

Revisiting Jomo Kenyatta’s Nation Branding through the Construction of National Identity in Kenya.

Fred Ernest Nasubo
Pan African University,
Institute of Governance, Humanities and Social Sciences, Yaoundé, Cameroon.
Main author Email: nasubof@gmail.com

Abstract

This study analysed nation branding through the mobilisation of elements of Kenya’s national identity under Jomo Kenyatta’s regime. Nation branding and national identity perspectives are used to deepen the understanding of how Kenya constructed and branded its identity. It advances the notion that, as Kenya transitioned from colonialism to independence, a new nation was reimagined and redefined by mobilising elements of national identity and according them new meanings. The study is founded on the notion that the concept of nation branding is not new, nor is the practice since nations have historically reinvented themselves due to the changing circumstances. For Kenya, nation branding can be traced to the period following independence through the construction of the country’s national identity. This process was marked with the mobilisation of Kenya’s cultural elements aimed at replacing customs and traditions of the British constructed during the colonial period. Kenya’s nationalist leaders were motivated by the idea that colonialism had led to the emergence of a new breed of Africans shaped by and practising British cultures; a new form of culture that was neither African nor British or a new hybrid; and a group of Africans who were firmly attached to their African traditions. The need by Jomo Kenyatta, therefore, to change the colonial image to one that resonated with independent Kenya, as well as to assert his rule called for the replacement of the sonic and visual elements of British identity with those resonating with the new nation.

Key Terms: Nation, country, state, nation branding, national identity

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Introduction

Background: Colonialism and the British Identity

The need to construct and brand Kenya's national identity under Jomo Kenyatta's regime was aimed at replacing British identities that were constructed during the colonial period. The arrival of the British and construction of their identities in colonial Kenya was largely fuelled by their perception of an image [or brand] of Africa whose culture was inferior to theirs. Their settlement in Kenya was, therefore, an attempt to 'civilize' [or rebrand] a 'barbaric' and 'backwards' 'nation.' Their 'civilizing' [or nation branding] strategy was marked with the construction and imposition of their identity upon Africans. This attempt not only presented a clash between two cultures but also revealed contestations and contradictions of identities. This is because both the colonialists and the Africans had their defined cultures and traditions.

However, the need to conquer colonial Kenya by the British led to the introduction of British culture by suppressing the customs and rituals of the indigenous peoples. Whereas some Africans were initiated into the British' ways of life, there were those who rejected the new lifestyle. It is this attempt by the Europeans to exert dominance over the indigenous systems and the refusal by some Africans to leave their cultural heritage that resulted in the contestations of identities. Those who accepted the British lifestyle, on the other hand, continued to live with their fellow Africans, thus presenting contradictions of identities.

By colonising and imposing their culture on the locals, they were ensuring that colonial Kenya was turned into a "white man's country in the sense that Europeans could live, breed, thrive and establish homes there, and so create a new British dominion'

(Huxley, 1968). It was, however, important for the British to export their culture to what they perceived to be a 'new' homeland. This process began with the creation of imaginary boundaries that aided in curving out the land, thereby distinguishing between European and African settlements. These boundaries further lumped communities that were formerly diverse and independent with no common history, culture, language or religion, while separating previously communities that lived within the same enclave (Ndege, 2009).

Through the colonial boundaries, the British assigned to themselves fertile regions also known as 'white highlands', creating an impression that they were superior to Africans. The borderlines further differentiated between those within, and those outside the nation, thereby assigning Africans new identities. The colonialists also introduced English laws, which resulted in multiple effects on African identities. Land laws, for example, displaced indigenous people from their 'homeland,' resulting in them becoming squatters and landless. Land perceived as communal property, a divine endowment and spiritual inheritance by Africans became the queen's possession administered from Britain (Kenyatta, 1995).

British culture in colonial Kenya was further entrenched via the institution of the position of colonial chiefs, which contradicted African's leadership system. The latter was characterised by the council of elders. Despite their lack of experience [or disregard] of traditional laws, colonial chiefs advanced the interest of the colonial administration, such as tax collection and recruitment of African labourers into the white

farmer's plantations. African leaders, on the other hand, identified with the culture and traditions of the locals and administered the day-to-day life of their respective localities. Whereas the traditional leaders aided in bettering the lives of the indigenes, the colonial chiefs worked under the colonial administration and ensured that the Africans adhered to colonial laws. Their office, therefore, demoted the role of traditional leaders by creating an image of superior European culture over that of the Africans.

