of factors. One basic factor is the historic fact of Africa having been enslaved and colonised. That there arose a moment in the historical interaction of races when the dominated (in this case Africans) realised that for Africa to make any impact in terms of her contribution to the Global civilization, there was a need for African intellectuals and people to forge a unity in order to counter Capitalism, Colonialism and Imperialism. On the ideological front, a system of thought and practice was necessary, due to the demand for, the nature of opposition and resistance. These gave birth to Panafricanism, African Socialism and African Nationalism which arose to fill this ideological gap. The social fractures of the time demanded a symbol that could hold the society together. The social realities of the time on the other hand demanded that the needs, and aspirations of Africans both urban and rural, those of white settlers and the emerging working class be harmonised.

At that particular point in time, history sought to illuminate the nature and structure of African History and social life hence, intellectuals and men of ideas emerged to represent the different intellectual systems. This led to the emergence of different Ideologies such as Negritude, Marxism (a revisit), African Socialism, Panafricanism and Nationalism. But what is African Socialism?

To many people, African Socialism is a body of literature that tries to define the condition of an African in society and tries to propose ways and means of alleviating human suffering. To others it is a body of political theorization aimed at understanding man and society besides being a view of human nature that is based on the fundamentals of traditional African set up.

To some other scholars, thinkers and Africanists, it is a communicable ideology that provides one with a perspective for understanding the present rapid developments and change in Africa, that is, the why and how ideas are generated in post-colonial Africa. For traditionalists or conservative African thinkers, African Socialism is the sum total of those codes, principles and forms of behaviour which will and have been seen to confer dignity to the African over the ages and which have afforded him security.

This chapter will attempt an assessment, refinement and synthesis of these various and seemingly ambivalent arguments and definitions of African Socialism. An attempt will also be made at relating African Socialism on the one hand and Scientific Socialism on the other. The argument as to whether

African Socialism could be an alternative theory, unique and specific to Africa as opposed to Capitalism or Communism will be critically analysed. One might also be interested in trying to understand the philosophy behind African Socialism as an ideology and the possibility of moving from traditionalism (primitive Communism) to Scientific Socialism.

As observed earlier, most literature pertaining to the theme of African Socialism is vague on what precisely the concept is all about. This may perhaps be with the exception of the writings of Leopold Sedar Senghor, the flamboyant Senegalese statesman-cum-poet who has attempted a definition of the same.<sup>2</sup>

Even the celebrated proponent of the much talked about *Ujamaa*, Julius Kabarage Nyerere, finds it difficult to give a clear and precise definition. For him, Socialism is only an attitude of the mind. The articulate intellectual and perhaps the best theorists and proponent of African Socialism, Kwame Nkrumah, is even more ambivalent having abandoned his evolutionary theory and adopted a revolutionary approach after his overthrow from power. The situation for Nkrumah was so bad that after 1970, he believed that African Socialism was a myth and only Scientific Socialism was real. One perennial argument which has followed as a logical consequence from the above is that, no two Africans mean quite the same thing when they talk of African Socialism.<sup>3</sup> For Nyerere, it simply means *Ujamaa* (familyhood),<sup>4</sup> Sekou Toure insists on having orthodox Marxism, while Senghor uses Negroism to propagate Socialism the African way as Nkrumah talks of African personality and "African Socialism" in his theory of

Consciencism, vague as it may look.<sup>5</sup>

However, basic to all these views are some underlying principles and beliefs that are knowingly or unknowingly agreed upon as the foundation and mainstay of the ideology of African Socialism.

First and foremost African Socialism is a brand of Socialism that emanates from Africa. One can then argue that being a brand of Socialism that emanates from an African mode of thought, African socialism is a unique brand of socialism that is only practiced in Africa and that it is culturally determined.

## **5.1 THE ORIGIN AND BASIS OF SOCIALIST DISCOURSES IN AFRICA**

One of the most difficult activity is to embark on identifying what the origins and bases of Socialistic discourses in Africa could be. One reason why it is a difficult activity is the fact that traditional Africa has been described as having been socialist. However, in the light of the Marxian argument, where would the demarcating line between African Socialism and Scientific Socialism be placed?

One obvious fact that has been observed before is that, no two Africans mean the same thing when talking about African Socialism. Perhaps one can go further and argue that, basic to all these discourses on African Socialism, three important points come to mind and therefore underly all the Socialist discourses in Africa:

- a) The need to be different which comes in the form of asserting the



**Africanness of the black man,**

- b) The desire to abandon and reject colonialism and all that it stood for, and**
- c) The search for an appropriate (mainly from the African past) socio-political theory suitable to the African condition.**

**It then follows that when one talks about African Socialism, one necessarily has any one of the above in mind.**

**Translated into economic terms, African Socialism rest on the assumptions that:-**

- a) Since capitalism is the system of the coloniser, it is a product of the colonial thought system, therefore, unsuitable for Africa. Nkrumah even extends this argument further and says that, Capitalism besides being too complicated is simply unacceptable on social and ethical grounds as it is based on the exploitation of man by man.<sup>9</sup>**
- b) Individual enterprise cannot mobilise enough resources on the scale required in Africa. The choice of individual enterprise would therefore mean that, the most urgent and pressing developmental issues in Africa are not squarely addressed.**
- c) Submission to the market mechanism is wasteful and too slow.**

**If the above factors are not uniquely African, but general and universal liberation discourses, a sort of revolt against capitalism as a social and economic system, then the African thinking in African Socialism can be found in:**

- a) Its association of capitalism with colonialism,**

b) The view that the role of the merchant is very parasitic *vis-a-vis* the absence of the mercantile class in the traditional communal non-monetary economies. This would mean that solutions to Africa's development crisis should be sought and harmonised with the values of the villages life which is communal; land is held in common; there exists strong kinship ties and there is lack of sharp class distinction.

It would then mean that the foregoing social setting is simply a natural basis for the construction of a Socialist form of society. That by building on the traditions of "village Socialism, the African society hoped to skip a stage in history",<sup>7</sup> the destructive individualising capitalist stage.

Other scholars have argued that, most African elites view capitalism with distrust and distaste common in Marxist discourses; that it is an extension of Colonialism and Imperialism.<sup>8</sup> Private foreign entrepreneurs were seen as being unfit for Africa since they represent and harbour neo-colonial influence.

The rise of a dynamic Capitalist class was therefore viewed with distaste and as a possible diversion of the virtues of national unity for the newly independent nation-states. Since Capitalists were seen as reactionaries bent on defending the status quo, Socialist radicals were the people to deliver Africa from economic and cultural bondage.

Closely related to this was the fact that, Capitalism and Colonialism allied to promote government bestowed monopolies which in most cases sacrificed the interests of Africans. With this in mind, decolonization and the reduction of the role of private enterprise were but only a logical

consequence.

One would further want to extend this and argue that these government bestowed monopolies saw the government organise and fix prices, production, buying and selling of commodities. To a large extent, this cast much doubt on the ability of the market forces which argument seems to have been carried over to the post colonial era, since:

- a) there already existed a basis for misunderstanding and mistrust for market mechanism,
- b) discourses on the ability of the government to manipulate economic variables existed, and
- c) there existed doubt on whether the market mechanism could control and allocate resources through decentralised decision making.

Essentially then, much of the post-colonial thought on economic development was couched in terms of State enterprises, direct State control over production, marketing, pricing and suppression of middlemen.

Political ideology aside therefore, Socialist thought and discourse in the post-colonial Africa represented continuity of the present with the past. But the past was to be seen in the light of the view that the adoption of Socialism was mainly geared at the replacement of the outmoded unifying influence of *anti-colonialist* slogans that had provided a powerful unifying and mobilizing force in the pre-independence era. African Socialism it is argued, grew out of the lack of a new doctrine that could continue to unify African population where nationalism and *anti-neo-colonialism* seemed inadequate. Africanness seemed a powerful unifying tool at the same time

the conscious of being African.<sup>9</sup> It is at independence that one finds Socialists disappearing to re-emerge as African Socialists ready to identify with the growing continental consciousness.

It is from this perspective that one has to treat the origin of African Socialism as being the economic philosophy of communal ownership of land, the egalitarian character of society with little if any degree of stratification and the extensive network of social obligations which led to high degree of co-operation. This position if held would mean that the existence of the three would steadily and readily facilitate the creation of modern economic institutions based on Socialist principles. What is however absurd about this argument is its conclusion; that capitalism was unnatural and unsuitable for Africa. Obviously one need not have the techniques and rules of formal logic to see that this conclusion has been fallaciously smuggled in to justify the choice of Socialism.

One notable fact has however been that, unlike primitive Communism, African Socialism has been a byproduct of specific cultural processes that were developed along the historical development of the African society. In a way then, African Socialism provides the traditional sanction to the conceptualisation and construction of a new social order, one that serves to show a sense of belonging to the emerging crop of Africans.

All said and done, is there anything within African Socialism that one can claim is the sure African mark on Socialism? Was Africa only interested in the transition to modernity other considerations notwithstanding? Igor Kopytoff has discerned three major themes which he argues can be said to

be the African contribution to the Socialist system or that make Africa have a Socialist outlook for that matter. These three can be summarised as co-operation, collectivism and communalism (which he refers to as Socialism).<sup>10</sup> Based upon these three he argued, one can construct a special and unique kind of Socialism that would take into consideration the cultural uniqueness and conditions of Africa and her people. While retaining the universal standards and criteria that go into defining Socialism.

A study of African civilization, argues Senghor, reveals that Africa had realised Socialism long before the coming of Europeans. For Nyerere, Socialism like democracy are the defining characteristics and essence of being African and African society. The transformation of colonial society to a Socialist one becomes therefore natural.

But when one talks of African Socialism, does he mean that it is only practiced by Africans, and only in Africa? Does this view if granted leave any room say for Africanists to practice African Socialism as an ideology? This perhaps can explain the fact that the uniqueness and claim to difference in African Socialism is a result of ethnocentric biases where a people tend to perceive other's cultural patterns and practices through their own categories, values and concern.

The argument as to whether traditional Africa was Socialist or not has become increasingly of least academic concern and interest. The main concern now is to view and appraise the theory of African Socialism for its pragmatic utility and as a guide to action. What has been considered the basis of African Socialism, the social control of property which forms a

relationship of reciprocal obligation is simply a universally acclaimed social duty of all in society- any society.

It would therefore seem that African Socialism has little, if any uniquely African foundation upon which to assert a difference. But latter position cannot be reconciled with that of radical Panafricanists who emphasise following George Padmore the uniqueness of African values. This school holds that four important and unique characteristics go into defining an African world view. These include the fact that;

- a) Africa had a single culture that could be harnessed and be used to base upon it an African way of thinking.
- b) Africa had an economic basis, her natural resources which require unity in their exploitation by Africans and only for Africans.
- c) Africa had suffered a great deal under the hands of colonialism, therefore independent Africa needed independence in all spheres of life namely: social, economic, political, ideological and cultural.
- d) For Africa to forge ahead, continental planning was necessary.

The above view which to a large extent represented radical Panafricanists who believed that Capitalism is a system that is based on blind forces of demand and supply, yet for them, man needs to assert his rationality. It therefore followed that Socialism was the only way out of this predicament. Socialism for them created a sense of common identity, expressed the cultural unity in Africa and was welcome as a unifying ideology. The ideological framework underlying African Socialism and shared throughout the African continent aimed at the rejection of imperialist

practices and the elimination of exploitation thereby restoring in man his power to plan co-operative ventures and the preservation of African traditional values. It is from this point of view, it is argued, that came, from the archive of Africa's past discourses on Socialism in Africa.

## **5.2 THE GRID OF AFRICAN SOCIALISM**

Most political theorists and leaders understand African Socialism to mean a communicable ideology that provides one with a perspective for understanding the present rapid development and change in Africa. It therefore seems that African Socialism broadly provides ideas and a framework to social and ideological change, that is the why and how ideas have and are being generated in a post-colonial Africa. It is the praxis which permits the analysis of the effect of ideas upon action, whether ideas are shaped by economic and social realities.

The argument that African Socialism as a theory was formulated in haste could probably and partly provide the answer to, why it lacks precise definition. But its theoretical formulation has never in the first place been completed which means it lacks a coherent ideological orientation and conceptual framework within which to operate.

Others may argue that African Socialism is not the product of one thinker, but that of many thinkers operating from a variety of exigencies in their own countries. To this end then African Socialism has remained simply a dimension to which Africans give specific content as they work out their problems on a day-to-day basis. It is therefore a forum through which

leaders in Africa sought to articulate and develop an ideology that will support their long range generalised goals. The question as to whether these goals were Socialist or not is quite another matter.<sup>11</sup>

As the new nations passed through the various stages of development , the ideology of African Socialism became the basis for the justification of the divergence of actions in the time which led to much of the expectations in Africa aimed at satisfying these different and diverging situational demands.

However, as an ideology, African Socialism has been highly flexible, an amorphous set of ideas that fail to meet the criteria of sophisticated thinking. The implication of this is that, there has been difference in emphases, trends, goals, orientation, language and the primary aim. For instance, whereas Nyerere emphasised community development centered around the village, Nkurumah emphasised for Ghana the creation of modern economic institutions in which the State played a prominent role.

This notwithstanding, four themes stand out clear and can be discerned in spite of the diversity and differences in style and orientation within African Socialism. These are:

- a) the search for a common identity,
- b) the problem of under-development,
- c) the crisis to control, and
- d) the denial of class antagonism.



### **5.2.1 THE SEARCH FOR A COMMON IDENTITY**

It has been argued that, this theme qualifies African Socialism to remain a unique ideology. This is a philosophy that sought to identify the position of Africa, assert the commonness of Africans and the need to be different.

Socialists the world over believe that only Socialism represents the interests of the down trodden, the exploited as opposed to the bourgeoisie exploiters. For Africans however, the rejection had to be seen from an African perspective. The rejection has to do with all that originated from the metropolitan powers and therefore Socialism can no longer remain universal, hence the need to change it to be able to accommodate African culture. From this perspective African Socialism is a reaction against metropolitan Europe, as well as a search for a common and unifying identity for all Africans.

### **5.2.2 THE PROBLEM OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT**

It has been argued that African Socialism and African Economic development are two sides of the same coin. Perhaps this has been derived from the argument that, at Independence, the rejection of capitalism dealt the final blow to private enterprise hence the issue of economic growth and development lay largely in the hands of the people's government. The government's role in planning has been over-emphasised thus becoming the rallying point in the same way its role in the provision of capital is. The government has been as the only agent which can accumulate capital on its

own behalf and for development.

African economies being much dependent on foreign Metropolitan economies, means that African Socialism guided the rapidly needed economic growth and industrialisation while at the same time it forms a medium through which Africans could reduce dependency. To many however, as Igor Kopytoff has observed, "African Socialism has come to be no more than a convenient doctrine which helps to explain, rationalise and justify governmental involvement in the process of economic growth"<sup>12</sup>, *in order to control the crisis of class formation* (emphasis mine).

### **5.2.3 THE CRISIS TO CONTROL AND CLASS FORMATION**

The struggle for Africa's Independence took the form of appealing to the population for support and the advocacy for sustained economic activities that could facilitate capital accumulation. It is this time and mood that led to the need to check the new imbalances that were the outcome of unbalanced distribution of the national income. The departure of the colonialists saw black Africans replace them in the every structures that necessitated the struggle for independence. This meant that the social and economic problems and conditions of pre-independence Africa remained unresolved. The rural areas remained largely underdeveloped and the mass of the population in rural areas lived in conditions of abject poverty.

With these social and economic problems, African leaders saw the beginning of social classes arising out of the formation of different interest groups with different aspirations, wants and targets. This posed a threat to

**African nationalism, African unity and nation building.**

The introduction of African Socialism was therefore, partly to offset this imbalance by mobilising the masses to produce more and improve their conditions through self-sacrifice. Thus, the various interest groups and the problems of class consciousness were all tied up to the differential sacrifices that various groups, social or economic were to make in a bid to enhance economic progress.<sup>13</sup> This it was hoped would transform the society from the parochial kinship unit to focus on the nation.<sup>14</sup>

African Socialism then became the unifying doctrine that supported in the economic sphere the political changes that had taken place, that is, the transition from a colonial to an independent Africa.

#### **5.2.4 THE DENIAL OF CLASS ANTAGONISM**

This has been a common argument raised in support of African Socialism and therefore forms part of the literature that attempts to define African Socialism. In traditional Africa it is argued, everybody was equal and one could not draw a strict demarcating line on where one class ended and another one begun. In Africa, social classes were seen as an unnecessary evil brought in by Colonisation. Any argument on class formation was seen as an anomaly since a genuinely indigenous traditional Africa was economically homogeneous and therefore unstratified.

One should however note that at Independence, the gap between organised workers and the rest of the populace was wide and this process was just beginning and was poised to continue. This should not however

mean that there existed any class antagonism. In fact it has been observed that in Africa during colonial and immediately after Independence class antagonism could not exist, because, the existence of class consciousness had not been realised.<sup>15</sup>

This meant that the analysis of the social structure and social group would not fit in the Marxian dialectical theory since it is based on the assumption of class consciousness and class antagonism.<sup>16</sup>

The general argument as to whether Africa was a classless society or not has been quite controversial and perhaps the most debated upon in the history of African political thought. Nyerere says there were no classes, as does Mboya and Nkrumah. However, Mulusa and Fox have observed that some regions notably the interlacustrine Kingdoms, manifested some kind of stratification. The "three distinct classes; the royal family, the administrator, and the peasants" existed.<sup>17</sup> This argument is however flawed. The analysis is right but the conclusion is wrong. But in the light of this what would be the sincerity in the argument of a classless Africa? Perhaps the trouble here could be to what extent can one accept Mulusa and Fox's definition of class. How can one refer to a royal family as opposed to a proletariat as a group or both as classes?

Senghor avoids a direct answer to the above question but points out that a colonised people are alienated people. Economically they have been marginalised, politically, socially and culturally they are alienated. This for him leads to physical and moral suffering, poverty and an uneasy conscience.<sup>18</sup> But this is in the context of Colonialism, which would mean

there existed the alienator and the alienated at individual and class level. So colonial Africa was a class structured society.

It should however be observed that for Senghor, whereas the Socialist struggle in Europe aimed at eliminating inequalities that arose out of class formation, the same cannot be said of Africa. In Africa, the struggle was aimed at the restoration and re-establishment of the natural equilibrium of man in society. Africa having been culturally unique, the Socialist revolution must aim at eliminating inequalities caused by colonial domination.

Nyerere argues along the same line that;

*"In traditional African society, everybody was a worker. There was no other way of earning a living for the community. Even the elder who appeared to be enjoying himself without doing any work and for whom everybody else appeared to be working for, had in fact worked harder in his younger days. The wealth he now appears to possess was not his personally, it was only 'his' as the elder of the group, a custodian for the whole group. He was its guardian. The wealth itself gave him neither power nor prestige."*<sup>19</sup>

This would seem to provide the basis for the argument that if past society lacked social classes, then future one had no reason to have, or if it acquires any, then the number of strata should be minimised and so should the differences between the classes. For Nyerere therefore, "The true Socialist may not exploit his fellows"<sup>20</sup>, such that if a group insists on getting more than their share of the national product,

*"... in spite of the fact that it would mean reducing their groups contribution to the general income and thus slowing down the rate at which the whole community can benefit, ... it is also exploiting the other members of society. It is displaying a Capitalist attitude if mind."*<sup>21</sup>

In the foregoing, one may have observed that implicitly there

exists a notion of justice in the general doctrine of African Socialism. That, in the larger community as in the family, the maxim operating was, from each according to his ability to each according to his needs. The surplus goes to the society or State in modern terms.

