NYAYO: CULTURAL CONTRADICTIONS IN KENYA RURAL CAPITALISM[1]

Judith M. Abwunza
University of Western Ontario

Abstract: Post-independence Kenya has not followed the route of some African countries, breaking with the ideology of world capitalism. Indeed, Kenya's dominant ethos enshrines economic individualism and capital accumulation as central values. Yet *Nyayo* as a rallying call for development connotes the spirit of love, unity and peace, along with sharing, "the living and activating cement to the fundamental African socialism . . . that motivates all actions, including *Harambee* in action" (Daniel Arap Moi 1986:18). This paper explores the contradictions between the two discourses as they are played out in the lives of rural Kenyans who are attempting to adhere to state edicts that have little relevance to daily economic experience.

Résumé: Depuis son indépendance le Kenya n'a pas suivi le même chemin que certains autres pays africains ont pris: notamment le renoncement du capitalisme. En fait l'ethos dominant au Kenya enchasse en tant que valeurs centrales l'accumulation de capitaux et l'individualisme économique. Par contre *Nyayo*, le point de ralliment pour le développement, démontre un esprit d'amour, d'unité et de paix, et de partage, «the living and activating cement to the fundamental African socialism . . . that motivates all actions, including *Harambee* in action» (Daniel Arap Moi 1986:18). Cet article examine les contradictions entre ces deux discours tels que vécues par les habitants des régions rurales qui essayent d'adhérer aux demandes de l'état même si celles-ci ont très peu de rapport avec leurs expériences économiques quotidiennes.

> [T]here are three important factors in the Kenyan style of nation-building: the vehicle, the force and the philosophy. KANU[2] is the vehicle, *Nyayo* is the moving spirit or force, and *Nyayoism* is the philosophy.
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> — Daniel arap Moi 1986:18[3]

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This paper, which is based on recent fieldwork,[4] describes the reactions of a group of rural Kenyan people to certain contradictory social pressures. They must attempt to follow state edicts directed toward nation building and economic development, although such commands have little application or relevance to the day-to-day realities of social life.

Post-independence Kenya has not followed the route of some African countries, which have broken with the ideology of world capitalism. Indeed, throughout the reign of the first President, Jomo Kenyatta, and during the rule of his successor, the current President, Daniel arap Moi, Kenya has remained a pronouncedly capitalistic regime, dedicated to making money. For ordinary Kenyans then, the experiential economic structure involves buying, selling and a hope of individual accumulation, the ingredients of capitalism.

However, the manipulation of the economic (and political) structure in Kenya by both of these presidents has been, at least in part, legitimized by discourse denoting a sharing ethos.[5] For Kenyatta, the new nation's rallying call was *harambee* (let us pull together).[6] *Nyayo*, Moi's slogan, means "footsteps" in Swahili. At first, it referred to the footsteps of Kenyatta.[7] Recently, the call has taken on additional meanings as defined by its creator. Broadly, it now refers to the footsteps of the ancestors of all Kenyans. Their descendants are called upon to engage in *maendeleo* (development) in building the nation. Before Moi's presidency, at any public gathering, be it fund raiser or football game, the rallying cry was *Harambee! Harambee! Harambee*! Today, Moi or his representatives are welcomed by a chorus of *Nyayo*! *Nyayo*! *Nyayo*! Kenya is immersed in the *Nyayo* era and Moi and his KANU party are the *Nyayo* administration.