The study also reasons that the decision to make English the colony's official language led to the demotion of Kiswahili and other vernacular languages at the bottom of the scale. English becoming the language of the law, administration, business, and higher education not only disenfranchised Africans loyalty to their indigenous languages but also ensured they were more acculturated in British traditions (Sindiga, 1977). Colonial education also served the role of passing the language and other belief systems of the British to the indigenous peoples. Not only did it replaced traditional learning systems, but it also forced Africans to leave their values and customs practices in favour of the British. Traditional education was used to pass culture and beliefs to younger generations, preparing individuals for communal responsibilities and interpersonal relationships (Owuor, 2007). Colonial education, on the other hand, laid emphasises on the importance of the cultural values of the British, creating a sense of competition in terms of status, privilege, power and control, which were contrary and anathema to African communal living (Mwiria, 1991; Shizha, 2013).

To further ensure that colonial Kenya resonated with the values and ideals of the Europeans, colonial

currencies engraved with the images of the reigning British Monarch and featured English, Arabic and Gujerati writings were introduced (Mwangi, 2002). Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) notes that the use of images on currencies was not only for asserting allegiance but also for instilling collective identity centred on a common identity and culture. The idea behind currencies also resonated with the 19th and 20th centuries Monarchs and emperors sought to assert their powers and authority by embedding their image or seals on forms of currencies issued (Helleiner, 1998).

The use of these currencies changed ways of African transaction previously in the form of barter trade. The symbols on the currency also meant Kenya was a subdued 'nation' and had become a 'homeland' for the British. Colonial identities were also manifested through the symbolic raising and waving of the British Flag, known as the 'Union Jack' (Eatman, 2007). Through the 'Union Jack', it can be argued that the British emphasized their nation's values, history and memories, and what Europeans stood for as opposed to the Africans. The Flag also acted as a powerful symbol that bound together with the colony's people, signifying the authority of the British Monarch over native rulers.

British national identity was constructed and made visible via the statutes and monuments of Queen Victoria, King George V and King George VI, Lord Delamere, Lionel Douglas Galton-Fenzi and Hamilton Fountain that were erected in public places (Larsen, 2012). Their presence symbolized not only British domination but also the subjugation of Africans by the European identity. More importantly, these sculptors not only aided in mobilising collective memories through the narration of European national stories but also represented their pride. The

rituals and traditions surrounding these monuments also echoed common consensus and reverence towards the British Monarchy. The construction of the British identity was, however, not without opposition from the indigenous peoples. For instances, some Africans refused to heed the call for a subscription towards the construction of the King George V statue (Larsen, 2012).

Opposition towards the assertion of colonial identities was also witnessed through the rejection of chiefs in favour of traditional rulers. The Giriama community, for example, refused to recognise by denouncing all the appointed colonial chiefs in favour of the traditional council of elders led by Mekatilili and Wanje (Patterson, 1970). In some communities like the Agikuyu, colonial chiefs Waruhiu from Kiambu and Hinga from Nyeri were attacked and killed (Wamagatta, 1988). The Nandi and the Agiriama also resisted the British encroachment into their homeland. These communities reacted by fighting the colonial officers. The Somali also was opposed to the division of Somaliland into the British and Italian spheres of influence, which separated the clans. While such resistance was suppressed through the arrest and execution of local leaders, burning of villages, crops and driving away livestock, it revealed African's opposition to the interference of their heritage.

Opposition to the British by the indigenous communities aimed to safeguard the locals' heritage and culture from being destroyed. This resistance created a faction that refused to collaborate with the colonial administration. As a result, the colonialists began to sow division and hatred between those that opposed the British and the collaborators. This was achieved by propagating tribalism, where the formation of political parties

was only allowed within the confines of particular tribes. Travel and trade restrictions were also placed to reduce or inhibit inter-tribal contact. Communities were also turned against each other through misrepresentation, as in the case of Turkana and Samburu against the Kikuyu (Kariuki, 1964). This strategy, therefore, created and perpetuated the idea of differences among the colonial Kenya communities, hence embedding tribalism.