One may then at this point question the role of the State in as far as it remains the manager of public funds. African countries that opted to go Socialist argue that society's wealth should be managed in the interest of all. It has also been observed that the public sector in the newly independent States continues to expand and therefore have become the largest employer. It is also admissibly true that significant economic development can be achieved through public investment. This however should not be interpreted to constitute Socialism.

The question here then would be, is Socialism all about elimination of private property or private means of production? If it is then, one would rather it (destruction of private property) remained just a necessary but not a sufficient condition for the establishment of a Socialist society, one that upholds the liberty of man, a society built on the foundation of the principles of justice, freedom and aims at achieving the good of all in society. One would therefore want to look at the elimination of private ownership in so far as it tends to encourage exploitation. The conclusion here is simple and natural; that on a purely natural pedestal, there appears to be no logical inconsistency between the existence of Socialism and private ownership in so far as the latter is devoid of exploitation.

African Socialism can therefore be seen from the point of view of

merely being a humanistic development. If so, then, a sense of solidarity and willingness to subordinate private interests to those of society is necessary in ensuring a transition to modernity.

Could one argue that, African Nationalism and Panafricanism fostered solidarity amongst Africans to the extent of cementing Socialist principles and ties among Africans? If it did, could this perhaps explain and account for the reasons why African Socialism merely focussed on economic relations of man to wealth and of man to man in the productive context without paying much attention to the theoretical principles behind man and production? But, then, how can one reconcile this with the view of production as a very divisive process involving functional and structural differentiation epitomised in Adam Smith's division of labour?

Since functional specialisation and division of labour come with what Marx calls alienation, there arises need and necessity to evolve various integrative mechanisms for the various social institutions. In Socialism one finds an ideology specifically tailored to meet the needs and demands of man rather than the rights of property. African Socialism on the other hand, apart from providing for the needs of man, is based on co-operation rather than competition hence has a humanistic appeal. Combined with an environment in Africa that was split between retaining its traditional outlook or turning capitalistically westernised, the product was to be a well structured society set to maintain and solidify human relations and the productive forces.

### **5.3.0 THE RATIONAL CHOICE AND CREED FOR DEVELOPMENT**

An analysis of African Socialism reveals that, unlike Scientific Socialism, it was not based on nationalization. Yet, within the body of literature on Scientific Socialism, State planning is often seen as a prerequisite for the attainment of Socialism. Given the many choices Africa had at Independence, it was only rational that they (Africans) chose Socialism.

Socialism in Africa it has been observed was simply a complexity of structures, economic as well as social practices and realities which conformed to the environment. Whereas Nkrumah based his Socialism on industrialisation, Nyerere based his *Ujamaa* on the villagisation policy and agricultural production. To facilitate economic growth and development, nationalization was effected alongside the encouragement of the private sector.

Perhaps the question one should ask, is whether conditions were favourable for the operation of public enterprise with the aim of controlling, directing and orienting the economy? One can also go further and delineate particular reasons that seem to have made African Socialism the rational ideology for a post-Colonial Africa.

### **5.3.1 THE REJECTION OF COLONIALISM AND THE EXPERIENCE OF CAPITALISM**

Capitalism for a long time was and is still associated with oppressive colonial powers and structures. The latter is based on the assumption that



one man (or a race) will work to produce for another. Here, man and his humanness - (humanity) is negated. The moral value of man is also denied. For colonialism to thrive, then Africans had to be exploited to the benefit of the Colonial powers. It meant therefore, that, Capital in Africa remained a preserve of foreigners which follows that Africans were excluded from the profits derived from it.

The implications of this has been that at Independence, no major class of Africans had developed with clear cut vested interest in Capitalism. Why? Because, Colonialism exploited Africans and destroyed their culture which made Africans become socially alienated and become economically rootless, consequently they mistrusted Capitalism.

This argument has been used to support the view that at Independence no group of Africans was well placed to try and risk investing. The task of capital accumulation was therefore left to the State. Given the state of development in the world (Nyerere makes a joke out of this: that the world is aiming at the moon while Africa is aiming at the village)<sup>22</sup>, it seems things had taken a wrong turn. The adoption of Socialism in Africa therefore presented Africa with the best alternative, avoid experimentation and haphazard change, thereby giving Africa the best hope to achieve rapid economic transformation.

### **5.3.2 THE PSYCHOLOGY OF AFRICAN SOCIALISM**

From a psychological point of view, Socialism was the only remedy to European terror and individualism. African Socialists hoped to retain the

community aspect within African civilization.

In Nyerere's words, the African saw himself as a member of the Community, but he saw no struggle between his individual interests and society's interests. The problem of African Socialists was how to benefit from the best of the atomized European civilization without necessarily compromising Africanism.<sup>23</sup>

### 5.3.3 REJECTION OF MARXISM

Scientific Socialism, what Nyerere calls doctrinaire Socialism, is based on class antagonism. This has been derived from the fact that for Marx, the history of the hitherto existing societies has been the history of class struggle.<sup>24</sup>

While rejecting Marxism, African Socialists assumed that Socialism could be built on the supposed homogeneity of African peoples and the desire for continental unity and equality.

Therefore considerations of class struggle are more relevant when one looks at the international community, than focus on particular nation-states in Africa since:

*"The world is ... divided between the have and the have-nots. This division is not between Capitalists and socialists ... this is a division between the poor ... and the rich countries of the world. The poor and the rich countries of the world ... may be found on either side of the division ..."*<sup>25</sup>

What all these amounts to is that, development following a Socialist model was unlikely to create gaps that will create or/and necessitate class antagonism. The requirements of Socialism was the political organization of

the masses for the achievement of equitable distribution of the national resources. This, it was believed would lead to Socialism without class struggle or a proletarian revolution.

#### **5.3.4 THE PHILOSOPHY OF MARXISM**

According to marx, economic relations of production determine the course of history and reality. This would mean that matter is basic in determining history. In Marxism one finds the rejection of the spiritual strand in man. What of Africa? Man for Africans is man because of God's work of creation.<sup>28</sup> The spiritual element is part and parcel of the definition of man and reality.

Later day communists (in the guise of Socialism) rejected this humanitarian appeal in Marx, thereby abandoning the revolutionary ferment that made Marxism a Philosophy for revolutionary appeal. The focus here is on Marxian humanism, the desire to uplift the status of man and the search and struggle freedom. In Africa this Communist totalitarianism could not be accommodated. The spiritual place of man in society is recognised and respected.

One therefore will observe that, Marxian economic Philosophy as regards the ownership of private property and the requirements of a Socialist revolution are rejected and treated pragmatically when it comes to Socialist practice and orientation in Africa.

Yet one can argue that the rejection of Marxism can be seen in the light of the anti-imperialist sentiments of the time. It followed therefore that

in Africa;

*"It is both necessary and objectionable to narrow the range of choices to two systems: Capitalism and Communism.... The chances of either ... being adopted are very slim ..., the tendency then is toward a pragmatic approach which discards the irrelevant and incorporates the best from both systems".<sup>27</sup>*

It would however, be argued that Socialism based upon the tenets and principles analysed in chapter four would for sure not see any Socialism in what has come to be known as African Socialism. What has conveniently been termed a pragmatic Socialist approach is in fact a betrayal of the principles of democracy and justice for which Socialism has fought over the years. This may be true. But one has also to look at the way African Socialism was born; under an overwhelming and popular desire for rapid economic growth and the urge to be different. It follows that within their formulation, African Socialists have unknowingly taken care of the concept of democracy. Nyerere would for example, recognise the fact that though African leadership is seen within the framework of monopartyism, it however perpetuates a popular sense of participation in the government.

African Socialism should however be seen from a different perspective, that of providing a compromise between the growing individualism born out of colonial institutions and experience, and the traditional African sense of solidarity and collective action. This, could serve the purpose; both in mobilising the people for development and reflecting upon their own needs, desires and opinions as well as considering the realities of their own peculiar situation.

How about a Capitalist option? Capitalism has basically been rejected

on the grounds that it could not work in Africa given the uneven distribution of the national wealth at Independence. Not all members of the various nation States were for example assured or guaranteed same life expectancy as well as equal living standards.

This has led to the conclusion that Capitalism could therefore not be a remedy for the poverty, mass unemployment and hunger. A Capitalist option could only bring along private ownership of land which was simply the concentration of land in the hands of a few moneyed class, thereby creating a destitute landless class. How could a nation develop using a destitute proletarian landless class? This leaves Socialism as the only rational choice under whatever guise, and the only hope for development on the scale required in Africa.

#### **5.4 A SOCIALIST VIEW OF AFRICAN SOCIALISM**

Nineteenth century Socialists argued that Socialism was universal and humanistic. Could this perhaps account for the choice of Socialism by African political elites at Independence? If African Socialism was concerned with purely and uniquely African affairs in a pragmatic way could one argue that this is a parochial, instrumental and largely a leader's creation that lacked an ideological basis?

It has been argued elsewhere that Socialism was basically inspired and grew out of social inequalities and the lack of political freedom.<sup>28</sup> Given this then, one would contrast it to African Socialism and argue that, the latter grew out of the desire for economic development and the

achievement and consolidation of national political power. But the label 'African' attached to this universal ideology served the purpose of declaring African independence, economically, socially, politically, (ideologically), and culturally.

The principles and tenets underlying the Socialist ideology world over have been identified with a historically progressive movement. Socialism disregards cultural background and indigenous traditional orientations. Yet one will notice that African Socialism was motivated by some strange factors that would immediately, at first sight seem non-Socialist.

One of this has been the need and the desire to be different and to reassert the Africanness of the black man and his contribution to global civilization. Coming immediately after Negritude, it would seem that African Socialism meant efforts to be distinctly unique and modern. It would appear that African Socialism meant assuming some basic and specific character in the contemporary world that would be able to deal with the problem of social identity, economic development and new class formation in the emerging societies.

In its avoidance of dialectics of the founders of Scientific Socialism, African Socialists ignored the role of class struggle and therefore African Socialism did not grow out of a fully fledged capitalist society. Instead it stressed the indigenous character of communal ownership of land, the egalitarian nature of society, and aimed at appealing to the extensive network of social obligations which tie African families together. The

conclusion here could then follow that, Scientific Socialism was unnatural and unacceptable to Africa. On what basis these Africans Socialists arrived at this conclusion is a matter of conjecture. But one thing was for sure obvious: that there are those who admired the privileges and powers of colonial structures and wished that the same powers could be transferred to them in independent Africa. The problem however lay in the masses: would the masses accept the colonial privileges and practices to be carried over to independent Africa? So what choices did the political elites of the time have? partly to disguise their policies and programmes in Socialist and populist language in a bid to satisfy the emotional feelings of the mass of the African population.

But why just African Socialism? Could it be that Scientific Socialism did not guarantee - given its origin - the fundamental rights and freedoms Africans had fought for? How unique is Africa for that matter if Socialism in Europe claimed to have liberated the whole down trodden lot? Could one argue that African Socialism was necessitated by the simple desire to be unique and the wish to extend the extensive relationship existing and binding one african with another? Why choose 'African' Socialism anyway, when the goal was to move towards Africanity, where the achievement of an African personality defined as so was paramount and most urgent the means notwithstanding?

Perhaps one thing stands out clear. That Socialism in Europe did not mean the same thing as in Africa. In Europe, entrepreneurship had reached a very high degree of specialisation hence a corresponding degree of

individualism. In Europe therefore, the most urgent thing was to eliminate private ownership from the hands of a few, thereby entrusting the community as an entity with the task of managing, organizing and safeguarding her wealth.

Discourses and orientation's on Socialism in Africa are neither wholly Socialist nor wholly African.<sup>29</sup> There are undoubtedly many reasons why Socialism was practiced in Africa. But whatever else it might be, or defined to be, African socialism should be appraised only from the point of view of its pragmatic ability, that is, its workability and moral appeal. One cannot therefore appraise African Socialism on the basis of purely Socialist principles.<sup>30</sup>

If Socialism is a conception of a cooperative society in which inequalities are banished by removing the distinction between haves and have nots,<sup>31</sup> then, the desire to go Socialist in Africa was not at least motivated by this one reason: the elimination of inequalities! A survey of current works on African Socialism provide enough evidence that at least, African Socialism was motivated by the sole desire to remain as much as possible Africans. But who said there is something Socialist in being African? There are among individual Africans who are capable of practicing Socialism but one cannot just pass a blanket judgement that being African is equivalent to being Socialist!

It should however be maintained that Socialist values ought and have been held to be universal such that Socialism is Socialism regardless of where and when it is practiced. While, to some extent, specific issues that



demand focus and attention may vary contextually, the activities of Socialism is essentially cross cultural. One may wish to state that Socialism has all along fought for equality of man, cooperation as a human virtue, collective welfare, internationalism and universal justice. Without denying the Negro-African contribution to global civilization, how can the practice of benevolence towards a neighbour be a basis for asserting the Socialist nature of Africa?

A renowned Africanist, I.I. Potekhin has argued that, a Socialist State is one whose

*"... Power is vested in the workers. There are no exploiting classes nor does man exploit his fellows. The economy is planned and its essential aim is to afford the maximum satisfaction of a man's material and spiritual needs."<sup>32</sup>*

How far can this be said of post-colonial Africa? In independent African nation-states, a class, formerly the civil servants, teachers and the administrators formed themselves into a powerful positions to acquire political power which they in turn used in the acquisition of wealth. The latter was a very good weapon for acquiring land which then gave them the economic power to consolidate their political positions. Essentially this was an exploiting group which pushed the rest of the populace to become a landless proletariat on the periphery of society.

It should be observed that while Nyerere asserted the view that Socialism is just an attitude of mind, he at least also insisted that, it is necessary to formulate and formalise some basic conceptual principles upon which to consciously base a national programme for development.<sup>33</sup> One can here argue that perhaps he sought ways and means of eliminating

exploitation of man by man. In this way, one has to base his actions on what he considers to be basic moral principles of equality, cooperation and collective welfare which then demand just treatment and relationship between men. It would also seem that African Socialism is nothing but those codes, principles and forms of behaviour which will and have been seen to confer dignity to the African over the ages and which have afforded him security. In this way then, security and communal spirit become the most distinguishing characteristics of African Socialism. To this end, One has no business terming the practice of Socialism in Africa Socialist (but this is when pushed to the extreme). Yet African Socialism given all that has been analysed above provides one with values that have remained praiseworthy and good in themselves, the values that are revered in traditional African Society. Talk about African Socialism however, as going back to the 'source' meaning primitive communism is misguided to say the least. This is a historical fact which at best ought to remain as that thus forming only a small portion in the literature on the history of African civilization and not as a basis for building a modern Socialist State.

A close analysis however, reveals that there are elements in traditional African society which one could base his argument on in building a modern society. *Ujamaa* for Nyerere seemed to do exactly that.

Considered as an ideology alongside Scientific Socialism, African Socialism seemed bent on providing a tool for economic development by explaining today's sacrifices in terms of a vision of a better tomorrow.

It was meant to give direction and hope as well as inspire new efforts

with its major concern being the danger of individualism and the rise and growth of a moneyed class. Africa then has to harness the communal spirit of the village and make do with the cooperative work groups.

Here, it emphasised and made appeal to the larger social goals of patriotism, nationalism, national unity and the natural good for all. That at independence African countries were faced with the problem of modernization and industrialisation is not in dispute. It is the emphasis placed here which tend to upset the traditional and religious values of the society where the bases of authority were not quite clear and as such rested on different criteria. African Socialism was then charged with the double duty of creating new and modernised States, acted as an ideological creed, as well as a socio-economic system besides being a tool for African unity.

It should however be noted at this point that, the various "Socialisms" practiced under the generic term African Socialism seems to be vastly different in form and content, from the traditional vision of the nineteenth century Socialists whose principles were both humanistic and universal. From a purely Socialist point of view therefore African Socialism seems to have been narrowly focused with its main concern being the acquisition of political and economic power. The latter being the means and bases of acquiring political power which was to be used as a means of consolidating and protecting economic wealth, legitimately or illegitimately acquired.

With this kind of argument, one would run into problems immediately. For example the problem of economic power cannot just be settled by the simple act of transfer of capital from private hands to the State since,

nationalisation alone does not necessarily provide any automatic answers to the problems of economic growth. Socialist policies based on humanism might maintain full employment, for example, but, the problem is that they will not materially increase industrial production. Thus, in the short run, full employment might look appealing but in the long run, lack of increased capacity to produce more might cause more disturbing questions than just unemployment. Purely on a philosophical level it might present a moral dilemma whether it is morally desirable and therefore right to achieve full employment and alleviate human suffering even in the short run, or aspire for greater industrial expansion with all its related and unpredictable turn of events including human suffering. Perhaps the solution for Africa lay in the Socialisation of the means of production and therefore make Socialism in Africa serve man and society.

## **5.5 THE PHILOSOPHY OF AFRICAN SOCIALISM**

When juxtaposed to Scientific Socialism, African Socialism seems to differ radically. The philosophy of Scientific Socialism arose out of the Social structure where individualism had taken root. That was the philosophy of nineteenth century Europe.

On the contrary however, African Socialism is based on the rejection of individualism, the philosophy of Western Europe. Though it is in a way linked to the existentialist movement which also gave birth to the philosophies of Negritude, African nationalism, Panafricanism among others, African Socialism asserts a view of human nature that rests on the

fundamental characteristics of traditional African society, that is, classlessness, communality and egalitarianism. This philosophy rests on the belief that, only within a society, can an individual fulfil himself. It is a philosophy, a metaphysic that rests on the belief that, it is society which gives shape, form, content and cohesion to man. This view if held would mean that society assumes a collective interaction, aspiration and fear. Here, society is seen as taking on a form of consciousness, and therefore the right of compulsion to force the individual to be free.

A close analysis of this philosophy will reveal that, the western majoritarian democracy of the will of all is reduced to the general will or the will of the people.

Capitalism in Africa is not only a form of private ownership of the economy, but it is also a kind of human relationship, individual ownership can produce. The latter then heightens individual ambition and produces a desire for personal gain. This is seen as a destruction of the values and characteristics so much cherished in the definition of an African personality and society. One would want to argue at this point that, the economic and social philosophies of African Socialism are fundamental in as far as it is a kind of social obligation that aims at working out modalities for increased material wealth for use by man in society.

Parasitism and idleness being the hallmark of Capitalism are regarded as social ills and Nyerere exemplifies this in his argument that in traditional African Society everybody was a worker. A worker, not only in opposition to 'employer' but also in opposition to 'loiterer' or 'idler'. Those who take

pride in the African way of life and the traditional African hospitality will always invoke the Swahili proverb "*Mgeni siku mbili, siku ya tatu, mpe jembe*". Translated it means that one can only remain a visitor for two days, on the third day give him a hoe. Nyerere continues that, in actual fact, the guest was likely to ask for a hoe before the host gave him one for he knew what was expected of him and more idleness could make him feel ashamed.<sup>34</sup>

This view has been challenged by among others Friedland who argues that the subsistence economies found in African societies could not be a basis for perceiving work as an ethic.<sup>35</sup> In fact for him, Africans looked at work as a necessary evil for survival. This assertion is debatable. Perhaps Friedland's assertion could only help as far as the understanding of discourses on the dichotomisation of the universe into the west and Africa is concerned. In that case if the west considers obligation to work as ethic, then Africa's reason must be different and therefore should be sought elsewhere.