The contact between the British and indigenous communities, therefore, resulted in three primary forms of cultures toward Kenya's independence. First, some of the local cultures were shaped by the colonialist, leading to the emergence of people who belonged and identified with the British culture. Secondly, the clash between the two cultures resulted in the emergence of people with strong ties and allegiance to the traditional indigenous systems. Thirdly, the contestation led to the emergence of people who exhibited components of the British and African cultures.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nation Branding vis-à-vis National Identity

While the coinage of the phrase 'nation branding' is attributed to Anholt (1996, pp. 357–364), a different study has argued that the concept of nation branding is not new, nor is the practice (Olins, 2002, pp. 241–248). Historically, nations have reinvented themselves as regimes and circumstances [such as colonialism] change. The new brand or nations is carved out of a variety of fragments such as colonialism, forging a unitary government characterised by a dominant language, religion, symbols and myths. Lee Kuan Yew argues that the practice of nation branding in Singapore's is not a new phenomenon as it can be traced back to 1968

(Lee, 2000). It not only aimed at encouraging Singaporeans to be proud of their country but also to brand Singapore as a multi-racial cultural nation, a modern destination place rich with world cuisine and full of multi-racial traditions.

In another study, Marfo (2015) argues that branding Ghana has existed since 1957 with the country's first president Kwame Nkrumah. It manifested through ambitious economic projects such as the development of infrastructure. Nigeria initiated a nation branding process to reinforce the country's values such as humility, hard work, contentment, respect for established authority and selflessness that existed in pre-colonial times (Akinjide, 2014, p. 527). The government unveiled another nation branding project aimed at depicting the true Nigeria identity, reviving old cultural values, and instilling the spirit of patriotism and hope to all Nigerians (Akunyili, 2010, p. 21). Therefore, any nation can be viewed as a brand. This is because countries have always created and managed their images, although they may not have referred to it as branding. The current move into branding is thus a past practice by many nations.

Countries engage in the practice of nation branding for various reasons, among them to signify a new beginning. For example, some nations rebranded by changing their names after the collapse of European colonial empires; Gold Coast became Ghana, Southern Rhodesia became Zimbabwe, Dutch East Indies became Indonesia, East Bengal changed to East Pakistan and later Bangladesh. Nation branding also aids nations to erase negative image, replacing it with the positive one that depicts its richness. The image of a country can be related to many things ranging from music, food, history to arts. Additionally, Aronczyk (2007, p. 123) argues that

countries engage in nation branding in order to deal with bad reputations and build a new image internally and externally.

The importance of national branding is not only limited to creating an image for global audiences but also strives to define a nation in a particular way for the purposes of its citizens regarding their self-identity (Nas, 2017). In the study, Nas (2017) argues that nation branding imagines and express the nation in a particular way, generates an identity and attains a specific image for the country. The author observes that the Turkish nation is historically, economically and culturally imagined and constructed as a brand through the help of particular narratives that purport to characterize the nation.

This study reveals that nation branding in Kenya was largely motivated by its transition from colonial to independence. At the time, most features of the colonial government not only reflected European identity but also inspired allegiance to the British monarch. As such, there was a need for Kenya to reinvent itself by building coherent national identities that represented its internal audience. By doing away with the colonial identities and creating national cultures, the new nation was attempting to promote and enhance patriotism among its nationals. In doing this, the study discusses various elements of culture that were mobilised by the government of Jomo Kenyatta, thereby constructing Kenya's national identity.

The importance of understanding elements of national identity that are used in nation branding cannot either be ignored. A Nation's brand bearing the elements of national identity is perceived to be more enriched with cultural resources, stronger and

even more resilient (Dinnie, 2008, p. 111). A genuinely representative national brand entails sonic and visual elements of a nation's identity. The visible manifestation of national identity used by countries takes the following forms: flags, uniforms of the armed forces, traditional dress, architectural styles and landscapes such as monuments, mountains and sacred territory. Sonic manifestations of national identity include the national anthem, the national language, and distinct voices of renowned individuals associated with a specific country, such as Julius Nyerere in the case of Tanzania and Nelson Mandela in the case of South Africa. Therefore, culture in its broadest sense (literature, music, sport, architecture, and so on) is the essence of any nation's brand (Dinnie, 2008).