What then can one say is the philosophy of African Socialism?

Senghor argues that the satisfaction derived from stereo typed formulas and vague aspirations about Scientific Socialism in Africa should be discarded. One would not really wish this literature discarded but perhaps only to form part of the history on the origin and development of African political thought. Senghor would want to see in African Socialism, the legitimate means that will enable contemporary Africa return to the original (African) sources, the basis for which Africa came into being, the ontology of the African.<sup>36</sup>

Given the diversities in the meaning and function of Socialism in Africa, Senghor's argument would entail all the texts on African Socialism being rethought a new, in the light of Negro-African realities, that is, from the point of view, of black culture and civilization. What does all this mean? It means that African Socialists must start from the works of Marx and Engels only in so far as their methods and ideas are meaningfully applied to Negro-African situation. The Marxian method can in the light of this be used in the analysis of the African social realities in the same way this ideas can be used in solving African problems. To this end then, the Marxian method provides a framework within which African social realities could be understood. Since Marx's theory of class struggle cannot explain all the social and specifically cultural realities, Africa had the task of founding a model that could effectively explain her peculiar cultural predicament within the mainstream of Socialist framework. This framework was to be found in African Socialism.

Given the above, Africa would base her Socialism on experiences of traditional African civilization, the contact with Europeans under colonialism and the appraisal of Africa's economic resources, taking into account her needs hence its major focus would be on economic growth and development. it would also mean that African Socialism will be social and cultural in dimension placing emphasis on traditional African social life and practices. It is in this way that the Socialist contribution would be adopted to the African realities by ecclectically retaining some traditional values, religious (eclectically) and communal spirit, borrow from Marxist-Leninism's

dialectics at the same time rejecting the atheistic materialism of the same (Marxian theory).

Thus the only path to Socialism in Africa is by basing one's belief on national values and realities. African theorists then need only to rethink the Socialist method in the light of African realities. This method should then be suitable and appropriate for understanding African realities and transforming them effectively to suit the quest for modernity. But why built on African traditional values? One plausible argument has been that colonial Africa was politically and economically dependent on the metropolitan powers in the west. This kind of situation it has been argued has not been plausible enough for a people to develop themselves fully. Independence and freedom enables man to develop intellectually, politically and culturally. Here then, one finds that the personality of a people cannot flourish when it feels chained to certain norms and values that underly a world view which seems alien. Yet, there cannot be freedom in the alienating mood created under colonialism where the being of the black man was disregarded. Liberal Philosophers have argued that one cannot have freedom without specific liberties, first and foremost the liberty to choose what and who he wants to be. The struggle against Imperialism was therefore a struggle that aimed at liberating the black man, that is, a reassertion of the uniqueness of the African personality.

The philosophy of African Socialism cannot be said to be complete if one failed to appreciate and place it within the wider movement concerning the predicament the black man found himself in the first half of this century.



The argument that African intellectuals are too obsessed with the history and philosophy of the black man, a re-invention cannot be underestimated. The place of African intellectuals has itself been defined by the values of being black, how one betrays or expresses them as well as the categories and discourses by the white man on the definition of the "Other".<sup>37</sup>

If one wished to place Nyerere in this wider context, then, one would argue that Nyerere's main concern was the philosophy of the African seen from the point of view of his history and the predicament involved in the definition of the "Other". *Ujamaa* then was to survive on the generosity and benevolence of the traditional African family relationship which creates a symbiotic interaction between men. The humanism involved here then made African Socialism, Nyerere's *Ujamaa*, a philosophy of justice.

## 5.6 CONCLUSION

The analysis of the principles and tenets underlying Socialism as a doctrine, its origin and growth, reveals that, it has been identified with a historically progressive movement, the desire for human freedom and the struggle for justice. It has been argued that African elites at independence felt the need to identify themselves with a movement which sought to assert the rational Independence of man. This search for Socialism also provided the path for the search for justice in Africa and for Africans.

As an ideology, African Socialism sought to create identity that transcended tribal and communal boundaries aimed at the consolidation of

national unity and the preservation of national independence. As a social system, it concentrated power in the hands of an elite class which seems to have provided for the ease of nationalisation of the basic industries in the nation and their direction under some ministerial control while focussing on central planning and direction of industries through a political monopoly by one party system of government. Here then, Socialism serves as a means of mobilising society for industrial, economic and social transformation.

If being nationalist was not appealing enough, then the idea of kinship (*Ujamaa*) was definitely found in the idea of being African. African Socialism then was not just an ideology for redressing social and economic inequalities but a Metaphysic, a philosophy to be lived, an ontology for the Africans. Thus, African Socialism became a new myth that took the place of anti-colonial sentiments that had fueled many independent movements which later reasserted new values for the new African. It was argued that African Socialism arose to fill an ideological gap in the African political thought. That it sought to unite where nationalism and Panafricanism seemed not to hold. For Nyerere however, African Socialism lacked a basis upon which it could be built to perform the double duty of uniting Africans as well as acting as an ideology for modernisation. He thus sought to base African Socialism on the idea of kinship system that characterised traditional Africa. This was *Ujamaa* the ideology.

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# CHAPTER SIX

## ***UJAMAA: A RURAL SOCIALISM***

### **6.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND ANALYSIS**

*Ujamaa* is a swahili word which when literally translated means brotherhood. This is the word Nyerere chose to designate the kind of Socialism he desired to build in Tanzania. One cannot deny the fact that this is a description of the unity and brotherhood relations found in traditional African communities. His socialism he argued, was to be built on the traditional African practice of extended family - *jamii*.

The decade between 1960 and 1970 saw great debate on precisely what the generic term African Socialism meant. At one level, it was argued that African Socialism was a unique brand of Socialism emanating from the traditional African mode of thought. It was therefore a brand of Socialism that was most suited for the African condition. That in spite of Africa having been colonized and consequently her cultural values denied, negated or at best disrupted, there seemed something persistent about Africa which needed attention. In a word Africa needed to contribute her Africanness to the global civilization.

Proponents of this view argued that African Socialism reflected and implied the development of society based on African ideals and value system, the relationship between man and man, between labour and profit and the attitude towards work as well as between production and its results.<sup>1</sup>

The period beginning 1961 saw most African countries attain

independence. During this time Nyerere observed that, Africa had no choice of either going Communist nor Capitalist. There was only one rational path to follow on the way to recovery. That was through Socialism.<sup>2</sup> He argued that though he was prescribing Socialism for Africa, her brand of Socialism was to be different since it had to have its basis in the traditional African value system and practice of extended family - *Ujamaa*.<sup>3</sup>

At another level were those who saw nothing uniquely African in this so called African Socialism. For them, Socialism was a universal ideal which was also universally applicable. The only valid approach to the study and practice of Socialism was therefore that propounded by Karl Marx in his historical materialism. Therefore only scientific Socialism merited existence. The claim to uniqueness by the so called African Socialists, they argued, was only but a bourgeoisie way of protecting the interests of Capitalist imperialists. If the practice of Socialism was to differ, they said, then it was in its application which was an instantiation from the universal to reflect the social and economic environment. Otherwise the conditions obtaining for Socialism should remain the same.

### **6.1.0 THE BASES OF UJAMAA**

The practice of Socialism in Tanzania took two main dimensions. The first was where Socialism remained simply an attitude of mind while in the second, Socialism followed a strict ideological formula which seemed to bear principles, sometimes very rigid that were to be observed by all those who were defined as Socialists, *viz*, peasants and workers. This does not in any

way deny the existence of principles in the first phase. Though it should be borne in mind that in this first stage, these principles were not clearly formulated to constitute a body of theoretical framework upon which practice could be based. In this stage, each individual practiced what he or she thought constituted Socialism depending on his or her understanding of the concept.

The above scenario led to the development of two rigid and almost irreconcilable ideologically hostile camps in Tanzania. All these was in the name and process of experimentation on what did or did not constitute Socialism. One camp as argued elsewhere in this work was led by Julius Nyerere. The other was composed of notable figures both in academic and political life. These included Issa Shivji, Abdul Rahman Babu and Oscar Kambona to name but a few.

The latter camp believed in Orthodox Marxism and consequently the Marxist theory of the historical development of societies was valid in Tanzania as it was in Russia. For them, Socialism must be preceded by Capitalism and there was no compromise over that.

The former however believed in the uniqueness and practicability of African Socialism as being a brand just like any other Socialism practiced elsewhere in the world. Thus, Nyerere through the development and perfection of his ideas on Socialism believed that Socialism in Africa was unique and had some basic and irreducible defining characteristics which could not accommodate Marxist views as found in Scientific Socialism. *Ujamaa* was one of this brand. As a brand of Socialism therefore *Ujamaa* can



be said to have been based on well articulated and connected though at times passive principles. This chapter cannot claim to discuss them to exhaustion but at least it will present the very basic and in a way, a summary of all that *Ujamaa* stood for.

### 6.1.1 ABSENCE OF EXPLOITATION

In propounding *Ujamaa*, it has been advanced that Nyerere was reacting to a situation that bred exploitation. High on his list of priority therefore was elimination of exploitation. For him, society that he envisaged forming was one that was devoid of exploitation of man by man.

In the colonial society, man seemed to lose his freedom through over-dependence on relationships that made him fall prey to other stronger men. Nyerere thus aimed at eliminating exploitation to let man regain his freedom which could only be done through self-reliance.

In traditional Africa, the classless nature of the society ensured and maintained relationships that rewarded on equal basis those individuals participating in it. In a Socialist (*Ujamaa*) society these relationships were to exist for the mutual benefit of all in society. He observes;

*"A truly Socialist State is one in which people are workers and in which neither Capitalism nor feudalism exists. It does not have two classes of people, a lower class composed of people who work for their living and an upper class composed of people who live on the work of others ... In a really Socialist country, no person exploits another, everyone who is physically able to work does so; every worker obtains a just return for the labour he performs; and the incomes derived from different types of work are not grossly divergent".<sup>4</sup>*

### **6.1.2 COMMON OWNERSHIP**

Throughout the period when Nyerere saw *Ujamaa* as a unique brand of Socialism, there existed some basic consistency in his attitude towards ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

In the Arusha Declaration for example, it is noted from the outset that Nyerere desired arrangements that ensured the control of the society's major means of production to be in the hands of peasants and workers. This could either be through the central government or the people's cooperatives. The main aim being that, the people should provide the required labour as well as the managerial expertise. In traditional Africa, Nyerere argued, there existed no clear cut distinction between the producer and the manager. This condition if carried forward could provide a sure basis for the construction of a Socialist society. The manager was also the labourer so no amount of exploitation however minimal was tolerated in the modern State Nyerere wanted to build.

### **6.1.3 DEMOCRACY AND CLASSLESS SOCIETY**

Nyerere believed that for Socialism to succeed, the people must take part in the process of decision making. But the ownership and control of the means of production by the State alone does not qualify it to be Socialist. Socialism also presupposes a government chosen and led by peasants and workers. This tended to eliminate social classes and the subsequent problem of class antagonism. Seen from this point of view, *Ujamaa* is a classless society.

#### **6.1.4 SOCIALISM AS A WAY OF LIFE**

Socialism in Tanzania just like any other third world country was simply a way of life that was to be lived. Thus, Socialism like democracy must be brought into existence by Socialists of conviction. Nyerere argued that it was only through Socialism that a society could be transformed from a backward poverty stricken country to a prosperous and rich modern State. The aim here being to transform the general attitudes of the people and consequently their way of life.

#### **6.1.5 LOVE AND RESPECT**

*Ujamaa*, Nyerere argued, should be based on a real recognition of mutual involvement in one another through the recognition of the place and rights of each other in society depending on age, sex and character. Love and respect regulated the major ethical issues in the traditional society and therefore determined and regulated interpersonal relationship.

#### **6.1.6 SOCIAL OBLIGATION TO WORK**

In traditional Africa, it was a duty of every member in the society to contribute in the general production process. Those who were not hindered by natural disabilities and therefore able to work did so. It has however been argued that women tended to take much of the societal burden as a result of their sex which tended to require that they work in the field as well as take care of the children as well as homes. Accusations of authoritarianism have been advanced on the basis that women tended to be

burdened most in relation to men in society. But defenders of traditionalism argue that in fact this was the only way to ensure equality in the productive process.

Since everyone was a producer, there existed some level of economic equality though on a lower level. But on the whole, all were economically disadvantaged with nobody in particular being too advantaged in terms of wealth. Even those who were wealthy, this did not give them any power of control over the rest in society. This it should be observed has nothing to do, or particularly inherent in the traditional social set up which seems to have been blamed for this situation. All that one can for sure assert with certainty is that the low level of operation witnessed in traditional Africa could have been caused by ignorance. This for Nyerere was a situation that could easily be corrected without greatly *"affecting the validity and applicability of the three basic principles of mutual respect sharing of joint production and work by all."*<sup>5</sup>

In practical terms, these principles can be said to constitute the basic foundation of human security and a real practical human equality. On a purely economic pedestal, the three can also form the basis for economic growth and development besides equality. Thus *Ujamaa's* objectives were among others;

*"To build a society in which all members have equal rights and equal opportunities; in which all can live at peace with their neighbours without suffering or imposing injustice, being exploited or exploiting; and in which all have a gradually increasing basic level of material welfare before any individual lives in luxury."*<sup>6</sup>

One could therefore argue that *Ujamaa's* main point of strength was

the fact of cooperation. It has come out quite clearly throughout human history that whenever men cooperate there is a practical attempt to overcome their individual limitations and the consequence is society of abundance and care, hence;

*"... in each Ujamaa village the man who is sick will be cared for; a man who is widowed will have no difficulty in getting his children looked after."*<sup>7</sup>

It should be noted that for Nyerere, *Ujamaa* was a tool through which to reconcile traditional African practices with modern technological innovations in a bid to uplift and improve the welfare of Tanzanians.

Apart from rejecting westernism, *Ujamaa* also assumed some basic and crucial characteristics which go with modernization. For him "we modernise within our resources. But we must modernise."<sup>8</sup> In traditionalism one finds the virtues of equality hence egalitarianism. In *Ujamaa*, there was an attempt at retaining these traditional virtues while taking advantage of modern knowledge to modernise. It should however be observed that, there was need for some modifications to ensure the traditional social organization fitted well into modern social and political institutions and structures. This in turn required coherence and systematism in the formulation and application of principles that took account of traditional and modern outlook to reality. This required;

*"... a conscious working together for the common good, and a conscious effort to utilize the strength of a united activity for social purposes. In the past we worked because that was the custom; now we have to do it deliberately and do it in a manner that modern knowledge can be utilized for the common good."*<sup>9</sup>

## 6.2 THE QUEST FOR FREEDOM

In this quest for freedom, Nyerere observes man must remain a free agent in matters of decision-making as well as choice. Under freedom he argued, only then can one improve his or her living condition. Thus in his quest for independence from colonialism the reformation and improvement of the living conditions of Tanzanians was ranked first on his list of priorities. Thus, any ideology that independent Tanzania adopted needed to be one that favoured the improvement of the well being of man in society. That man must in the final analysis remain a free agent, able to choose his priorities in development and the course of that development. This, it has been argued led Nyerere into choosing policies that were sympathetic to Socialism.

It should be observed here that from the outset, it was not quite clear what Nyerere meant by Socialism. This ambiguity somehow cleared after independence through the advocacy of what kind of society he hoped to achieve. One would want to argue that if he hoped to create a society of abundance but of a low degree of social stratification, then Socialism was the ideology suited for that. Subsequently what comes out is that, Nyerere's conception of Socialism was not similar to Western Socialism. He sought to build Socialism that was devoid of class antagonism. This brand of Socialism, Nyerere argued, was to be based only on the theory and practice of traditional African societies and the concept of extended family system. It would therefore appear that for Nyerere, Socialism and communalism meant one and the same thing such that since traditional

African was communalistic, it also followed that this fact, and this alone, could form a basis for constructing a modern Socialist State.

In Africa he argued, Socialism had to take note of the African cultural as well as her socio-economic environment, system of land ownership and relation of man to property and wealth. Through *Ujamaa*, he hoped to achieve change without creating, strengthening or even increasing opportunities for class formation. *Ujamaa* to this end not only signified the absence of classes in society, but also was itself a classless society.

### **6.3 UJAMAA: A THEORY OF SOCIALISM**

In adopting *Ujamaa*, Nyerere wished to designate a kind of Socialism that had its roots in traditional Africa. The Socialist nature of traditional practices was thus uplifted to new status where it could perform both traditional tasks as well as fit in well with modern State functionalities, institutions and structures. African Socialism simply became a new name for an old practice. In this section, an attempt will be made to show that *Ujamaa* was both in the theory and practice a brand or a theory of Socialism.

As a theory of government, *Ujamaa* sought to have all the basic means of production, distribution and exchange controlled by the community as whole either through its agent the State or the people's cooperatives. Just like any other theory of Socialism therefore, Nyerere realized the impossibility of the success of *Ujamaa* without the central control of the major means of production, distribution and exchange.

As a theory of government, *Ujamaa* rejected both Capitalism and

communism. It works on the assumptions of a classless society where all are equal hence exhibits a kind of brotherhood extended to more than just the family unit and meant to function in a State of peasants and workers. It aims at integrating harmoniously the various social, political and economic institutions to the traditional African conception of the Good in the community. This approach to the governance of society tends to be communalistic in nature and non-sectarian in approach.

In defining *Ujamaa*, it was argued that when translated, means brotherhood. In 1962, Nyerere observed that Socialism just like democracy is an attitude of mind. As a political doctrine then, Socialism does not mean the rigid adherence to some set standards of political theorization and action. This would seem to imply that no particular brand of Socialism contains gospel truth to be observed universally.<sup>10</sup>

It is important at this point to point out that the development of the Socialist thought in Tanzania seems to have evolved over time with the development and perfection of Nyerere's political thought. In this endeavour, Nyerere took into account the experiences of Tanzania as a young nation and the hard realities of the global socio-economic and political environment. Yet, he never wavered in his search for equality in the changing society.

Traditional Africa was egalitarian. Colonial Africa was not. In colonial Africa there were some shifts of centres of power and consequently decision making organs which in one way or another tended to interfere with the egalitarian nature of the traditional social set up. Post-colonial Africa



thus faced the dilemma of reconciling these egalitarian objectives with programmes of action designed to maximise economic growth and development without distorting the principles underlying egalitarianism.

Nyerere, as other African leaders, in an attempt to come to terms with the numerous problems that resulted in this contradiction adopted catchwords (slogans) which he thought provided a complete framework for solving (these problems) them. In Capitalism, he saw imperialism. In Communism, he saw a society built on hostile human relations of class antagonism. Socialism thus seemed to provide a middle ground through.<sup>11</sup> Socialism, for many African political leaders including Nyerere reflected a true socio-political and economic scene of traditional Africa, thus, the environment in which Socialism was to operate in Africa looked radically different from European Socialism, hence the birth of African Socialism. For Nyerere *Ujamaa* best described this compassionate Socialism. He observes;

*"... Socialism can be compatible with our aspirations; by adopting Socialist policies it is possible for us to maintain our independence and develop towards human dignity for all our people."*<sup>12</sup>

In 1962 while calling for the adoption of *Ujamaa*, he observed that;

*"Socialism like democracy, is an attitude of mind. In a Socialistic society it is the Socialist attitude of mind, and not a rigid adherence to a standard political pattern, which is needed to ensure that the people care for each others welfare."*<sup>13</sup>

One will therefore note that between 1962 and 1974, Nyerere's writings reflected a systematic and coherent programme of development through the outlining of the kind of society he wished to build. In these, he used *Ujamaa* as a tool for reconciling the conflicting objectives of the newly independent nation States in Africa. On the one hand there was a desire for

equality and on the other, economic growth and development, efficiency in managing and manning the various social institutions and State organs.