Dinnie (2008) further observes that "nation-brands are rooted in the reality of the nation's culture, which is perhaps the truest, most authentic differentiator that any brand could have... it is the culture in the widest sense-landscape, music, sport, language, literature, architecture, food and drinks and so on that emphasizes the soul of a nation and its identity." In addition, heritage monuments are often employed as the main tool in nation branding. Historical features in any nation brand attract questions relating to the past while encouraging the narration of stories of that nation to its citizens and the international audiences (Henderson, 2002). Aronczyk (2013) adds that Nation branding is effective when it appeals to aspects of collective will, cultural beliefs, and patriotic sentiments to establish an image that underpins its roots to history and cultural memory.

Branding of national identity is also depicted via the creation of symbols, images and monuments. These objects serve to provide a nation with a new face.

This study demonstrates ways through which these objects were implored in creating a British identity by the colonial administration. It discusses the role of these objects in reinforcing unity and fostering patriotism to the British monarch. Upon independence, the government of Jomo Kenyatta embarked on a process of dismantling symbols, images and monuments that reinforced a British identity while at the same time mobilising cultural elements that represented the identity of the people of Kenya. The study, therefore, discusses the transition of these objects because of changing historical circumstances and how their use reflected Kenya's national identity after independence.

The study further argues that nation branding does not reshape nor alter the national identity. Instead, nation branding only changes the image that the people have about a nation as well as fostering a sense of patriotism. In other words, a nation's brand is its identity made robustly or made visible, whereas a nation's identity represents the sum total of its people, making a country's brand more personal to the nation's population.

As such, the study begins by showing ways through which colonial Kenya was branded and how the Jomo Kenyatta's regimes attempted to counter the colonial brands. The study argues that the colonial administration enforced its values upon colonial Kenya to suppress its freedom and ways of life. It was meant to undermine and strip Kenyans of their indigenous cultures while imposing on their values of the colonizer. They used education, religion, values and beliefs, and language as cultural tools to manipulate the identity of the colonized and to eliminate their understanding of their past. However, after independence, the first government embarked on a nation branding process that

entailed the dismantling of European cultural heritage and replacing them with cultural elements that resonated with the people of Kenya. These elements were reflected through the National Flag, National Anthem, Education reforms, a national slogan and so forth.

RESULTS

The Creation of a New Image: Jomo Kenyatta's Regime

Nation branding process in Kenya is traced to independence period when Jomo Kenyatta's government assumed power. The two-phase process involved removing the elements that fostered British culture, and secondly, the construction of identity that resonated with the new nation was carried out concurrently. First, the government of Kenya embarked on the removal of monuments and statues of the British monarch and those of the white farmers that were erected in colonial Kenya. The Statue of Queen Victoria was vandalised by a crowd in 1958 before Lord Delamere's monument was formally removed on November 6 1963, just about Kenya's independence (Larsen, 2012). Following independence, King George V and King George VI memorial plaque was also removed in 1964. Their removal displayed an exact picture of a nation's identity that the nationals wanted to do away with.

The independent government also renamed the streets bearing the colonizers names to honour the heroic actions of the nationalist leaders. Names identifying with colonial identities, such as Lord Delamere (Avenue), Henry Hardinge (Hardinge Street), Queen Victoria (Victoria Street), were renamed with those of Kenyan leaders. Another symbol of British identification, the *Union Jack*, was lowered on December 12 1963. The British Anthem

was also replaced with the Kenya National Anthem. Other symbols that independent Kenya got rid of was the colonial currencies bearing the image of the British monarch. As such, at independence, Kenya began the nation branding process by dismantling both sonic and visual symbols of British national identity. These symbols, as already explained in the study, were meant to portray Kenya as a British nation. However, with independence, there was the need to mobilize elements of culture that resonated with the new nation.

On the other hand, nation branding in Kenya entailed the mobilization of elements that resonated with the identity of the new nation. The process involved the mobilization of visible elements of national identity such as the National Flag, Monuments and Statues, currency notes and coins, national days, architectural styles and landscapes such as mountains and sacred territories. Construction of Kenya's national identity also featured the mobilization of sonic elements of culture such as the national anthem, national language and national narration, among others. The study, therefore, argues that, by combining the elements of both the visible and sonic manifestations, a new nation with its own identity was reborn.

Kenya's national flag was raised on December 12 1963, at Uhuru Gardens, Nairobi, alongside hauling down of the British Flag. The raising of Kenya's Flag was symbolic in two ways. First, it signified the end of colonial rule and the beginning of Kenya as an independent nation. Secondly, it symbolised the replacement of British identity with Kenya's values, history and memories. Studies also contend that exposure to National Flags increases national unity, out-group prejudice and egalitarian concepts

(Hassin et al., 2007; Becker et al., 2012; Butz et al., 2007). The Flag was introduced concurrently with the National Anthem that replaced *God Save the Queen*, British's national anthem. The replacement of the British anthem was not only meant to distinguish between Britain from Kenya but also to reaffirm the latter's national identity. Mach (1994) contends that the musical nature of anthems evokes feelings of patriotism and national pride. Thus, unlike 'God Save the Queen' developed by Europeans and fostered patriotism to the British Monarch, playing of Kenya's national anthem developed by Kenyans evoked a feeling of unity and patriotism for the land of Kenya.

Kenyan currency notes and coins launched by the government also formed part of the Nation branding process. These coins and notes contained elements of the country's national identity (*The Daily Nation*, March 2, 1966). An immediate change was the removal of the image of the British monarch and the inscription of the portrait of President Jomo Kenyatta. Unlike the colonial currency bearing the image of a distant monarch, the new Kenyan shilling bore the country's first president, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta which fostered a sense of collective identity and reinforced the idea of a national common past. The colonial currency was inscribed in both English and Arabic. Whereas the text in English was retained in the new Kenyan currency, the Arabic text was replaced with Kiswahili.

At the back of the new notes, the government updated the image of a lion appearing to conquer Mt. Kenya with the one showing various economic activities performed by the people. The most outstanding being agriculture, in a photo in which men and women appeared with baskets collecting tea leaf. The new coins also contained the image of

Kenyatta portraying him as the father of the nation, while at the back, symbols of coat of arms denoting instruments of power of an independent state. As such, the new currency notes were used to construct the national identity of the country as an independent nation, with Kenyatta as the founding father of the nation. It also elevated Swahili as a national language, alongside English as the official language.

The independent government also erected two statues in honour of President Jomo Kenyatta. The first statue that was launched on December 14 1964, portrayed Kenyatta as the founding father of the nation. He was sculpted wearing an African hat, leather Jacket, and a ring on the little finger of his left hand, which rested on a wooden walking stick—the top of the wooden stick, shaped to form an elephant's head. Kenyatta's right hand, holding a flywhisk, is lifted high. The flywhisk is a symbol of leadership held by the elders among various Kenyan communities. This symbol not only identified Kenyatta as one of the elders, but also a leader of all the communities in Kenya. The leather jacket, on the other hand, symbolized 'the struggle for freedom' (Larsen, 2013).

This symbolic posture came to be associated with Kenyatta and his leadership. While addressing political gatherings, President Kenyatta would always lift and wave the flywhisk, greeting the people and chanting 'Harambee.' The second statue was unveiled on December 10, 1973, and graced by the then vice president Daniel Arap Moi. The statue depicted Kenyatta in the regalia of his presidency, sitting on a 'throne', which is raised high, ruling over the people below. The statue was placed in front of Nairobi's law courts, City Square. It stands where the colonial Hamilton's Fountain once stood. The

statue affirmed not only Kenyatta's authority, both as a government leader and head of KANU but also as a hero and father figure to be revered.

Discontinuity with colonialism was symbolic through both the removal of colonial monuments and erecting of the new statues. First, the decision to vandalize or remove monuments erected during the colonial period symbolized the end of the colonial reign and that the British Monarch was not in charge of the affairs of the Africans. On the other hand, erecting the statues of Jomo Kenyatta was a strategic signifier that Kenyans were in charge of their land and chose to celebrate their heroes. Whereas it may appear as though using monuments to assert national identity denoted continuity with the colonial administration, it is not the case. This is because records of using monuments and statues can be traced to the earliest Greek societies.