Having remained an attitude of mind since its inception, the Arusha Declaration however seems to have provided some clarity on exactly what Socialism and consequently *Ujamaa* meant. The problematic nature of having to operate with a theory that seemed to point to a direction but failing in its method culminated in the Arusha Declaration of 1967.<sup>14</sup> In the Declaration, Socialism as an attitude of mind was critically assessed and various measures put in place in a bid to forestall the seemingly imminent collapse of Socialism in Tanzania.

The Declaration provided the direction within a Socialist framework through which the nation needed to pass in order to achieve her goals, developmental or otherwise. *Ujamaa* as observed by Nyerere is a conception of Socialism which draws on the traditional African approach to life and is based on the traditional African family system, *Ujamaa* or brotherhood.

In Marxian conception, Socialism can only arise out of full blown Capitalism. That Capitalism must of necessity (factual, logical or otherwise) precede the growth of Socialism in any society. For Marx this was a historical fact.<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, the advent of Capitalism in Africa brought in some inevitable conflicts and contradictions that have been difficult to redress. Unlike European Socialism therefore which was born out of social and mainly class conflict, *Ujamaa* did not have the benefit of class conflict nor did it arise out of the activities of an agrarian nor industrial revolution. The only

justifiable and therefore strongest basis of this rural Socialism (*Ujamaa*) is the fact of extended family system. For Nyerere this was the only way of building a Socialism that was;

*"... opposed to Capitalism which seeks to build a happy society on the basis of exploitation of man by man; and also opposed to doctrinaire Socialism which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of inevitable conflict between man and man."*<sup>16</sup>

The inevitability of this argument therefore follows that *Ujamaa* is basically created for the service of man, not withstanding his origin, race, colour, creed or even religious inclinations.

In this argument it will be observed that *Ujamaa's* logical end must be the attainment of universally accepted standards of justice amongst the human race. Nyerere argues that *Ujamaa* being a modernizing model must transcend the narrow extended family unit to reach beyond the tribe, the community, nation, continent and finally attain its perfection in a society of mankind.<sup>17</sup>

Here one can make a clear cut dichotomy in the thoughts of Nyerere on Socialism. That two distinct and clearly marked stages can be delineated in the development of Socialist thought in Tanzania; the pre-Arusha and post-Arusha Declaration. While in the former Socialism (*Ujamaa*) remained an attitude of mind, in the latter, it changed to a consciously thought out and laid down principles and practices that were to be imparted to the populace through education over time. The first stage saw Nyerere urge for the expansion of the complexity of development and the more demanding necessities of the *Ujamaa* system and method launched in 1962.<sup>18</sup>

Socialism in this period developed in a spontaneous way and largely

remained an attitude of mind. It was as Nyerere observed "*an attitude of mind, a disposition of considering wealth only in terms of its use to the service of ... fellow men.*"<sup>19</sup> It is this attitude of mind and disposition of considering wealth that goes in the creation or non creation of a millionaire. In Africa, Nyerere argued "... *because of the organization of the traditional African society, its distribution of wealth was such that there was hardly any room for parasitism.*"<sup>20</sup>

During this take-off stage, *Ujamaa* was not an ideology as such, it was an attitude of mind, a State of mental disposition, or simply a way of life. This stage also saw Nyerere map out strategies that he hoped an independent State would use in her bid to develop. The communal practice of many African communities before the advent of colonialism was seen by many as a kind of spontaneous Socialism. In supporting this school of thought, it has been argued that in traditional Africa, despite there being enough wealth, the tendency to accumulate for personal and therefore private use was absent. Yet, no legal institution existed that barred such practice and process of creating capitalists. It is then argued that the attitude of mind prevailing in traditional Africa was Socialist. This ensured that the wealth produced by the society benefitted all including the less fortunate members of the society, the disabled and the orphaned. The elders in some cases were wealthy. But their wealth did not give them any power or prestige. If anything they held it in trust for society.

One can also observe along the same lines that during this phase, the development of *Ujamaa* as an ideology was mainly concerned with the

rejection of colonialism on the basis of Senghor's Negritude, as well as structuring of the new roles of leadership into local hands. Socialism then as manifested here was not clearly defined and consequently its programme of action was not explicitly outlined as it did not adhere to any set standards of political action in the first place. Instead it wavered from one political angle to another in the name of pragmatism.

Nyerere's definition of Socialism as an attitude of mind did not seem to stand the test of international socio-economic and political environment. Choices becoming more complex, he sought a new approach to the realization of his Socialist ideals hence the Arusha Declaration of 1967.

The Declaration marked the second phase in the development of Nyerere's political thought and consequently the development of *Ujamaa*. This phase was mainly structured on the experience collected in the former period and summarised in the Declaration in order to aspire toward satisfying the more complex demands of a larger nation that sought to conform to the practice of Socialism as a political ideology as well as a theory of society (social organization) and the demands of modernization.

In the Declaration, Socialism ceased to be an attitude of mind and became a belief, and creed that was to be followed by all those who were defined as Socialists- peasants and workers. Socialism was transformed to consciously laid down principles that were to be imparted to the populace through a process of carefully planned education. The Declaration represented a policy through which Nyerere attempted to explicitly chart out policy outlines upon which the future Socialist development of Tanzania

would be based. One therefore finds in the Declaration a radical shift from the traditional attitude of mind to what seemed a clearer path to the achievement of Socialism in Tanzania.

In the Declaration, one gets the impression that it suddenly dawned on Nyerere that, for economic justice to be done and to be seen to be done, the State needed to intervene and take part in the effective control of the principal means of production. It thus became the responsibility of the State to intervene actively in the economic life of the nation, to direct and ensure the well being of all citizens through the elimination of exploitation as the uncontrolled use of the means of production tends to lead to a situation where individual members of the society accumulate more than their share in terms of need and use, which argument directly contradicts the ethics and existence of a classless society.

#### **6.4 THE POST-ARUSHA DECLARATION: AN ANALYSIS**

The two stages referred to above represent the course through which Socialism-*Ujamaa* passed in a bid to realise the society Tanzanians wished to build, a society where social justice took the centre stage. These two stages, or phases it has been argued marked two different epochs in the development of the Socialist thought in Tanzania. This section will be concerned mainly with the analysis of the post-Arusha Declaration, what it meant for Tanzania as a nation and the universally accepted Socialist ideals.

It has already been noted that in the Declaration, Socialism was transformed through a deliberate policy that sought to consciously lay down

principles intended to guide social, economic and political action in Tanzania. To this end, the Declaration marked an important milestone in the socio-economic as well as political life of Tanzania as a nation.

In the Declaration, specific projects and policies designed to drive Tanzania towards her Socialist goal were pronounced. Here, it should be observed that Tanzania being a black man's nation sought to assert a difference. That if all nations in the world can unite in the fight against discrimination then *Ujamaa* through the Declaration took the dimension that asserted the philosophy of the black man through its rejection of Capitalism, any form of imperialism and neocolonialism that seem to have been attached to Western imports in Africa. In its place *Ujamaa* stressed self-reliance.

In the Declaration the oppression the black man suffered was due to his relatively weak position in the global society, which position (weak) he is forced to bargain for better deals with his European counterpart. This is evident from Nyerere's advocacy for international justice which must first correct economic then the political situation in the world. He says;

*"We have been oppressed a great deal and we have been disregarded a great deal. It is our weakness that has led to our being oppressed, exploited and disregarded. Now we need a revolution ... which brings to an end our weaknesses, so that we are never again exploited, oppressed or humiliated."*<sup>21</sup>

*Ujamaa* thus became a deliberate philosophy that based its argumentation on the principles of freedom and self-reliance for the black man.

In the Declaration, money as a medium for development was rejected as being a false strategy. That reliance on money could easily mean African nations could auction their independence at the counter of development. In

fact it presented a very strong case against the use of money as a basis and medium for development. For one, money is not readily available in Africa and other underdeveloped societies. The alternative method of raising money was through taxing the citizens' incomes. Since the State was poor because the citizens were poor, the last resort was that of reliance on foreign aid. The problem with the latter is that, it tends to erode the recipient nations' independence.

Nyerere even goes further and observes that even if it was granted that developed nations could lend developing countries money that could comfortably meet the latter's development needs, the decision to choose what to do with the money eventually rested with the donor and not the receiving country. In fact purely on moral grounds, developed countries are not under any (moral) obligation to fight international poverty since even within their borders, poverty continues to exist in varying degrees. The argument is therefore that, it is far more important for a country to be self-reliant consequently preserve her independence than rely on other nations for her development requirements. The post Arusha era for *Ujamaa* was a declaration of human liberty hence the argument that;

*"Independence means self-reliance. Independence cannot be real if a nation depends upon gifts and loans from another for its development. Even if there was a nation, or nations, prepared to give us all the money we need for our development, it would be improper for us to accept such assistance without asking ourselves how this would affect our independence and our very survival."*<sup>22</sup>

The Declaration it should be pointed out paved the way for justice, fairness and rationality in every sphere of public life. The State was to actively intervene and control the social, political and economic life of the



citizens. The State was to ensure a rational allocation and reallocation as it were, of the nation's resources and a fair distribution of final product. One can therefore point out that to a large extent the Declaration was a bold logical step towards the ultimate attainment of the objectives set out at independence in 1962. Socialism became the official ideology as well as a mechanism through which the control of the socio-economic system of the nation was to be effected.<sup>23</sup>

One therefore finds that, in the Declaration, *Ujamaa* came out with one clear basic concern; that of shaping out a systematic ideology which could facilitate a well formulated and articulated programme of action with designed needs, clearly suited for an African country. In other words, the Declaration seemed to offer a systematic set of ideas about social values that provided a different vision, a better future and also gave guidelines to the achievement of this future of a just society.

*Ujamaa* was formulated partly to lend credence to the theory that a nation can choose her own path to development and through public commitment be able to achieve the chosen objectives. This was a counter to the Marxian argument and theory of history which holds that, for Socialism to flourish, it must be preceded by Capitalism in time. *Ujamaa* in a way provides the rationale for the various and different routes through which Socialism could be achieved.

Earlier, it was observed that Africa seemed to have only one rational path. That was, one which will stimulate economic growth and development without gross income inequalities in society. *Ujamaa* therefore

had a major unique feature; it did not arise out of a Capitalist environment. Consequently, it was not an urban Socialism. In this regard, *Ujamaa* aimed at satisfying the needs of the populace, both the peasant and the urban worker. The service of these two was a service to the whole nation.

An analysis of the production relationship in Tanzania reveals that if and when the nation sought the use of foreign aid in establishing industries, factors that determined their location and eventual utilization greatly favoured urban areas. It should also be noted that when considering the issue of repaying these foreign loans, only income derived from primary products from rural areas is relevant. This is precisely because developing countries have a weak industrial base hence produce little if anything for export. It will thus suffice that the main beneficiaries of these industrial establishment derived from foreign loans are not burdened by its repayment. This, Nyerere argues is one form of exploitation: Urban exploitation of the weaknesses of the rural areas. In principle then since *Ujamaa* stood for the abolition of exploitation, it provided the national alternative to the ideological ambivalence of the time.

It should be noted further that in providing this alternative, *Ujamaa's* immediate aim was the production of more food for immediate needs and later surplus for export to pay the import of machinery and other capital goods. Though it should not be forgotten that the ultimate aim was self-reliance.<sup>24</sup> The issue here was that of employing discipline and hardwork in an intelligent way to achieve self-reliance in the most immediate needs of the people, that is food, shelter and clothing. The concept of self-reliance it

should be emphasised could only make sense if and only when the population was satisfied. The achievement of self-reliance for the nation, a guarantee to the freedom of man and therefore preserves a nation's independence. Thus, for Africa, African Socialism was the rational choice in the face of all the available alternatives.

The post 1967 period saw policies, strategies and programmes specifically designed to improve production and distribution of goods in Tanzania. Measures were undertaken to ensure that production, distribution and exchange of all national products was planned. Planning therefore became central, and necessary for the effective allocation and reallocation of the various national resources in the country in terms of need and use.

This period also witnessed increased focus of *Ujamaa* on man. Structures and institutions were put in place to further help in the achievement of the vital aim of *Ujamaa*; service to man. In the post-Arusha era, the existence of the rich and the poor as distinct classes in the society was seen as being socially unhealthy and therefore ethically undesirable.

The advocacy of equality of all men transcended territorial boundaries, racial categorization as well as skin colour. *Ujamaa* thus rejected the polarization of society into those who own the means of production and those who own nothing save their labour. Under *Ujamaa*, one finds a marked awareness of the needs of the people and an articulated commitment by the government to serve these needs.

## **6.5 TOWARDS A THEORY OF SOCIALISM**

As a theory of Socialism, *Ujamaa* has a pragmatic meaning. It aims at preserving the traditional community's (both at the individual and community level) spiritual values as a counter to Western individualism.

In economic terms, it aims at giving the widest possible access to ownership of capital to the greatest majority in the growing national economy to facilitate a fast and well coordinated level of economic growth and development.

It is argued that traditional African societies were communalistic which provides support for the argument that this can comfortably form the basis for constructing African Socialism. Communalism assumes that all men form a close and well intentioned network of interrelationship. It assumes that all men form a community with their fellow men and that their actions are always conditioned by this fact alone; that they should contribute to the well being of the community in return for a share in all the benefits accruing from it. Here it must be observed that community life is basically shared as opposed to inequity, privilege and monopoly; shared ownership of productive (capital) property (goods), economic activity, decision making, culture, government and social security.

Traditional African society was therefore based on an assuming Socialist attitude of mind and governed by indigenous Socialist rules, customs, values and institutions that were not in any way a result of foreign thought or otherwise. This argument would point to the fact that, the Marxist thought system is therefore totally absent in the theoretical basis of

African Socialism and consequently *Ujamaa*.

*Ujamaa*, represented one stream in the many approaches to the achievement of Socialism and a response to white supremacy. It indicated a desire to seek African identity within a universally accepted system of values that were non-oppressive. It was a declaration of ideological independence for the African man. On the whole, it rejected Westernism on the criterion that western ideological orientation tended to focus on the individual as a unit of analysis leaving out the element of interrelationship for that particular individual. Westernism was rejected following the argument that the ideological systems it has produced so far have had a chance of reforming the world but instead they have all let humanity down. *Ujamaa* thus comes in as an attempt to seek justice for both individuals in society and the society itself - *jamaa*. Its admiration of the traditional African life style is not for nostalgic purpose, but is for the love of the equity of tribal life in which all were "brothers" (*jamiin*) as an expression of solidarity and social egalitarianism.

Like any theory of Socialism that aims at lessening suffering, *Ujamaa* has been seen from other quarters as aiming at applying a rational plan to economic growth and development, in a bid to increase the investment ratio, elimination of duplication and waste.

Yet, unlike the Marxian and Democratic views of Socialism, *Ujamaa* was not based on the factory worker for its revolutionary spirit nor was it a result of violent class struggle. Instead it arose out of the spiritual harmony of a communal life based on Africa's own history.

Man is generally egoistic and self-centered. If left to interact with other selfish beings in equal freedom, would encourage the law of the fittest. Independence, more so in Africa, needed a carefully planned approach to the issue of nation-building since the survival of the weak and disabled members of the society could not be left on the charity and benevolence of the strong. Institutional safeguards needed to be worked out hence making social irresponsibility a crime. This was justice in society.

Ahmed Mohiddin has observed and rightly for that, that the definition of a Socialist society must of necessity include four basic characteristics namely: absence of exploitation; nationalization; democracy and the rejection of a model that uses money as a basis for development.<sup>25</sup> Under Socialism, he argues as does Nyerere, income inequalities are far much minimised since incomes derived from different types of work are not grossly divergent. Under Socialism, one finds a conspicuous absence of inequality and a marked desire for equality in the society.<sup>28</sup>

In the Arusha Declaration, Nyerere aimed at preventing the property owning and commercial classes from taking over political power as they would in the final analysis sympathise with the interests of the Capitalists which in effect would frustrate the Socialist course. It is from this perspective that, and, in a bid to realise some level of economic equality, Nyerere employed the policy of nationalization.

It is worth noting that, nationalization in itself is not a sufficient reason for the existence of Socialism. If nationalization is understood to simply mean the control by the public of the basic means of production,

distribution and exchange, then, it only goes far in the strengthening of Socialist structures which in turn create institutionalized guarantee for equality of all in society. Central to this concept of nationalization therefore is not just a question of simple ownership, but how best to serve the needs of the people. Nationalization must aim at explaining the specifics (aims, objectives and targets) and outline the complexity of methods and techniques, through which these will be realised. Through nationalization therefore, one has to identify the areas of want in society and the means of meeting these needs.

For Nyerere, nationalization as a process towards Socialism was only *"... a necessary part of our determination to organise our society in a way that our efforts benefit all people..."*<sup>27</sup> Here it should be emphasised that nationalization indeed does not create a Socialist society. It simply means the ownership and control of the monopoly by the State of the means of production.

What exactly is the question of consideration here? Who exactly is in control of the State apparatus? If it is a minority, then, nationalization can lead to anything but Socialism. Smith's Rhodesia (present day Zimbabwe) and Apartheid South Africa are examples that come to mind immediately. If nationalization is effected in such societies as cited above it would only mean a minority would have monopolized both the political and economic power.

At this point, one finds the need to reassess Nyerere's assertion that Socialism is an attitude of mind bearing in mind his observation that;

*"... the basis of Socialism is a belief in the oneness of man and the common historical destiny of mankind. Its basis in other words is human equality, since the ultimate justification of Socialism is in its service to man..., and without an acceptance of human equality, there can be no Socialism. This is true however Socialist the institutions may be."*<sup>28</sup>

This definition of Socialism as an attitude of mind is justified strictly on considerations of inter-human relationships. Here one has in mind issues of equality, since equality can simply not be measured but to think of equality one has to go back to the definition and status of man viz a viz other beings.

It will be observed therefore that, whatever one conceives Socialism to be, finally it is what the leaders and the people in a particular society think that matters. The people's mental disposition and attitude towards wealth as well as the interpersonal relationship is most important when it comes to implementing Socialist policies. In the final analysis therefore, it will be observed that *Ujamaa* is nothing but Socialism as thought out. It is an attitude of mind that is based on unassuming but concrete principles with definite objectives to achieve.

Though the 1967 Arusha Declaration cleared the confusion and ambiguities in the ideological orientation of Tanzania and strengthened the ideological position of *Ujamaa*, it should be added that the ideological model of *Ujamaa* in the post-Arusha era had penetrated, defined and determined the categories and conceptual apparatus through which thought was to be seen in modern world. Was it a question of transplanting traditional social set up onto a modern political system? Or was it a simple question of going modern?