The government further coined a national motto, 'Harambee' [that means means to 'pull together' or 'all for one'] to encapsulate the beliefs and the ideas representing Kenya. The word 'harambee' is 'grounded in the indigenous cultures of most Kenyan communities, where different names for joint efforts – such as clearing the bush, weeding, and building structures – can be found' (Ngau, 1987). Mbithi and Rasmusson (1977) further reveals how the word 'harambee' is called among various communities in Kenya. The Luo refers to it as Konyir Kende, among the Luhya it is known as Obwasio, the Agikuyu call it Ngwatio, while the AKamba refers to it as Mwethia, among other Kenyan tribes.

Since the idea of 'Harambee' was generally known and accepted by many Kenyans as a people-led development initiative, the government applied it to fight poverty, diseases and ignorance. Therefore, Kenyatta called on every Kenyan to join hands

through the 'Harambee spirit and defeat these three enemies of the 'nation.' 'Harambee' was, therefore, not only cultural virtue for self-reliance but also a political tool for pulling together the nation and appealing for national unity. It was more of a national identity that reminded people of the importance of togetherness. As such, the 'Harambee spirit branded Kenya a united nation whose people share a common goal of eradicating poverty, diseases and ignorance.

Another important step towards nation branding was the establishment of a national language that resonated with the country's population. President Jomo Kenyatta encouraged Kenyans to use Kiswahili as he felt that its adoption would promote cultural nationalism. All Kenyans were urged 'to speak Swahili at all times, either to fellow Kenyans or non-Kenyans, whether officially or non-officially, politically or socially' (Daily Nation, September 1, 1969, in Harries, 1976). To further entrench Swahili in Kenya, President Jomo Kenyatta says, 'we are soon going to use Swahili in parliament, whether people like it or not' (Daily Nation, September 1, 1969, in Harries, 1976). The pronouncement further required the President, Ministers, and Government Officials to communicate to all people, whether Kenyans or foreign, in Swahili.

During this time, English was the only official language in parliament. Besides the proceedings being in English, Standing Orders also stipulated that debate should only be in the English language. While the MPs tried to change from the English language, Records show that majority of the leaders struggled to translate parliamentary jargon into Kiswahili (Wahome, 2013). There was also continuous interruption with the point of orders, as MPs sought the meaning of various Swahili words

from their counterparts. In as much as the government passed legislation on the use of Swahili, the challenge remained on how the government was going to ensure that cabinet ministers and government officials spoke Swahili, considering their difficulty in speaking it. Another challenge was that of reversing English to Swahili from the school syllabus as a medium of instruction. At the time, the majority of schools were using the English-medium system.

Nation branding also featured through the education reforms, which sought to preserve Kenya's cultural heritage. At independence, Africans were perceived as non-schooled and hence ignorant. A census carried out in 1962 revealed 63 per cent of Europeans having received nine or more years of schooling, 59 per cent of Asians, and four per cent of Africans (Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, 1966, p. 45). The government therefore set to correct the imbalance of the past in the education sector. This need was driven by the realisation that an education system that reflected colonial values would neither satisfy the social aspirations of the people nor lead to economic development. Furthermore, the Education commission indicated in its report that was published in 1964 the need to shift away from British heritage by 'Africanizing school curriculum and thereby to provide educational experiences relevant to the traditions and cultural values of the people (Government of Kenya, 1964).

One of the changes initiated by the government involved the influence of the Christian church on the education sector. The nationalist leaders in independent Kenya were of the view that religious education is non-sectarian and taught through a single Christian syllabus (Kenya Government, 1964).

The government also changed the curricula to reflect Africa's traditional and cultural values. While colonial education limited its focus to European ideals and values, the new curricula allowed Africans to study things related to their own experiences and provided them with the knowledge of their environment. The Education Commission further stressed the importance of geography and history to emphasize a common tradition among other issues related to nation-building in an African context. African music was also recognized as a means to develop cohesiveness through shared cultural heritage.

Jomo Kenyatta's regime further introduced a 'back to the land' government project with the objective of providing land to the Africans whilst encouraging the practice of agriculture. The project was a result of colonial policies that led to the acquisition of land by the Europeans while at the same time alienating Africans from their homeland. The first to be introduced under this project was the 'million-acre settlement scheme' that enabled nearly ten thousand families to settle on ninety farms that were formerly in European ownership (Speech of Jomo Kenyatta, December 12 1973). In terms of agriculture, the project led to the initiation of the Mwea irrigation scheme. Following its successful implementation, Jomo Kenyatta commissioned other new tracts of land for irrigation schemes on Tana River in the Coast, Ahero in Nyanza, and Bunyala in the Western Province' (Speech of Jomo Kenyatta, December 12 1966).

An important policy on 'Africanization' or 'kenyanization' aimed at ensuring Kenyans are given preference in available employment, especially those jobs that could be done by the Africans in the private and the public sector. This policy was

inspired by the notion that Africans performed unskilled jobs during colonial times. For example, forty-two per cent of the Europeans held professional and managerial posts, while seventeen per cent were in the technical and supervisory posts. Professional and managerial posts held by the Asians constituted twenty per cent and four per cent in the technical and supervisory positions. At the same time, the African workforce constituted one per cent of all the occupational groups (Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, 1966, p. 115).

This difference indicated that the Europeans held many of the management, professional, and higher technical posts in the public and private sectors. The need was, therefore, urgent to change the image of the civil service from one that was dominated by Europeans to one that was composed of indigenous Africans. In this regard, the government established the 'Kenyanization' of the Personnel Bureau responsible for collecting data regarding available citizen work force who could take over jobs held by expatriates. The government further introduced the system of work permits targeted to reduce the holding by non-citizens of jobs that Kenyans had the qualifications to do. On top of that, the government further introduced Trade and Transport Licensing aimed at ensuring that Kenyans play their rightful and increasing part within the private sector.

At the time of independence, expatriates, who were competent and experienced, dominated Kenya's civil service. However, as they were not Kenyans, they could not be truly dedicated to the great adventure of building a nation, and their presence was in conflict with the aspirations of the Africans (Speech of Jomo Kenyatta, December 12 1973). The Africanization policy, therefore, gave top

priority for employment to indigenous Africans in the public sector. By doing this, Kenyatta was ensuring that his government was not only wholly composed of Africans but also its image resonated with the idea of the Kenyan identity. By December 1967, the public sector had been Africanized to the extent of ninety-two per cent. Kenyans were therefore performing all major decisions of the government. While commenting on the rapid Africanization project, Jomo Kenyatta observed that 'there has been no fall in the standards of efficiency,' implying that Africans were equally up to the tasks performed by the Europeans (Speech of Jomo Kenyatta, December 12 1967).

The Africanization programme not only focus on providing Africans with jobs previously handled by the Europeans but also aimed at ensuring that Africans own businesses and industries. This program was inspired by the notion that Africans performed unskilled jobs during colonial times, while their European counterparts held the white collar jobs in the government. By africanizing the public sector, the independent regime ensured that Kenyans have a greater share of business and industry in the country. In this regard, the government introduced two important legislations, namely, the Import, Export and Essential Supplies Act (1967) and the Trade Licensing Act (1967). The latter stated that 'no person who is not a citizen of Kenya should conduct a business (a) in any place which is not a general businesses area; or (b) in any specified goods' (the Republic of Kenya, 1980). It, therefore, excluded non-Africans from engaging in trade in the rural areas and non-central zones of major cities and towns. The Import, Export and Essential Supplies Act, on the other hand, enforced the monopoly position of the Kenya National Trading Corporation in the wholesale and retail trade of key commodities, such as salt and sugar.

The move to empower Kenyans to take part in trade was inspired by the idea that the natives had been intentionally blocked from participating in commerce and industry by the colonial administration. Hence, the nationalist leaders found it necessary to “correct the imbalance which now exists” and informed that ‘many economic opportunities which existed in Kenya have not been available to African’ (Government of Kenya, 1964). The effect of these changes was that African organizations increased steadily in relation to new private firms that were being established in the country, and in 1972, 310 African companies overdid for the first time the 249 created by the Asian community. These changes reflected the rising amount of merchant capital accrual incorporate forms. By 1972 the effects of the Trades Licensing Act was strongly felt by the non-African community. By 1973 African companies comprised nearly 50 per cent of the private firms established in that year (Swainson, 1977).