It becomes then important to consider Marx's claim of Scientific Socialism and its plausibility in the face of the above argument. The Marxian historical prediction of societies developing in stages has remained a theory. It indeed serves the work of a scientific theory for that matter; it has predicted. Now whether the prediction is true or not is not the question. What needs urgent consideration is the question as to whether this claim can hold in terms of objectivity in the face of the injustice witnessed so far in the world. Considering Marx's arguments and the inherent bias then one is left with no choice but to dismiss the scientific claim in Marxism and conclude that Marx's work is heavily loaded with racial overtones

The philosophy of *Ujamaa* provides an alternative and objective tool through which the evil of racism can be eliminated once and for all. *Ujamaa* regards men as men, not Africans, Asians, or European. This is the objective and universal essence of equality. It does not deal with issues and *"... talks about men and their beliefs ... Socialism and Capitalism. It does not talk about racial groups and nationalities."*<sup>29</sup>

For Nyerere therefore, there is nothing scientific about the Marxist theory of Socialism. What instead there is, *"... is a theology of Socialism"*,<sup>30</sup> since this literature tries to define and describe particular situations linking them to particular personalities just like Christianity links everything to Christ. Purely on this basis, it lacks the objectivity inherent in science. This would in effect mean that if the Marxian theory of Socialism has to claim any scientific basis at all, then, it has also to do that in deed, accepting and rejecting any Socialist ideas and methods purely in accordance

with the objective realities and circumstances of the time and place.

In considering *Ujamaa* as an ideology, equality and justice in the objective sense should be the criterion to serve as a basis for the creation of humane society. Because all men are equal and all have equal rights in society, the justification for *Ujamaa* is based on simple issues of human equality. The basic thread running through the theoretical framework of *Ujamaa* is the same as for all other world's greatest religions; Christianity, Hindu, Islam and the world's greatest and most humane political philosophy of Socialism. It would then follow that;

*"... the human equality before God which is the basis of all the great religions of the world is also the basis of the political philosophy of Ujamaa", (emphasis ours)<sup>31</sup>*

where *Ujamaa* provides the purpose of the application of the principle of human equality to the social, economic and political organization of society.

On yet another angle, equality presupposes the existence of strong democratic structures and institutionalized guarantee for their operation. Nationalization could be done in a purely Capitalist society depending on the aims of the ruling class. In the final analysis then, it is the attitude of mind that matters on whether nationalization ought to be effected or not, since for Nyerere with everything said and done, Socialism remains; *"... a belief in a particular system of living, and it is difficult for leaders to promote its growth if they do not themselves accept it."*<sup>32</sup>

In the Arusha Declaration however is found a new dimension and a new concept in modern development economics. There is a radical shift from emphasising industrialization to emphasising agriculture as a basis for

development. There is a shift from use of money (capital), labour, land and entrepreneurship to emphasising land, labour (people) and good policies. The target of development shifts from a market oriented economy to laying more emphasis on self-reliance (domestic production) with surplus being considered as a by-product and not the objective of production.

Though this analysis might be true of most underdeveloped economies, one should be able to take special note of Tanzania and most if not all African countries as they are basically agricultural and rural in their set up giving way to only peasant based labour economies. The only strategy for development was one that only aimed at the core of the society and therefore targeted the populace. *Ujamaa* therefore seen from this point of view is a rural Socialism aimed at rural development.

## **6.6 UJAMAA AND SOCIALISM: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

Socialism as argued above is a theory of government, postulating and articulating conditions under which social order integrates the functions of the society. To Communists, it is a stage towards the attainment of Communism. For Marx, it functions in a State based on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

*Ujamaa* on the other hand can be said to be a theory of government postulating and articulating conditions under which society integrates harmoniously the various social, political and economic institutions based on traditional African practice and the theory of extended family unit. *Ujamaa* functions in a State based on the discipline of peasants and workers, could

control, share in the production process, as well as, participate in decision making process of firms. This provides the basis for self-reliance and the latter the unshakable foundation for ensuring freedom from exploitation. Self-reliance was therefore to guarantee human freedom. In this regard, *Ujamaa* could not function in a State controlled by Capitalists because the latter thrives on the theory of surplus labour.

Socialism may also be conceived as a kind of society, or a way of life whose general characteristics include collective ownership of the basic means of production as well as the apparatus for distribution and exchange. This type of production relationship has a consequence of abolishing social classes and consequently class privileges.

A close look at the two will reveal that both Socialism and *Ujamaa* involve an integrated economy based on long term planning in terms of need and use. Nyerere observes that;

*"... the basis of a Socialist and Consequently Ujamaa organization is the meeting of peoples' needs not ... profit. The decision to devote the nation's resources to the production of one thing rather than another is made in the light of what is needed, not what is most profitable.... Such decisions are made by the people through their responsible institutions - their own government, their own industrial corporations, their own commercial institutions and their own rural cooperatives."*<sup>33</sup> (emphasis ours).

One cannot say for sure that Tanzania was or was not ready for the kind of socialism Marx predicted as a stage through which all societies must pass. According to Marxist's historical materialism, the different modes of productions (the social relations of production) in different stages in the development of societies determine what type of social relations there should be and the political superstructure that results from it. This would

naturally mean that Socialism grew out of Capitalism which had its basis in the Industrial Revolution.

But one thing was for sure true. That for Nyerere, Africa was different. The social relations in Africa were and are different from those of industrial Europe. Africa lacked the benefit of the Industrial Revolution, *Ujamaa* could therefore not have arisen out of any Capitalistic practices but could only be based on skills, labour and hard work in agricultural production.

This conception of Socialism by Nyerere developed alongside his evolutionary theory of development for Tanzania as a nation, through the changing structures and institutions of society and government from traditional set up to modern conception of the State with the complexities of inter-State relations. Ahmed Mohiddin has observed that the ideological orientation of Tanzanian African National Union (TANU) and the style of politics which distinguished Tanzania from many other African countries was due to Nyerere's intellectual commitment, his political acumen as well as his commitment to human dignity and equality for all.<sup>34</sup>

In explaining this commitment as outlined in the Arusha Declaration Nyerere observes that;

*"The Arusha Declaration is a commitment to particular quality of life. It is based on the assumptions of life. It is based on the assumptions of human equality, on the belief that, it is wrong for one man to dominate and exploit another, and on the knowledge that, every individual hopes to live a decent life in conditions of peace with his neighbours. The document is in other words Man centred."*<sup>35</sup>

This argument brings out *Ujamaa* just like Socialism as a form of society where all people are workers and in which neither capitalism nor feudalism exist. It does not have two classes of people, a lower class

composed of people who work for their living and an upper class composed of those who live on the work of others.<sup>36</sup>

One important fact to be borne in mind is that, Socialism the world over represents an image of efficiency in development and social welfare. After independence, African countries in a bid to close the ideological gap, chose to have ideologies that could speed up the rate of development. *Ujamaa* as it has been represented here represents an ideology for development and distribution. By placing more emphasis on agricultural production Nyerere aimed at focussing on the largest possible section of the population, the urban worker and the majority rural peasants.

At the inception of *Ujamaa*, African nationalism everywhere on the continent aimed at achieving equality between all races. This was a direct result of the effects of colonialism where one race tended to dominate the other in all spheres of life; social, cultural, political and economic. Unlike European nationalistic equality (which gave impetus to the rise of Socialism in Europe) which was inspired by class struggle as a result of class inequalities within the same society, African Socialism's desire for equality more or less arose out of the structural institutional set up and presented a reaction to the practices of the colonial authorities.

Can this perhaps account for Nyerere's rejection of Marxian doctrinaire Socialism? For Marx the equality of society under Socialism was a reaction to inequalities brought about by Capitalism. In traditional Africa Nyerere argues, the phenomenon of class struggle seems to have been absent. Therefore, rather than basing itself on class antagonism, *Ujamaa*

aimed at rationalizing and romanticising rural poverty, how to make sense of this poverty, turn the poor underdeveloped rural areas into rich and productive regions that appreciated modern science and technology. It sought to glorify the communality and fellowship of tribal life.

It will be argued here that the conditions, situation and the proletarian nature of Africa led Nyerere into embracing the political theory of *Ujamaa* which seemed to create a bond of romanticized poverty while at the same time concentrating the workers' efforts on development.

One would want to contest the above view by showing that in fact Socialism concentrates more on distribution than on initiating real development efforts. This is true. But it should also be noted that *Ujamaa*, apart from being an ideology for equality, was also invoked as a comprehensive term for five year developmental plans, governmental control of the economy and as an attempt and catchword for mobilizing the masses in order to assert rationality in dealing with the problems of an underdeveloped economy. In communities of limited wealth and rising expectations, normally an ideology for development rather than distribution is more to the point. Though, in the final analysis it should be noted that Socialism does not just strive for a society of material abundance. This is only but one aspect of Socialism. It also aspires for social equality, equal opportunities for all and a general elimination of exploitation of man by man. This is exactly what *Ujamaa* stood for.

## 6.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter attempted to present an analysis of *Ujamaa* as a theory of Socialism though rural based. It was argued that in its formulation and development, *Ujamaa* passed through various stages in an attempt to achieve clarity as an ideology for development. These stages were identified as the pre and post Arusha Declaration.

In conclusion it should be observed that the Arusha Declaration which can be said to have been the moving spirit of *Ujamaa* was a declaration of intent. It attempted to analyse the objective Tanzania situation, pointing out mistakes that had been committed and as a way of remedying presented proposals for change. The Declaration focussed on what kind of society was to be built, assessed the material wealth and capacity of the nation as well as the direction the society ought to take in her path to development. This path was defined as Socialist oriented and designed to benefit man. Here, material wealth for its own sake was rejected. Nyerere observes that;

*"... there are more important things in life than amassing of riches and if the pursuit of wealth clashes with ... human dignity and social equality, ... the latter takes precedence."*<sup>37</sup>

All the social, economic and political activities of the society after 1967 was aimed at serving man. Any wealth thus produced in society becomes good only if it goes to the service of man.<sup>38</sup>

The Arusha Declaration can be seen as being a declaration for quick human effort to change. The change being evolutionary hence should be initiated from within based on the concept of self-reliance because;

*"... only Tanzanians are sufficiently interested to develop Tanzania in*



*the interest of Tanzanians, and only Tanzanians can say what these interests are .... Socialism is an application to economic and social life of the doctrine of human equality which we appealed to when we rejected the right of any other nation to govern us."*<sup>39</sup>

Nyerere thus based his Socialism on the African theory and practice of extended family system. If anything, Socialist within African Socialism existed, then it was to be found in *Ujamaa*. The idea of justice was not left behind. In *Ujamaa* therefore the equality of all in the society was paramount. *Ujamaa*, Nyerere believed, transcended local boundaries of family, village, nation and reached the international level. It will be argued in the next Chapter that in fact *Ujamaa* represented an African notion or view of justice. That the basis of *Ujamaa* was the construction of a moralist society. If African societies could salvage what good there was in the traditional social set up, then, *Ujamaa* exemplified a model of African social system that History had systematically denied.

# NOTES

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- Ibid.*, p. 110.
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- Cfr. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- Cfr. Nyerere, "The Rational Choice," in Man and Development. (Dar-es-Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 111-125.
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- Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism. (Dar-es-Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 235.
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23. Cfr. D.A. Masolo, A History of African Philosophy. An unpublished Ph. D. Dissertation. Rome: Gregorian University, 1979), pp. 198-217. See also, Masolo, Some Aspects and Perspectives of African Philosophy Today. (Roma: Instituto Italo - Africano; 1981), pp. 23-36.
24. Cfr. Nyerere, J.K., Ujamaa - Essays on Socialism. *Op. cit.* p. 29.
25. Mohiddin, *Op. cit.* pp. 82-85.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
27. Nyerere, J.K., Ujamaa - Essays on Socialism. *Op. cit.* p. 38.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
32. Nyerere, J.K., Freedom and Socialism. *Op. cit.* p. 235.
33. Cfr. Nyerere, J.K., "Socialism and Rural Development," in Freedom and Socialism. *Op. cit.* pp. 337-366.
34. Cfr. Nyerere, J.K., "Man and Development". *Op. cit.* p. 123.
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36. Nyerere, J.K., The President Explains the Arusha Declaration. (Dar-es-Salaam: Ministry of Information, 1967), p. 2.
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# **CHAPTER 7**

## ***UJAMAA AS A VIEW OF JUSTICE***

### **7.0 INTRODUCTION**

A discussion on morality must necessarily drag in the question of which actions are good and which are bad, which behaviour could pass as good and therefore praiseworthy and which one is wrong demanding condemnation. This is in other words a study of the interrelatedness of the human behaviour, how this is manifested in different situations at different times and places. Nyerere's desire to build up an establishment partly based on African virtues and beliefs is set on a moral pedestal than a political one.

According to Allasane N'daw, traditional African communities, can be centres of a dynamic energy and models of building a society if and only if it is known how to save their original quality. For N'daw one can only save the original quality by simply claiming and asserting the human values history has systematically denied at the cost of an impoverishment impossible to set right.<sup>1</sup> The fact here is that, Africa has never been a cultural wilderness and therefore the question of whether an African mode of thought exists or not is off the mark since the notion of African thought system is not yet clear cut and only exist at this moment as an intellectual exercise in futility.

### **7.1 *UJAMAA*: IMPLICATIONS FOR TRADITIONAL KINSHIP**

One may want to observe that Nyerere has in all his works mainly touching on his political philosophy, at least attempted to blend his

political thought with his moralist views of what makes a good society. He in other words wishes to base his political thoughts and practices on moral principles.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, Nyerere is a realist who seems to recognise and embraces the African past that had been denied, distorted and almost blotted out as no history, thanks to the colonial legacy. He is in touch with the past yet keeps pace with the modern world of changing technological progress. With this in mind it can be argued that Nyerere aims at applying modern knowledge to traditional (African) set up in a bid to transform the society in an evolutionary basis without radically changing the kinship pattern of behaviour that existed in traditional Africa. With all due respect therefore it is important to note that Tanzania's development has been charted by Nyerere's convinced but automatic Socialist attitude of mind,<sup>3</sup> a vigorous and committed but subtle assessment of the African cultural and social realities and a political as well as economic situation and realities of the changing times.

In Nyerere then what one finds is an attempt to construct a society based on just principles, a society that aims first and foremost to serving man. In Nyerere too, one observes that, the African thought system is transformed and elevated to a status where it becomes man's greatest weapon in his endeavour to question and find answers to problems concerning his being, that of the world, and the absolute Being.<sup>4</sup>

In the African thought system, namely the African cultural value system and categories, there is found no desire to dominate the world. Instead there is a desire for human equality, liberty for all and respect for human dignity. There is a feeling of closeness between man and man,

man and nature, consequently, a sense of balance and harmony is maintained through a whole system of set techniques and compensatory rites.<sup>5</sup> The attitudes and feelings of domination and conquest was totally lacking and was only brought to Africa by colonial expansion. Evidence shows that even those conquered during the period of widespread intertribal wars in pre-colonial Africa were treated as subjects under the conquering power but largely retained their cultural rights and could perform their customary activities. Thus, the conquering tribe did not impose its cultural categories on the conquered.

It should be observed further that wisdom taught in African societies during growth had a social and cosmic bearing. The spiritual equilibrium of the society depended upon there existing relations between the life of the society and cosmos. This remained the case to the point where absolute perfection in traditional African societies (on which Nyerere wished to base his political theory) consisted in adapting cosmic rhythm to the social setting which in turn rested on a communal basis. This community based system of rules and values put a check to individualism by rejecting isolationism. It is imperative then that the communal co-existence and collectivist nature of traditional Africa was founded on a living spirituality which affirmed the permanence of links between the living and the dead. In African thought, this system was viewed as a struggle to safeguard man's life, man being the prime element of society. This struggle in other words sought to give justice to man through the elementary and basic family relations of *Ujamaa*.

For Nyerere, man's developmental activities through his interaction with nature is aimed at the achievement of his (man's) freedom. Thus,

man's definition and particularly the predicament of the Black man finds himself, in this and the preceding years of colonial domination is basically because he (the Black man) lacked the freedom to make his own independent choice to in effect determine his future in the light of what he had and what he could make of it. This is positively reflected in Nyerere's definition and argument in favour of self-reliance. He notes that freedom for man can only be achieved after he has developed his socio-economic milieu. That therefore personal freedom is only meaningful to the extent that society is also free. Translated in modern terms, freedom for man is only meaningful if the State is also free.

Nyerere's conception and the subsequent development of *Ujamaa* seems a model through which he wished to eliminate dependence and exploitation of man. Under *Ujamaa*, people are not Capitalists, nor feudalists or any of these categorizations which depend on the ownership and status of one in relation to the prevailing mode of production. Instead, people are classified on the basis of the roles they play in society, hence one is either a worker or a peasant. Nyerere's just State therefore consists of workers and peasants who are consciously aware of the relative weak position of their State and who have awakened to the realisation that ultimately the development of their State will depend on their own efforts and their efforts alone. Here it is notably clear that to this end, Nyerere has tried to eliminate exploitation hence created a just interpersonal relationship.

## 7.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR LIBERTY

The seriousness of man towards his liberty is the process by which he becomes what he must be; a free self-reliant and self-sufficient agent at least in the elimination of poverty.<sup>6</sup> Man remains a free agent who realises his own happiness. The end of this happiness is the constitution of a self-reliant community and the achievement of a life without want. To achieve this, Nyerere saw the need to integrate man in small communities which to him were "*efficient groups that ... work in integrity for their own realisation*" (emphasis mine).<sup>7</sup> The ruler of the society must on the other hand work for the maximum development of the whole group.

Self-reliance for Nyerere means that a society should not look across its border for the financing of her development needs. This tends to negate personal freedom and make nonsense of the liberty of the whole society. That the struggle for independence would not be of any value given that another nation dictates to another on what should be done, how and where, given that priorities differ.

Nyerere observes that, Tanzanians and the African man in general have been exploited, disregarded and rejected as non-human by methods and categories that made them base their lives on wrong premises. This situation needs correcting. For him the formula for correcting these vices lies in the glorious African past; the past African values that made the African lose his humanity to the white man yet they were the civilised values that made Africans be proud of being what they were. In other words, *Ujamaa* sought to correct the injustices that had been meted out to the black people and in turn replace them with values that regarded



man as man notwithstanding his social standing, creed, sex, colour, religion and ideological leaning.

For Nyerere therefore, time had come for the African to liberate himself from these alienating ties through the adoption of Socialism which seemed the rational path out. Capitalism had exploited and made Africans appendages to international Capitalism. The relationship existing here was basically exploitative for the Africans. Therefore, by removing exploitation, the people's instruments and institutions, must be established for positive growth.

Under *Ujamaa*, the individual is basically the sole determinant of his course of development and thus remains the patron of his dignity and rights. Yet this is only meaningful if he is a member of a politically organised community. However, when it comes to solving common problems like natural disasters, poverty, hunger, floods, and epidemics, the society must come to the aid of man hence it becomes paramount in as far as the protection of man's dignity, rights, and freedoms are concerned.

### **7.3 MAN AS A SOCIAL BEING**

Among the many issues that are addressed under *Ujamaa* is the issue of a colony. That for one to justify colonisation one should be able to show that under colonialism, the colonised are able to determine the course of their development. *Ujamaa* was one body of thought that seems to negate and consequently attempt to show that, there is no justice in dependence since one is never free under a dependent situation. From history, one learns that those who control man's livelihood control

man and consequently his humanity is denied, yet man is nothing but a free agent. In dependence man's livelihood is under control and so is his right to work, eat and live. In a nut shell dependence erodes humanity.