Another important aspect of national identity employed by the government of Kenya for nation branding was the reference to President Kenyatta as ‘Mzee.’ ‘Mzee’ is a Swahili word that means ‘parent’, ‘ancestor’ or ‘old person.’ The term is usually used to address respected elders in the community, demonstrating the esteem bestowed to Kenyatta and his role as the ‘father of the nation.’ Thus, with Kenyatta as ‘Mzee’ or the ‘father of the nation’, an ‘imagined community, one that connected Kenyans, was created in the minds of every citizen. Unlike in colonial Kenya, where reverence was towards the British monarch, independent Kenya had its founding father of the nation, ‘mzee’ Jomo Kenyatta. It also meant that Kenya was not only under an African ruler but a

national leader, providing leadership to all the tribes in Kenya.

Father of the nation’ narrative was meant to unify the country out of the multiplicities of ethnicities, races and regions that formed the post-independent Kenya. Despite attempts to foster patriotism by mobilizing elements of the country’s national identity, negative aspects mostly sowed during colonialism continued to dent efforts towards nation branding. One of them is the criticism against Jomo Kenyatta for budding disunity as opposed to unifying the nation. One of the instances is in 1967 during Kenyatta Day celebrations when the president posed a question to the audience, ‘where did you fight? How many weapons did you use? How many guns? [...] apart from Achieng, who was with us in Lokitaung, and maybe Kaggia [...] they did nothing’ (Kaggia, 1975). His thought can be argued to polarise the nation in two opposing sides based on who fought and who didn’t fight for independence.

Jomo Kenyatta was also criticized for the ‘kikuyunization’ of the country, in which senior civil service was increasingly dominated by members of the Kikuyu community (Ogot, 1996). For example, four out of seven Provincial commissioners were Kikuyus from 1967 to the time Kenyatta died (Hornsby, 2012). This led Martin Shikuku, an MP from Western Kenya, to warn that if the Kikuyu did not share the fruits of *Uhuru* (independence) with the other communities, they would eventually be ‘eaten’ by the other 41 tribes ‘like a satisfied hyena was eaten up by hungry hyenas’ (Hornsby, 2012). While Kenyatta’s speeches de-emphasized ethnicity and pointed to Kenya as one nation, state composition revealed the unifying rhetoric of nationhood and the nation branding efforts.

If at all there was a period when tribalism was at full display, it was at the time of Kenyatta's death. Members of President Kenyatta's inner circle formed GEMA (Gikuyu Embu Meru) Association, aimed at supporting a Kikuyu candidate against the president's purported favourite Daniel Arap Moi, then vice president who belonged to the Kalenjin community (Widner, 1992). Although GEMA packaged itself as a tool for promoting the culture of specific communities, its main object was to tighten control over the political and economic affairs of the Kikuyu in the state. Even without the support of President Kenyatta, the formation of GEMA contradicted the idea of nation branding as championed by the president and aimed at branding Kenya as a united nation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

In conclusion, nation branding was a portrayal of independence from British rule as well as a reimagination of the post independent nation. The nation branding process was necessary for three reasons. First, the colonialists had differentiated the people by sowing division and hatred. For example,

the Samburu and Turkana communities were incited against the Kikuyus through misrepresentations. Thus, there was the need to reconcile these communities and foster national unity. Secondly, the independent government's need to foster pride in the indigenous cultures, which the colonialists had branded as primitive and savage. Third, the need to foster patriotism for Kenya among the citizens through creating a national culture. The idea involved the replacement of the elements of colonial identities with those that defined the Kenyan peoples. The study further concludes that negativity sowed by the colonialists [such as tribalism, disunity and misrepresentation/stereotypes] continued to dominate in the government of Jomo Kenyatta, denting nation branding efforts, thereby affecting patriotism and national pride.

Recommendation

The need, therefore, to change the colonial image to one that resonated with independent Kenya called for the replacement of the sonic and visual elements of British identity with those of that resonate with the new nation.

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