The individual to Nyerere is meaningless unless he realises himself within the whole of which he is only a part. D. A. Masolo emphasises that;

*"... as a union of many persons, it is the society which seems to be the major reality and to which a person as a single reality is subordinate .... He must serve the society according to his abilities. He is obliged by how to contribute to the social life of the entire group.... The individual can in fact not realise himself as an end if not within a Community in which all (its) members are ends and strive together for the good of the Community".<sup>8</sup>*

Here man is being considered in his characteristic of being social.

Nyerere conceives man's presence in the world entirely as tied to being with others. Through the act of being social man is able to overcome the two main factors which drive men towards considering others as means. These are, egoism and individualism.

One would therefore wish to argue that man's existence in society involves the inevitable and the inescapable conflict he has to undergo in his continuous interaction with nature. Man has different needs and desires. These include the freedom to pursue what is to his own interests and follow what his inclinations dictate. This notwithstanding, the society has to grant him personal freedom from attack, natural disasters and calamities in his relation with strangers (international relations). Individuals will thus sacrifice in the interest of the society certain private freedoms which they possess outside civil society. To gain personal security individuals must surrender their freedom to attack others, so that they may not be attacked in return. Yet the purpose of

society is to satisfy the demands of her members and help them grow and develop all their potentials. But of importance too is the fact that society determines and shapes the growth, amount of wealth, security, dignity and the amount of happiness the individual should enjoy.

The social collectivity for Nyerere is a moral concern. That, the end to which collectivity puts her wealth is virtuous only if it is in the service to the object of society, man. *Ujamaa* as a social unit was based on the human moral virtues of equality, freedom and unity of its members since these are the virtues which ultimately lead to self-reliance for individual members. Nyerere observes that, society is basically constituted to serve the individual. Every society must in the light of this create institutions that will safeguard and promote freedom for the individual and unity for the society. That, society must have social ethics (public morality) which ensures that these institutions remain true to their purpose. Put simply then, *Ujamaa* demands that in spite of the uniqueness of every man, his actions must always be consistent with the goods of the society.

#### **7.4 BASES OF AUTHORITY**

Authority presupposes institutions which manifest justice or injustice depending on their constitution. Within the family, Nyerere observes that authority rests under the head of the family who helps the family surmount internal disputes. In this way, authority facilitates swift decision making in the case of external threat. But he also notes that authority can be misused hence the need for checks and balances. The acceptance of authority is then based on the foundation of mutual

respect between all members and their common expectations. This is what justice is all about in the family. The respect accorded to each member and the realisation of their common demands and expectations makes life harmonious.

In the family too, property has an attached moral value. It is shared mutually and each member gains from its existence. In this regard, no member is deprived of food and shelter to facilitate personal accumulation by other members of the society. Furthermore, since property belongs to the family, all members have an equal right to an equal share, in as much as they have an equal duty in participating in the process of creating it. It will thus follow that, the principles and basis of an African family encourage them to think of themselves as members of a community.

One has to however hasten to add that, the novelty and freedom existing in the family unit described above would seem too ideal to be true and practical. This means that, one has to think of a larger social unit. Thus, the inadequacy and insecurity of the small family unit enabled Nyerere to envisage a political philosophy based on *Ujamaa* whose principles were based on rational justice. That the family unit could not adequately control the harsh environment, hence, the need for men to come together and form large and strong enough social units (*Ujamaa* villages) that could withstand all but the worst disasters. In these social units, members accept social stability so that the search for food and shelter can go on under tolerable human conditions. Under *Ujamaa*, Nyerere believes, humanity is realisable under conditions of civility.<sup>9</sup> In a civil society, stability is possible through the achievement

of institutions and conditions that allow freedom within society -on the basis of the fundamental equality of membership (of men) to that society. These principles of equality in the constitution of a just society is applicable to both the *Ujamaa* villages as well as the larger social organisation, because men are ultimately the purpose and only justification for having society in the first place.

Though the primary relations of the family do not exist in the larger society (State), it is the only basis on which a modern African state can be built and be made to operate harmoniously in accordance with its purpose and principles. If these principles are not adopted, argues Nyerere, the society will witness a total breakdown in all civilised values where there will occur civil wars and family breakdown among others.

*Ujamaa* is thus built on the tenets that govern equality and freedom. Nyerere defines equality as the positive concept that requires positive action. That there cannot be a single rule that can be applied everywhere and to all aspects of life concerning or in attempt to define equality. To imagine equality therefore one has to necessarily fall back on human dignity and the sanctity of human life. That man should be regarded as an equal member in relation to others in a *Ujamaa* society, is a moral issue as well as a demand which require that all should be equal in their demand for the services so produced by society. That is for Nyerere what justice is.

## 7.5 MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF *UJAMAA*

For Nyerere the purpose of society is man, but to serve man, there must exist a social organisation which is conducive to a greater production and equal distribution of the products so produced in society. Society must therefore organise and sustain an efficient economic set up and distribution techniques even when they are themselves unpleasant or restrictive to its members. Here one will observe that Nyerere's work and function as an African thinker unlike his European counterpart is characterised by a concern for public life and the sanctity of the human person.

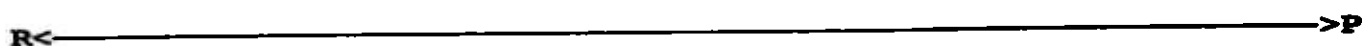
Yet, man has to be made to realise that, his dignity is only found through the acceptance of some basic fundamental principles which he as a member of a political society enters into with the governors of that society. For Nyerere, then *Ujamaa* was to be the basis for the acceptance of these principles which create a justification for a political obligation for the citizens of the State (members of the political society). These principles for *Ujamaa* are freedom and self-reliance. *Ujamaa* society was to be built on the maxim of hardwork where the peasants and workers would contribute towards the achievement of self-reliance in Tanzania and in effect create an atmosphere where total freedom and self-reliance is realised. This could perhaps tie in with Ali Mazrui's contention that Nyerere's Socialism represents an "*image of efficiency in development*".<sup>10</sup> Though this should be seen as a counter to Nyerere's own argument that any mode of production which aims at increasing society's total wealth consequently developing the society should always aim at serving the needs of the people and not maximisation of profits.

Thus, the just mode of production is that which aims at serving man and man alone, not structures nor systems.

One should however note that, in the overall works of Nyerere, there is no explicit mention of man in terms of definition. What one finds are statements on who man has been, what he does and what he must do to realise himself. Man for Nyerere is a fundamentally free being who can only realise his freedom from external conditioning and domination if he is self-reliant. Yet self-reliance for man depends on his rational choice and application of the resources made available by his environment, both natural and human. Man must therefore necessarily depend on his own work which is at its maximum productivity when he co-operates with others in society. For Nyerere then man's work within the collectivity is most effective when done collectively by all in the society. Here man must be made to know that his future is dependent upon his efforts and hard work.<sup>11</sup>

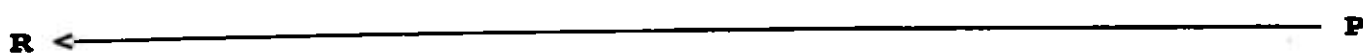
Of vital importance is the fact that man has to be led to the consciousness of his own responsibility by being made to understand that his development depends upon himself and his work. man would then seem to be consciously constructing his own history without awaiting for help from anywhere, hence, he and he alone is accountable to the society for the just and unjust deeds he performs during his life time. For the just deeds, he is rewarded, while for the unjust deeds, he is condemned and punished - and in this way the society's moral code is established. It can further be argued that, though man is an individual in himself, as an atom among many, the choice and range of actions available to him are decided by the society throughout his life and even in death. It decides

for him what is right and wrong.

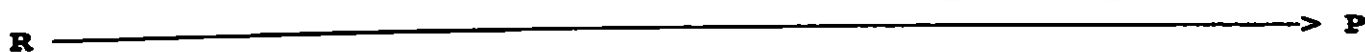


The diagram above explains how morality is established in society and consequently the point where justice in *Ujamaa* society lies. The point of departure is that, human actions lie on a continuum where R stands for Reward, and P for Punishment. In *Ujamaa* society, an act that is morally right, therefore just is determined by society along the continuum from the right to the left, hence the more just actions that a man performs the more rewards he expects from the society. His diagram will therefore look like the one below.

This diagram would mean that essentially, he is inclined to doing more actions that benefit the community than those that destroy it, hence he will be rewarded.



On the contrary, one who is inclined toward evil actions is punished by the society through imposition of sanctions.



These actions are normally supposed to be corrective in nature, a kind of restoration of normalcy in the society.

In an *Ujamaa* society then, actions are said to be good or bad depending on their effects on the society's stability. Those which tend to destroy the society are deemed bad and those which tend to affect the society for the better are good and hence just actions. This for Nyerere was simply an enlarged family unit. That at least members of a family are inclined towards actions which tend to preserve the stability of the family. For example, the child who acts contrary to the expectations of



the parents is normally taken to be a deviant and his actions are put under very close scrutiny by other members of the family, usually the parents or guardian. This (guardian or parent) in the society is the leader who is expected to exhibit maximum show of integrity in his actions and behaviour to conform with what society believes is a just way of behaving. But, man must also, remain free from society since the latter is constituted with a fundamental aim of serving man. Bearing the above in mind it can be argued that for Nyerere the State has a moral duty to educate its members on the meaning of man as a moral agent and the requirement of a just State. His argument points to a society whose institutions are organised and attitudes built such that they promote a universal respect for man which eventually leads to social equality. That whatever the size of the society and its institutions, the freedom and well being of its members is depended upon there being a generally accepted social ethic; a sense of what is right and wrong for both the society and its institutions in relation to its members and members in relation to each other. For example, the society cannot allow an individual to advocate in favour of killing, since this would undermine the basis of the society. In the same way, society does not allow discussion on the question of say abortion because this is the application of the wide principle of "*thou shalt not kill*".<sup>12</sup> The individual is not even allowed to anticipate society's decision on the matter since these and many others are instances where the individual's freedom is restricted yet we do not question them because we have grown up accepting them as automatic human reactions on moral issues.

For Nyerere therefore, the State is the greatest moral agent which

has to uphold individual moral security, freedom and is supreme. The need for the attainment of a common good is paramount and those habits which instill individualism in the social structure are kept in check. In their place Nyerere proposes a new order, one that cannot be realised without personal sacrifice. The development of man here then becomes historical, a process which man passes through in a bid to achieve self-realisation.

## **7.6 IMPLICATION FOR PRODUCTION**

That the purpose of society is man means that it (society) must aim at serving man. To do this, there must be a social organization of economic activities which are conducive to the greater production of things useful for the material and spiritual well being of man. It is therefore the function of society to organise and sustain an efficient economic system and production techniques even when these in themselves are unpleasant and restrictive for man. Yet, man must always be dominated by the desire to produce, not just to consume. What seems to have underdeveloped Africa is the Western consumptionist patterns that were transplanted in Africa during Colonialism. Justice will only be realised when the demand to consume is met by an equally eager willing population to produce and expand national produce. On the other hand, a society where the demand for efficiency and production overrides man's need for a full and good life, then society is no longer serving but using man. This for Nyerere constitutes injustice.

## **7.7 SOCIETY AND SOCIETIES: A QUESTION OF JUSTICE AND MORALITY**

It has been argued that under *Ujamaa* society, the freedom, equality and unity of all is paramount. This argument can further be extended and be shown that under *Ujamaa*, the rise of factions and sectional read (societies) is a negation of the principles governing a just society. It will be noted that, their rise (factional and sectional interest) make the will of these associations become general in relation to its members, while they (interests) remain particular in relation to the State - larger society. It will then seem that there are no longer as many votes as there are men, but as many votes as there are associations. In the event that one of these associations is too great to prevail over the rest, then, there is no longer a general will.<sup>13</sup> The prevailing opinion is not therefore generally aimed at the achievement of a common good, but particular to the service of the interests of the dominating section which represents only class interests.

Nyerere observes that in a modern African State, there is a clear case against the formation of classes since if allowed one is likely to assert its will over all the rest which do not seem to have a dominating position due to their economic and political power. This for him constitute injustice against the State as well as at interpersonal relationship. For instance, Nyerere would argue that it is unfair (totally contrary to the principles of justice) that the National Trade Union<sup>14</sup> should demand for higher wage and salary increment for its members even if the rest of the society will be hurt in the process. For Nyerere, such a demand might only be met through sacrifice by the government or

some other of greater social value. If this happened however, it would be allowing the interest of one faction to dominate and eventually suppress those of the larger society.

One will therefore note that, the formation of classes that would claim unequal share in the national production is as immoral as it is unjustified. These are the institutions - those which enhance injustice - which ought to be revised to conform to the nature of and way of African life which he argued had in built principles of justice. The situation as it was at independence, he argues, allows for the formation of classes where one will tend to present and articulate class interests aimed at the domination of all other classes which might not have the power to do the same. Accordingly then, it should not be permissible for citizens of a particular occupation, or interest to assemble for what is claimed to be their common interest which in fact is nothing but interests of disparate individuals and groups. Take the case that was alluded to earlier concerning salary increase as demanded by the National Union of Tanzanian Workers. If the demand is met, that would mean an increase in the cost of production consequently causing high price to be charged for those products. Here one may argue that the consumer is made to pay high prices because, the government has satisfied the interest of a section of the population. This arrangement is to Nyerere what constitute injustice in the State. Just arrangement would entail rewarding all on equal basis irrespective of the type of work he does. This, it is not possible for the government to achieve a decent life for all if one cannot afford to pay for the high prices since, he will be denied access to some basic goods and services as provided by the government

yet decent life and access to these all fall under the category of common goods, that which the society as a whole need to aim at.

## **7.8 COMMON GOOD**

Nyerere's argument here would seem to parallel Aristotle's assertion that, if all communities aim at some good the *polis* which is the highest of all embraces all the rest, aims and in a greater degree more than any other at the highest goods.<sup>15</sup>

For Rousseau however, the supremacy of the moral end of the State causes its hostility to other associations. That, as long as several men in assembly regard themselves as a single body, for example, the trade union movement, students' organization, employer's unions, then, they have only a single will which is basically a concern for their common preservation and the achievement of their aim which represents only a fraction of the interest of the whole society. But, when the State grows weak due to the relaxed social bonds, when particular interests begin to exercise dominance over the larger society, then the common interest changes and finds its opponent in sectional interest.

A major point to note here is that for Nyerere as it is for Aristotle and Rousseau, the State includes all the lesser (associations) ends like the family, village, workers' unions, hobby clubs among others. But since these lesser associations have not made man self-sufficient for a good life, there arises a need for the apparatus of the State which for Nyerere in Africa the State can work best if it built on the principles of a traditional African extended family unit, *Ujamaa*.

Hegel has however observed that men approach their membership

of the State through membership of their corporations or economic associations. These associations have their own functions but these functions must be subordinate to those of the State which guides and controls all the rest (associations) to the State's moral purpose. To fit Nyerere in this type of framework one has to go back to his argument that TANU (Tanzania African National Union) being the highest authority in the land ought to permeate all other associations in terms of goals and therefore presents more interests. This would then mean that, the small organizations' terms and policies should be formulated in a manner that they are in harmony with those of the larger organization, the State.

## **7.9 CONCLUSION: POLITICAL OBLIGATION AS A MORAL OBLIGATION**

For an African State looking for a formula for development in a rational way, her political philosophy must be derived and be necessarily based on moral premises. That neither development nor distribution was the real issue. The demand for political theory that satisfied Africa's condition as well as aspirations and therefore the demand for justice in post-colonial Africa was motivated by the desire for a method of how to develop socially and economically without creating disparities in the society. One would then want to ask whether it was possible to humanise capitalism without changing its structures radically which means it is no longer capitalism. If not, was there a rational way out for Africa? Many would want to argue that *Ujamaa*, (African Socialism) seems to have provided a way out.<sup>16</sup>

If it can be shown that Nyerere's political philosophy sprang out of the experience of the colonial period, then the achievement of

independence seems to have signalled the need for the establishment of a just and moralist State based on African kinship ties and brotherhood - *Ujamaa*. If in using this criterion, one is satisfied that the present State arrangements are reasonably satisfactory and just, then one has the obligation to support and defend them (State arrangements). This obligation it should be noted is purely a moral one.

Given that political obligation is necessarily a moral obligation, then, a duty to obey is never absolute but depends on the use the State makes of its authority. Since ability to govern depends on the willingness and readiness of the subjects to accept a particular government to lead the society, it follows that, the subjects must be satisfied of the ability of those in power to satisfy their needs and aspirations. This conclusion is easily derivable from the argument that, political rules aside no reason can be advanced why one man should obey another when all men are equal and free agents. Political obligation it should be noted must only arise out of an act of submission. The consent of the governed must be sought and this depends entirely on whether the authority to govern is used rightly or wrongly hence the political consent to govern becomes a moral issue.

Predicated to Hobbesian argument that only the State can guarantee safety from harassment, in submitting and undertaking to support an authority, men create the necessary conditions for peace and security. If men were to accept authority for the sake of order, it (authority) must be strong enough to enable and guarantee their self-preservation and defend them from the violence of others.

Here one can then plausibly argue that the need for a just society

as envisaged by Nyerere arose out of the recognition of the evil and unjust nature of the colonial institutions. That individual interests took a centre stage and were given priority to those of society. Exploitation of man by man was therefore the norm. Nyerere sought to create institutions which would give maximum security to individuals and society not those which would antagonise one group against another in the name of class interests. Citizens under these arrangements have an obligation to submit to the *Ujamaa* authority which had the moral authority to create civil order based on traditional African norms and values of equality and justice for all. It is here that democracy becomes an important ingredient in the *Ujamaa* society since it is the only guarantee to the freedoms of man.

That colonial law was oppressive, repressive and totally based on justice for Africans is not in dispute. Colonial institutions were based on the rule by a minority hence Tanzanians lacked the moral basis to support such an authority. In falling back on *Ujamaa* and majority rule, Nyerere sought to prove that, first, he had the consent of the Tanzanians to guide and determine what they wanted to achieve and how they wanted to achieve it, and secondly that the society he wished to build was based on justice and moral principles since Tanzania herself got her independence purely on moral grounds.

The above argument would seem to draw from Locke's that, the State is an important authority that lays down and enforces minimum standards that give rights of nature institutional guarantees which is done by majority consent. Thus, once the majority consent to a given authority, the individual has a moral obligation to accept those



arrangements.<sup>17</sup> However, Benn, S.I. and Peters<sup>18</sup> seems to see it differently. That if consent is a necessary condition for political authority it would easily deny any government any authority over dissent. That therefore the use of force in stamping out dissent is not justified and it can easily amount to acts of aggression and terrorism<sup>19</sup> on its own citizens since this is not their (dissenter) law as they did not consent to its establishment in the first place.

A free agent in this case who does not submit unconditionally is however forced by the society to submit to the absolute majority in the name of *Common Good*. This would however present another problem. If accepted, that one should submit to absolute majority then one can easily be bound by a promise to accept the consequences of the constitution thereafter. These consequences can however commit one to results that he never imagined since some consequences to the society might be so unjustified and one might have absolutely no duty to be associated with them.

One very obvious example is a democratic government that uses the constitution for undemocratic practices. The only justification for subjects to reject an undemocratic regime that is based on a democratic constitution is the moral obligation to obey that particular authority. This rejection is based purely on moral grounds since justice demands just institutions, arrangements and practices. *Ujamaa*, it should be asserted here stood for exactly that, justice and just institutions in the society for man.

# NOTES

1. Cfr. A. N'daw "Is it possible to Speak about an African Way of thought?" in Presence Africaine No. 58, (Paris: Presence Africaine 1983): 36-38.
2. Cfr. F.E.A. Owakah, A Moral View of the State: the Case of Nyerere (Unpublished B.A. Dissertation, Nairobi: University of Nairobi Department of Philosophy, 1990) p. 3.
3. J.K. Nyerere, "Ujamaa: Basis of African Socialism" in Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism. (Dar-es-salaam: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 3.
4. Cfr. A. N'daw *Op. cit.* pp. 36-37.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 38.
6. A. A. Mazrui, Towards a Pax Africana: a Study of Ideology and Ambition. (London: The Trinity Press, 1967), pp. 98.
7. Cfr. J. K. Nyerere, Freedom and Development. (Dar-es-salaam: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 6.
8. Cfr D. A. Masolo, A History of African Philosophy. (Unpublished PH. D. Thesis. Rome: Gregorian University, 1979), p. 209.
9. *Ibid.* p. 120.
10. *Ibid.* p. 216.
11. The term civility here is used to refer to a State whose laws are based on civilised, polite way of behaviour and recognises that all men are equal in law. But the term has also been used in opposition to capitalism which for Nyerere encourages individualism. Apart from these two meanings, civility here should be understood to be in opposition to the state of nature where all men stand on their own struggling to survive with absolutely no law at all.
12. J.K Nyerere, "The Church and Society", in Man and Development. (Dar es salaam: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp 83.)
13. Cfr. S.I. Benn and R.S. Peters, Social Principles and the Democratic State. (London: Allen and Unwin 1959), p. 269.
14. JUWATA is a Swahili short form for "Jumuia ya Wafanyi Kazi wa Tanzania" meaning Tanzania Workers National Union.
15. Aristotle, Politics. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 1.
16. See especially Ahmed Mohiddin's works on Ujamaa: African Socialism in Two Countries (London: Croom Helm, Ltd. 1981), pp. 80-89., A. Mohiddin, Socialism or Capitalism? Sessional Paper No. 10 Revisited in "East Africa Journal", (March, 1969), 7-16. See also F.B. Onuoha. Elements of African Socialism. (London: Andre Deutche Ltd.) pp 19-110.
17. Contrast this position with Rawls' original position, in J. Rawls, A Theory of Justice. (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp 118-183.
18. S.I. Benn and R.S. Peters *Op. cit.*, p. 269.

19. Cfr H. Odera Oruka, Punishment and Terrorism in Africa. (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau, 1976), pp 55-66.

# **CHAPTER EIGHT**

## **TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING JUSTICE**

### **IN *UJAMAA***

#### **8.0 INTRODUCTION**

This research set out to inquire into among others:

- 1. The nature and manifestation of justice,**
- 2. That the achievement of *Ujamaa* is evolutionary,**
- 3. The relationship between *Ujamaa* as a social system and the traditional African social organisation of extended family unit.**
- 4. The view that *Ujamaa* is a theory of Socialism, and**
- 5. The view that *Ujamaa* it is based on principles of justice.**

In essence therefore this research set out to show that underlying Nyerere's political doctrine are principles of justice. In the course of the research some particular principles were delineated which it was observed formally define the concept of justice. That the different formulae of justice are only concretised instances of this formal definition. That with all said and done, there is one essential and formal conception into which one can reduce the definition of justice by any name. These are; egalitarianism and proportionality. Under different circumstances and situations this formal conception it would seem gets different names but the meaning and the essence of justice remain the same.

The research analytically examined the concept of Socialism as understood in political literature. This it was discovered is a liberative

doctrine which makes good the use of virtues of equality, freedom of man and fraternal association of mankind. This naturally leads to the conclusion that Socialism unlike other forms of political ideologies are based on some principles of justice.

Attempt were made to show that African Socialism is Socialist and is African besides being a political ideology. That by definition African Socialism is a body of literature that tries to define the condition of man in (the African) society and propose ways and means of alleviating human hardship. It is a body of political theorization which aims at understanding man and society. More than that it asserts a view of human nature that rests on the fundamentals of traditional African social set up of classlessness, communality, egalitarianism, and kinship system, that is, the sum total of those codes, principles and forms of behaviour which have conferred dignity to the African over the ages and which have afforded him security.<sup>1</sup>

Though African Socialism qualifies as a body of literature about political development in Africa, it has in reality tended to operate within a variety of exigencies, taking into account national boundaries and microcultures of the different African peoples. Thus, in Tanzania there arose *Ujamaa*, which Nyerere saw as the traditional basis of establishing Socialism in Africa. That Socialism and democracy, he argued are the defining characteristics of being African and an African society.

It was argued that given the literature pertaining to African Socialism and in particular *Ujamaa*, the latter qualifies as Socialist. If Socialism is

based on principles of justice, then it follows that African Socialism and *Ujamaa* are also based on principles of justice. This as will be shown was through the analysis of the six formulae analysed in chapter three which were used as springboards in understanding the nature and manifestation of justice in an *Ujamaa* society.

However, before making the final conclusion it falls within the scope of this research to try and point out the main weaknesses in *Ujamaa* as a political doctrine, its formulation and implementation.

## 8.1 A CRITIQUE OF UJAMAA

There is no overestimation in the statement that Nyerere's political philosophy is humanistic. This is best manifested in the policy of *Ujamaa* villages. In this set up, one finds real and total human cooperation, as well as spiritual satisfaction for all in the society.

Analysis of *Ujamaa* reveals that the aim of the State, its policy and organization is the attainment of the *Good* of its members. That, therefore, actions by the State should always be in harmony with public interest hence implying they ought to be just to all. This notwithstanding, it will be observed that in fact the moral basis of the State can be destroyed if what the State actually does is not in harmony with the values and interests of the most powerful since the latter can manipulate and even overthrow the holders of political power to have judges who will rule in their favour, not because they are *right* but, because they are the *powerful* and their interests must (dominate) be overriding.

It is also important to observe that concepts like public good, public interest and common good left on their own do not convey any meaning apart from eliciting emotional responses from the listener (hearer). Public interest represents a mass of individual interests. One can therefore argue that, the State has no moral obligation except to ensure that as many members (people) as possible obtain as much as possible of whatever it is they wish to pursue and achieve. Policy decisions it should be emphasized, are only a result of competing interests whereby there is (are) no single interest(s) that everyone would acknowledge or would be to everyone's advantage. It logically follows that, there can be no public interest or common good that the State ought to pursue.

What is being alluded to here is that, *Ujamaa* as a social policy and form of social organization cannot claim to have been just to all. All that *Ujamaa* could claim to offer are institutions that guaranteed that at least as many people as possible attain their desired goals. Thus, as a form of social organization it can only be a fair umpire committed to just actions for at least the majority (interests) of the members.

Yet, one would still look at *Ujamaa* from another angle. That since it has a universal jurisdiction in its territory, an *Ujamaa* society was obliged to consider equally all the competing interest and pass the best judgement that can be universally accepted. But this will only be attempts to salvage the moral basis of *Ujamaa*, hence, claim of justice to all. As far as that goes, *Ujamaa* should be just to all. It should arbitrate fairly and ably in matters of defence, foreign policy; arbitrate between the highly organised monopolistic

producers and the virtually unorganised consumers.

But what are the philosophical implications of this arbitative view of the State within which *Ujamaa* has been analysed? One, it will mean that, there is need to persuade a sectional association to forgo its claims because of public interest. But who determines what ought to pass as public interest? Further still, how *public* is public interest? Two, it was noted that when it comes to making judgements on matters concerning public interest, the claims of one group are rejected in preference to those of another on their own merit. In this case, the group whose claims are rejected has to be persuaded not of the moral supremacy of the State, but of the State's impartiality in matters of arbitration. That therefore, given competing claims, one claim is rejected in preference for another on its own merit and not otherwise. But one will quickly notice that this destroys morality in the State and consequently the moral basis of the State and therefore the claim to justice. One would have to be convinced not of the just ends the State is committed to (achieving) but, that, as a matter of fact, the two or more competing claims cannot all be satisfied by the State. But matters of morality are not matters of fact. Three, it must always be assumed and particularly in view of the Socialist commitment that, the State does not fall in the hands of minority who will stake more claims on the nation's products to the exclusion of other concerned parties. This is a difficult assumption to guarantee. Could one be saying that by implication the State apparatus could never fall in the hands of non-Socialists especially given *Ujamaa's* commitment to the ideals of democracy? It has been the researcher's



observation that theoretically it was quite possible for Socialists in Tanzania to (have) elect(ed) non-Socialists leaders. Would this therefore not mean the natural destruction of *Ujamaa's* Socialist policies and programmes and therefore destroys justice in the State.

There is no denying the fact that greater associations must practice self-restraint in the use of power, otherwise the State as a just arbiter imposes the defence of its own independence and of the interest of others. This will however be on assumption that, the State which ought to govern and pursue public interest only is preserved from selfish domination. But much more important is the fact that public interest is not a matter of fact, but a matter of moral valuation where justice if it has to exist has not only to be done but must be seen to be done. It is in consideration of the latter (morality) that the element of justice seems to be salvaged in Nyerere's *Ujamaa*. By extension therefore, this to a large extent shows the manifestation of justice in Nyerere's (*Ujamaa*) model State.

Benn S.I. and Peters have argued that, there are two sides to rightness.<sup>2</sup> For one, if the State is monopolized by people of same values, it will seem a poor umpire to people with different values. On the other hand, if the latter's interests are constantly disregarded, they are likely to get morally dissatisfied by these acts of unfairness by the State. If this group is powerful enough, they can influence change of constitution to have favourable umpires. This would mean that, the State can only be at peace if her policies are at least morally intelligible and appealing to the more powerful in the society. Does this not repugnate the issue of equality and

freedom for all in society? Yet, *Ujamaa* was to redress the injustices of the colonial set up and bring equality to all.

This analysis points to the view that Nyerere's philosophy sprang out of the desire to build up a just society based on the virtues of freedom, equality and self-reliance, in a nutshell justice. That this was a direct reaction to the colonial experience goes without saying. What is of importance here is the question of, and, obligation to obey on the part of the citizens.

One would wish to argue that, the citizens of an *Ujamaa* society were morally obliged to support as well as enhance just structures and institutions for the new society. This argument, if stretched further implies that a duty to obey is never absolute, but depends on the use the government makes of its authority. This will go along way in supporting the earlier assumption, that the ability to govern largely depends on the willingness and readiness of the subjects to be governed.

Yet, one has also to show that this duty to obey can only be moral if it is shown to serve a greater good or arrest a greater evil, hence, (it) becomes conditional and not absolute. Nyerere's utilitarian justice demands therefore, that the obligation to obey should be in line or harmonized with the good of all or aimed at Common Good. One would be just if and only if, his actions are aimed at enhancing the achievement of Common Good or the Good of all.

It is however interesting to observe that this moralist view of the State does not insist that one has to make his own judgement on everything,

but, there must be good reasons for one to hand over to someone else his right to decide. These reasons belong to the sphere of morality, while the authority here is one's conscience subject to direction by the community. This is strictly speaking if one's interest do not conflict with those of the society.

Though from another angle, one would be right if he argued that authority at times is simply accepted for its own sake. The reason being that most social institutions and enterprises would be useless without it, hence demand that authority must exist! This might perhaps explain the need for having a bad commander and captain in an army and football team respectively than having none at all.

Studies have shown that politics ought to be based on morality and just principles, since it is the interplay between these two (politics and morality) that determine whether a government is good or bad, just or unjust.<sup>3</sup>

Sekou Toure writing on the structure of African society during the colonial era observes that, the colonial administration seems to have undermined the very moral institutions that it was supposed to perpetuate in Africa. Instead, it perpetrated individualism, lawlessness and other forms of vices. This in turn undermined the traditional network of mutual obligation which had for many years created a sense of communality in the African person.<sup>4</sup> As these changes took root in the African society, moral obligation was substituted by individual self-interest which in turn worked against Africans' ability to organise themselves and resist the economic

exploitation to which they were subjected. Given that this was the situation at independence in Africa, one has no other choice but to assert and conclude more strongly that Nyerere's political philosophy aimed at rejecting westernism, individualism and therefore aimed at reasserting Africa's communality and solidarity - *Ujamaa* which as it has been pointed out, had threads of justice for both the individual in the community and the community itself. This is found in the concept of classless traditional African society.

This kind of social organization accounted for the respect and belief in the equality and dignity of man. But for Nyerere the latter could as well be his main reason for embracing a Socialism which drew strongly from the values of traditional Africa, personal sacrifice and work for one's country - *Uhuru na Kazi*.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps this can explain the basis for his belief in equalizing economic opportunities and utilizing the nation's resources for the general welfare of the citizens. Production is important, but it ought not to be made the purpose of society, because "*when the demands of efficiency and production overrides man's need for a full and good life, then, society is no longer serving man but using him.*"<sup>6</sup> This it has been argued provides a basis for the argument that *Ujamaa* is founded on principles of justice. It isolates factors which though demand efficiency must in the final analysis cater for the needs of man first and foremost. The focus of *Ujamaa* on man does not exclude its communal outlook. All that one would be saying is that given the nature of *Ujamaa*, talk of justice only makes sense if societal structures and institutions are designed to serve man. This as it has been

pointed out is because man in an *Ujamaa* society sees no conflict between his interests and the society's.

Of much interest is the fact that Nyerere rejects the injustice inherent in classes and class struggle as a basis for building a viable Socialism. The rejection of classes and class struggles makes Socialism depended upon capitalism in a most unsatisfactory manner and forces indefinite continuation of discrimination against other men. But how true is the proposition that pre and post independence Tanzania was classless? In other words how far is the hypothesis from traditional communalism to a modern classless Socialism true?

It is the contention of this research that Nyerere seems to have ignored and deliberately for that, the philosophical analysis of traditional African society and simply rejected capitalism for its association with colonialism. A research by Henri Maurier has made very interesting revelation. Interesting because for him, traditional Africa was basically and structurally capitalist at all levels with regard to all values especially the control over these values by the traditional elites. For him western capitalism found a ready cushion that readily received it in Africa.<sup>7</sup> Though interesting and important, Maurier's position fails to account for the dominance over African Capitalism by western capitalism. Why couldn't the two compete as equals? Could this not be a case of misapplication of the Marxist method of social analysis? Masolo in comparative analysis of Maurier's capitalist traditional Africa and Nyerere's Socialist traditional Africa, points out that even if one does not consider Maurier's method, but

strictly on the basis of analysis of economic differentiation in society, management of production, producing for profit and the role of the market forces, African traditional societies cannot be characterized as capitalist. Though one would wish also to ask whether it is not true that what Masolo dismisses as not being "an innate mental category that man is born with,"<sup>8</sup> attitude of mind, as brought out by Nyerere was simply a response and reaction to the varying opportunities offered by the African environment, as exemplified by the development of *Ujamaa* as mental Socialism. This should be clear given the works of philosophers in contemporary Africa. Many have not understood the meaning of being an African. They need to understand the present problems, engage in a sensitive and critical analyses of the opportunities available and the resulting change taking place in Africa. The past should not simply be discarded for its own sake; the traditional African past should be seen as a basis for constructing a modern and a better future.

If one is able to show as this study has that one can explain the communitary nature of social relationships that developed in Africa (both traditional and immediately after independence to cover for the mutual want and the consequence interdependence then, all other explanations and criticisms of Socialism as not being an attitude of mind should be thrown overboard.

Issa Shivji has introduced another interesting dimension in the debate on classless Africa. He has asserted with a lot of evidence the existence of classes and the continuation of class formation both in the colonial and post

colonial Tanzania.<sup>9</sup> He observes that the introduction of cash crops created a difference in the Tanzanian peasantry. That their involvement in the production of food and their provision of labour to large plantations inevitably tied them to the international capitalist agriculture".<sup>10</sup> Shivji says that this, sowed the seeds of inequalities.

From this account it would seem that colonialism muted the class struggle in Tanzania, creating different phases through which it passed. This phenomenon of class struggle then seemed to have matured in the womb of colonialism such that anti-colonial sentiments and ideologies together with the struggle for independence were only but different though necessary phases of the class struggle. But this is no proof of the existence of classes in pre-colonial Africa.

What comes out clearly in independent Tanzania is that, the net result of the nationalization strategy and the retention of the existing bureaucratic and political leadership after the Declaration,<sup>11</sup> was to reinforce the powers of these two groups to the extent that now it was not quite clear who were the managers of the nationalized firms the workers and peasants or the top political and government bureaucrats? Evidence seems to point to the fact that in fact the nationalized firms were controlled by the latter on behalf of the former, which in turn meant that these bureaucratic managers and political leaders still decided and directed the distribution of the surplus (profit).

Granted the foregoing one has no otherwise but to accept and affirm the existence of classes and class struggles in Colonial and Post-colonial

Tanzania with the bureaucrats and politicians forming the dominant force while the rest of the community remained powerless.

This analysis, if granted would mean that Nyerere's political doctrine used the wrong units of analysis ignoring completely the issue of whether political leaders and government bureaucrats could form a dominating class over the masses. Yet, this research has attempted to show that, *Ujamaa*, (at least in principle and intent), aimed at redressing this social anomaly, which argument would leave only one possible conclusion; the *Ujamaa* was a response to the malady of social inequalities which were a major cause of social injustice while at the same time redressing these inequalities wherever and whenever they arose. Thus, *Ujamaa* was by and large based on strong principles of justice.

This aside, it would also be important to note that in the analysis of *Ujamaa* as a theory of Socialism what came out clearly is the fact that, *Ujamaa* was a Socialism that aimed at the serving the people - peasants and workers. By adopting *Ujamaa* therefore, the nation of Tanzania was making a choice between rapid economic growth and general economic development, all this aimed at self-reliance. While the former could allow for income disparities, the latter aimed at general development of the people's welfare hence had a marked sense of equality by checking the income distribution.

One important fact that has so far emerged from the study of the East African political landscape is that, Nyerere has been by far the most ideological of the East African leaders, both of the first and the second



generation. This notwithstanding, he has found it quite taxing to successfully reconcile his novel ideas and symbols, with programmes of action.

With the attainment of independence, it was clearly proclaimed that the basic means of production, distribution and exchange were to be owned and controlled by Tanzanians consequently placing the national resources of Tanzania at the disposal for utilization only by the nationals.

Nationalization brought large numbers of people under the government's control which to a large extent ensured a rational deployment and re-deployment of human and material resources where demand was highest. The result was not hard to come by, and in 1977 Nyerere observed that;

*"As a result of our Socialist policies it is the people of this country, not foreigners who determine what kind of factories and firms shall be established in Tanzania. This means that we can gradually increase our control over the Tanzanian economy; we are not being bound tighter and tighter into the international capitalist structure which we can never hope to control, or even influence".<sup>12</sup>*

The process of nationalization therefore ensured, clarified and allowed Tanzanians to identify, locate and implement policy programmes and projects that were in line with their national priorities. This marked attainment of freedom, was a step towards the achievements of self reliance which was the cornerstone of justice in the *Ujamaa* society.

It should be mentioned here that, the reorganization of the administrative and the economic infrastructures to meet the challenges of a just society underlined greatly and inevitably the efficiency of the economy in meeting the challenges, needs and demands of self-reliance.

Yet, a close scrutiny and analysis of the concept of self-reliance is purely a socialization process with aims at changing the economic and political attitudes of the population and not merely an economic issue or policy. By 1977, Tanzanian society showed little or no marked distinction in terms of classes. This was an indication that egalitarian ethos had taken root. This led Nyerere to assert that;

*"Ujamaa in Tanzania has stopped and reversed a national drift towards the growing of a class society, based on ever increasing inequality and exploitation of the majority for the benefit of the minority. It has changed the direction of the national development, so that our national resources are now being deliberately directed towards the needs of this nation and its people".<sup>13</sup>*

A study of *Ujamaa* is therefore a study of politics of morality or morality in politics. In the course of the implementation of the policies of *Ujamaa*, Nyerere designed a political leadership code which restricted political office holders from using them for personal gains. These gains seems to have been mainly economic.

But if Tanzania being an African country was to be led by Africans, why and how was it going to be possible to have leaders who are poor, in this case foreigners having a monopoly in the running of economic enterprises? How was he to solve the problem of economic control by foreigners? Nyerere here seems to have attached a very high price to political leadership. This economic dilemma undermined Nyerere's efforts towards the achievement of self-reliance. At least economic justice did not seem to be done since in the long run some Africans would team up with foreigners in exploiting fellow Africans. This, to the peasants and workers would mean that economic power base has simply not changed. This is so

if the leadership code is seen from the economic point of view. But from another angle, the code was a declaration of a commitment to a particular way of life for the political leadership. That it was very much possible to serve the society without necessarily expecting huge returns from the society at the same time. This seems to have introduced an element of morality in public life, and helped to eradicate the ethics of possessive individualism.

One may want to argue that economic and political hardships operated in Tanzania to the extent that it undermined Nyerere's ideas on social and economic equality. For one, many policy programmes were designed by expatriates who while sensitive to Nyerere's values and categories of operations, were largely unconcerned with providing a new symbolic framework of action. This in a way can go along way in explaining why Nyerere made his formulations more pragmatic yet less persuasive. In *Ujamaa* therefore what one sees is that Nyerere is more concerned with Socialism and traditional African society based on the concept of extended family and the problem of stratification. For him, the traditional family set up was inherently just and there was no way it could accommodate stratification. If he based his Socialism on the extended family structure, the result would be the creation by evolution of a society without class antagonism.

## **8.2.0 UJAMAA AND JUSTICE: A SYNTHESIS**

It has been argued throughout this work that Nyerere's political philosophy is founded on moralistic principles of what makes a good and just society. Under *Ujamaa*, there is an attempt at constructing a society based on just principles where ownership and production are concepts that do not seem to be dominative. It has further been observed that *Ujamaa* is based on the traditional conception of African extended family. This is the unit of analysis. One should note that in African cosmology, there is no desire to dominate others. Instead, there is a marked search for knowledge that will hold and maintain a balance between man and man on the one hand, and, man and nature on the other. The principles underlying *Ujamaa*, were aimed at achieving self-reliance for man. Self-reliance creates an atmosphere for free interaction between men on equal footing hence eliminates injustices. It was further observed that in a free society, men are classified not on the basis of ownership of property, but on their relationship to the production process in society. Hence men are grouped and classified on the basis of the tasks they perform in society. The resulting society is one of respect, equality, freedom for all and fraternal union of all in the community. Under *Ujamaa* therefore, the distinction of man on racial, tribal, religions and even ideological lines is absent.

It follows therefore that, Nyerere's conception and development of a Socialist State aimed at eliminating dependence and exploitation of man by man in society. For Nyerere it was observed that the development aims at some end. That is the attainment of Socialism based on the extended family

unit - *Ujamaa*.

From this point of view, the definition of man is incomplete outside the community. Community gives man language through which to communicate, culture and thus the humanness. Man's reasons for cooperation (with others) is basically to alleviate individual inabilities. Under *Ujamaa* therefore, the aim is to build a society of peasants and workers who have consciously acknowledged their individual weaknesses in the face of natural catastrophes. Thus for man to develop and this depends entirely on their concerted efforts and hard work. Cooperation is therefore important. This, is the essence of *Ujamaa*.

Here, the acceptance of man as man without qualification is a prerequisite for and provide the bridge between an egalitarian conception of justice and an egalitarian humanism. For one, the acceptance of human equality, require among other things that consideration be made of the class to which it is desired to apply to consist of all mankind. Mankind here is used without qualifications of race, colour, height, sex, age, religious affiliation or ideological leaning. At the same time, it constitutes and manifests a humanitarian ideal that strengthens the solidarity between men.

The foregoing analysis fits in well with a school of thought which holds that, Nyerere's philosophy is patterned and consistent though marked by pragmatic tendencies.<sup>14</sup> In his political theorization, one finds justice manifested as utilitarian, justice egalitarian as well as egalitarian humanism. This would make one argue that, in fact the general attitude by Nyerere towards political questions has been summarised in the Tanganyikan

constitution, that:

**"Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable right of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace; and whereas the said rights include the right of the individual of whatever race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed and sex; but subject to respect for rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest to life, liberty and security of the person, the enjoyment of property protection by the law, freedom of conscience, expression and assembly and respect for his private and family life .... the constitution guarantees the rights of man as man with respect of human family".<sup>15</sup> (emphasis mine).**

This recognition of one human family creates an interesting dimension through which to analyse Nyerere's theory of *Ujamaa*. Interesting because justice would depend entirely on the unit of analysis, that is, whether the unit of analysis is the individual, the nuclear family, the extended family, the *Ujamaa* village the nation or the world as a human family. This research has adopted the *essential category* theory to define what constitutes justice in *Ujamaa*.

### **8.2.1 TO EACH THE SAME THING**

Under *Ujamaa*, all people are treated equally without due regard to any distinguishing characteristics of age, sex, state of health, material status or colour of skin. Here, one finds the concept of proportionality (proportionate justice) carried forward from traditional Africa. Justice from this point of view applies to any given essential category of beings, be it a family, clan, or the nation. It should however be emphasized that as opposed to Plato, Justice for Nyerere is clearly manifested in the *Ujamaa* village (the ten cell unit) before it is seen in the individual and the whole

nation. That the ten cell household unit was a whole on its own and it is here that the best application of the principle 'to each the same thing' could be seen.

### **8.2.2 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS MERIT**

In the foregoing principle, it was observed that all people are treated equally without paying attention to the various distinguishing characteristics that they may possess. Under the present principle, under *Ujamaa*, justice does not demand universal equality, but simply treatment proportional to an intrinsic quality, that is, the merit of the human person. Thus, it aims at giving answers under different circumstances to the question; as a human being, what does one merit? How about what is above and beyond this? Liberty? Good working conditions? Non-exploitative human relations?

It should be emphasised that Nyerere does not go into the sophistication of designing the principles in any order as observed in John Rawls.<sup>18</sup> What is however clear is that justice for Nyerere as for Rawls would demand conditions of liberty to be up and above economic or social gains. Though the two differ greatly in their units of analysis. Thus, whereas Rawls would look at the individual as the aim of justice, Nyerere allows for communalistic justice where society determines what is good and bad, praiseworthy and unpraiseworthy.

Many libertarian observers would easily run into problems with this form of argument. For one, it is not easy to categorise merits and rewards to form one essential category. Furthermore, concepts of merit and reward

work best in a capitalist than a Socialist oriented economy. How then is one to extend the application of this principle to Socialist environment? Here one has to bear in mind that Socialistic principles do not in most cases reward or allow for reward to individualist initiatives. In fact Socialism tends to suppress individualism in favour of community oriented efforts. Seen from this angle, if justice is to be each according to his merit, what would be the implication of this to the weak in society? In fact what one draws from this is that the weak and the disabled since they merit to say the least, nothing, they should be left to the generosity and benevolence of the rich and powerful in society. Yet, given the framework within which this project has chosen to analyse *Ujamaa*, this is but unacceptable purely on humanitarian equality. What this research has brought out quite clearly is that the society ought and is under obligation to design and put into place structures and institutions, norms and values which compensate the weak in whatever position.

### **8.2.3 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS WORK**

Nyerere defines *Ujamaa* as a society composed of peasants and workers. The qualification to citizenship is simply loyalty to the State of *Ujamaa*. The theory of self-reliance is thus meant to buttress the argument that, it is only Tanzanians who can, through their hard work develop Tanzania. That the liberty of man can only be realized under conditions of self-reliance. But the latter is only possible if all peasants and workers sacrificed and worked for the betterment of one's country. Freedom is only



meaningful where the people work - *Uhuru na Kazi*.<sup>17</sup>

One quickly notes that, as opposed to an ethical criterion of justice this principle demands to see the result of an action hence only elements that can be reckoned with, weighed and measured are taken into account. This conception of justice nevertheless discourages laziness and rewards hard work. Thus the intrinsic value attached to a particular kind of work is irrelevant. What counts as the essential category are those whose production or knowledge have equal value for the judge. That from a given point of view given some particular pieces of work however different they may be, they must be considered and therefore accorded the same treatment. They constitute an essential category by the very fact of their enhancing society's productivity.

It should however be noted that for Nyerere, money does not form the basis for judging what ought or ought not be considered as constituting an essential category on the basis of rewards. What should be of relevance here is one's commitment to the Socialist cause and belief in hard work, denounce exploitation and disregard selfishness.

In theory, this principle looks simple. But its application to concrete situation, one would be hard pressed how to exactly determine between a regional commissioner's work, a peasant farmer in the countryside and a sanitary technician on the issue of equality. How, for example, should one decide how to determine their essential category in so far as their commitment and contribution to work is concerned?

Be it as it may, one would argue that this is a principle best applied to

a capitalist economy. It sounds only sober that money to a very large extent gives one what would constitute a just pay or just price for one's effort. This is strictly speaking the only way one can apply the principle to each according to his work the reward here being for that which one has produced.

#### **8.2.4 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS NEEDS**

The application of this principle in an independent Tanzania seems to have been in line with the Socialist principles. Thus, instead of paying regard to the different merits or output, it seeks to lessen the sufferings of men in the face of difficulties in satisfying their basic (read essential) needs. Under *Ujamaa* therefore, the social group is obliged to organize and institute structures that are conducive to the greater production and consequently of meeting the basic needs of the members.

The group designates some basic minimum which every man must necessarily have or be assured of; to his family the care it deserves; to his health and to the community to ensure its continued existence.

In the course of this research, the conclusion has been that it is only in this principle where it is found a way of not only making distinctions between essential and non-essential needs, but also arranging these needs in order of importance and priority.

For instance as an agricultural society what takes priority? Training more extension officers to hasten improved farming methods, or importing tractors and combined harvesters for large scale cultivation? Which should

be the basis of what? Agricultural development to later give way to industrial development or rely heavily on foreign loans for establishing industries whose spare parts will still have to be imported? This and many other questions can help one arrange needs to constitute an essential category. In considering what one's essential needs are, it must be borne in mind that, the accumulation of wealth is not priority for members of an *Ujamaa* society.

Perhaps of importance is to remember that, in its formulation, under *Ujamaa* men care for each other and there is no reason to accumulate for a rainy day when others have none. The society is organized in such a way that at least everybody is assured of achieving a bare minimum for survival before any consideration of surplus is made. Perhaps too, this formula of justice works well to allocate resources to individuals as well as settling societal obligations towards its members, be it material or spiritual.

### **8.2.5 TO EACH ACCORDING TO HIS LEGAL ENTITLEMENT**

From the onset, one is confronted by the difficult task of defining what is one's legal entitlement, that is, what is one's own? Under the colonial establishment, as a result of feelings of inferiority caused by slavery, colonialism and racism, the psychic withdrawal experienced by Africans in practice led to two sets of laws; one for the whites and the other for Africans. Though this was the case up to the time of independence, the independent State of Tanzania under *Ujamaa* established one juridical definition of what is one's own by stating unequivocally that *Ujamaa* was to

be based on the recognition of the inherent dignity and equality of all members to the basic inalienable rights as members of the human family.<sup>18</sup> This recognition of the humanness of man was to be the basis of freedom, justice and peace.

This principle of justice one should note is best applied in conditions of democracies. The principles of democracy it should be observed were best manifested and practices in small communities. These included the ancient City states,<sup>19</sup> and the traditional African forms of political organization where all were represented in village councils. Justice here then does not only require participation in the performance of community tasks, but also participation in decision making on what those tasks should be, and how best to go about performing them. For Tanzania this was best done in the *Ujamaa* villages.

Thus, justice under this principle would mean the application of same laws to the same essential categories (same acts) every time that they occur.

### **8.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

One can in conclusion say that *Ujamaa* if taken to be an affirmation of the identity of the black African man and the discovery of justice for him, also sought to fuse different cultures, the European and African, where *Ujamaa* as a practice of African Socialism does not vary greatly with European brand of Scientific Socialism.

Can one then say that *Ujamaa* was an Africa's contribution to

international view to justice? The position here is that *Ujamaa* was well intentioned but given the form in which modern racism manifests itself, Black Africans are not supposed to invent, neither are they supposed to determine the course of their thinking and development. If *Ujamaa* meant to counter racism in the world, it is the same injustice which led to its collapse.

For Nyerere, justice only exists in self-reliance. Outside it, one finds only injustice. Here then *Ujamaa* should be seen to stand for freedom of man, who sees no conflict between his interests and the community's precisely because the structures of his society are only but an extension of the family unit - *jami*.

The principles analysed here are the best manifestations of how universalism can be modelled to suit local conditions. One notes that Socialism aims at doing exactly that applying universal principles to suit whatever local conditions there might be. It will further be observed that the argument as to whether Africans Socialism qualifies as Socialism should be put to rest. Socialism not only denotes and describes a particular kind of society but it also proposes ways and means by which this (end) should be achieved. As a socio-economic concept, Socialism is based on economic as well as ethical values and principles. These principles, as it has been the aim of this project to show, are just in their constitution. Therefore Socialism is based on principles of justice. However, it was also shown that, the means to the achievement of Socialism is partly determined by the ethical and cultural categories and values as well as the socio-economic environment of particular societies in which it is to be applied.

So, is it possible to talk of "African Socialism"? The answer is Yes. Throughout this work, it was pointed out that individual cultural categories, norms and values, to a large extent determine what type of social organization will emerge out of a given system. One can therefore assert that African Socialism is African, it was inspired by African traditions and practices but was modified to suit concrete modern conditions.

Socialism is a concept about man and society. It is a way of life and means to achieving this way of life. Local differences must therefore arise when it comes to interpreting the means to this life. If *Ujamaa* provided one way to interpreting the means to this life and it is African then, *Ujamaa* is African and qualifies to be Socialistic. It is therefore African and Socialist. This is a Socialism without class struggle. The element of nationalization witnessed after the Arusha Declaration in 1967 was purely to conform to modern and radical Socialist principles and requirements, though it must be observed that nationalization here aimed more at mobilizing national resources than redistributing them.

Can therefore the hypothesis run through and it be shown that, *Ujamaa* being African and Socialist is founded on principles of justice? Yes. Production under a Socialist system aims mainly at serving the needs of the people and not only needs of the man who has enough wealth to pay for goods and services. Class distinctions are non-existent and ethically undesirable. Socialism simply aims at equitable distribution of social and economic products. Inherently therefore *Ujamaa* is just to man.

It was also alluded to earlier that Socialism can be built on poverty. If

there was nothing or little to distribute, what was the aim of *Ujamaa* as a brand of Socialism? It is true, that Socialism cannot be built on poverty. Conversely, Socialism does not simply mean the existence of quantitatively abundant material goods, neither does it mean a qualitatively different life-style! One important and basic aspect of Socialism is its advocacy for material justice for all in society.

One would also not be off the mark to say that African Socialism arose out of the desire to look for and assert an African identity and search for a sense of justice for the African man. One will therefore expect that naturally the resulting system must as a rule be based on just principles of human interaction where initially there were none. *Ujamaa* therefore comes in to advocate for social equality, equal opportunities and elimination of exploitation of man by man. The result is "*a society in which the condition for the development of each is also the condition for the development of all*".<sup>20</sup> This is a society based on justice.

The reconstructed traditionalism that has been analysed so far may have been based on many assumptions, but at least, Nyerere has tried to bridge in the process, the gap between theory and practice. In the same way, he has attempted to merge utopianism and pragmatism in a way that leaves the significance of the Socialist ideology in Africa intact. This has made modern Socialism in Africa seem nothing but a redemption of the communal practices that was the bedrock of many African societies.

This definitive mental categories and mythology it should be emphasised understands reality only from the point of view of man, not

nation nor class. The resulting socialism is "*Communitary not collective; democratic not totalitarian, and is founded on the primacy of law and not on the dictatorship of class*".<sup>21</sup> (emphasis ours). This is precisely where the understanding of justice in *Ujamaa* lies.



# NOTES

1. *Vide Supra*, pp. 103, ff.
2. Cfr. S.I. Benn and R.S. Peters, Social Principles and the Democratic State. (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1959), pp. 1 - 3, 271-277.
3. Cfr. Aristotle, Politics. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 1 - 3.
4. Cfr. L.G. Gowan, "Guinea" in G.M. Carter ed. African One Party States. (New York: Cornell University Press, 1962), p. 154.
5. Nyerere has published a book with the same title and theme. See J.K. Nyerere, Uhuru na Kazi. (Dar-es-Salaam: Oxford University Press, 1967)
6. L. Cliffe and J. Saul, Socialism in Tanzania, Vol.2 (Dar-es-Salaam: East African Publishing House, 1975), pp. 34-78.
7. H. Maurier, Philosophie de L'Afrique Noire Bonn: Athroops Institut, st, Augustine 1976.
8. *Ibid.* p. 54.
9. Cfr. Issa Shivji, Class struggle in Tanzania. (Dar-es-Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1975), pp. 34-78.
10. *Ibid.* p. 54.
11. Cfr: "The Arusha Declaration". In Nyerere, J.K., Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp 93.
12. J.K. Nyerere, The Arusha Declaration: Ten Years After. (Dar-es Salaam: Government Printer, 1977), p. 6.
13. *Ibid.* p. 2.
14. Cfr. M. Bates, "Tanganyika", in G.M. Carter ed. Africa One Party States (New York: Cornell State University Press, 1962) pp. 446 - 448.
15. See excerpts of Tanganyikan constitution in Margaret Bates, "Tanganyika", in G. M. Carter *Op. cit.* p. 448.
16. J. Rawls, A Theory of Justice. (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 126 - 129.
17. The two, Uhuru na Kazi translates to Freedom and Work buttresses Nyerere's policy of liberty and self-reliance. Thus, freedom (Liberty) is only meaningful if it is based on *Kazi*.
18. See excerpts of Tanganyikan constitution in Margaret Bates, "Tanganyika", in G. M. Carter *Op. cit.* p. 448.

19. Ahmed Mohiddin, African Socialism in Two Countries. (New Jersey: Barnes and Noble Books, 1981), pp. 195.
20. Cfr. J. K. Nyerere, Uhuru na Kazi. (Dar-es-salaam: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 195.
21. D. A. Masolo, A History of African Philosophy. (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation in the University of Nairobi Library. Rome: Gregorian University, 1979), p. 202.

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