Yet *Nyayo*, as the "moving spirit or force," has become more than a rallying call during Moi's presidency. It contains the ingredients of a philosophy (*Nyayoism*) and the principles for living, namely: love, unity, peace and sharing. Indeed, *Nyayo* (now spelled with an upper-case first letter), has become a Kenyan ideology, rooted in tradition, supposedly applicable to current times and, like all ideologies, perfect and defensible. Moreover, it is an ideology required by governmental edict and legitimized by Kenyan law. To be anti-*Nyayo* is to be anti-Kenya, a treasonable offense. *Nyayo*, as a prescription for daily life is described by its inventor as:

> [T]he vocal expression of an endemic and indigenous spirit in African culture. This is the spirit from which emanates deep familial and societal *love*; the spirit which nourishes and conserves the matrix of the invisible bonds of *unity* in the extended family, the sept, the clan, the tribe and the nation; the spirit upon which enduring *peace* is founded. . . . This spirit, of peace, love and unity is the living and activating cement to the fundamental African so-

> cialism of our heritage. It is the spirit (traditionally and in modern nation-building) which has motivated all joint actions, including *Harambee* in action. (Moi 1986:18)[8]

Thus, to legitimize themselves as Kenyans, people must engage in love, unity, peace and sharing with one another, from the smallest family unit to the larger nation. From such attitudes, economic development will ensue.

As one era replaces another, one culture hero displaces another in the legitimization of authority. While not completely excluding Kenyatta as the inventor of *Harambee*, Moi says we must,

> look back further to the incarnate source of his inspiration . . . more *fundamentally* we are also following in the footsteps of our forefathers who created and maintained the motive force, the spirit of African socialism. . . . For, across the length and breadth of this country, long before independence, people called out, "*Harambee*! *Eeh*!" before they pulled a cow out of a pit, put a roof on a granary. . . . The pervading spirit of *Nyayo* moves them. Peace, love and unity prepare the ground for joint action. That joint action is a universal theme, growing out of a universal African spirit—the spirit of the forefathers, their *Nyayo*! This is the rallying spirit upon which the Father of the nation (Kenyatta) relied when he called "*Harambee*!" The *Nyayo* of our heritage is the moving spirit. From it came *Harambee* activities. (1986:19)

Thus Moi and his *Nyayo* come before Kenyatta and his *Harambee*. Without Moi's discovery of *Nyayo*, as the "moving spirit or force," *Harambee* has no history.

Nyayo in economics finds its tradition in

> the communal role without inhibiting the productivity and creativity of the individual. . . . African economics reflected the essential principles of socialism, which demonstrated practical love and unity in an atmosphere of peace. . . . Today, the need for the recognition of those principles is even greater for a much more plural community which must forge lasting links and co-operate for the common good. (Moi 1986:9)

Co-operation may take place within the *Harambee* arena which,

> recapitulates African socialism and (incidentally) effects a voluntary redistribution of wealth, so that communal causes may be upheld. . . . We share the little we have, so that we can work together to produce more. (Moi 1986:29)

To sum up, *Nyayo*, the path to development and economic betterment enjoins Kenyans to follow the footsteps of the ancestors and evokes the love, unity and peace their societies contained. *Nyayo* permits an ethos of work-

ing together and sharing, without interfering with the "productivity and creativity" of the individual.

In the rest of this paper, we will examine the case of the Avalogoli as an example of the strategic moves people may take to overcome a dysphoria which has emerged from the contradiction between the capitalist economic structure of modern Kenya and *Nyayo*, a prescribed ideology denoting the spirit of African socialism, sharing and working together.

Close to 200 000[9] Avalogoli live in the heavily populated Western Province of Kenya in an area known as Maragoli.[10] The Logoli people are cattle-keeping agriculturalists who, for a long period of time, have relied heavily on inputs from the wage labour sector.[11] Historically and currently, Logoli people had and have a "right" way of seeing, believing and living their lives, the way it "ought" to be; therefore a Logoli ideology may be identified. Avalogoli ideology contains ingredients similar to the *Nyayo* ideology, and it is also as perfect and defensible. Traditionally, i.e., in "the time of the ancients, when people were naked" or "before God came" (prior to colonial and missionary intervention), their political structure involved a consensus which was expressed in a policy of "talking until you agree." The social structure was one of segmentary patrilineages, with levels of obligation consistent with such a social structure.

Adherence to the collectivity was not only evidenced politically, but also socially. An informant in her forties says, "You were trained in such a way that you had respect for anybody, living or dead. It didn't matter whether it's your father or whose father. Your mother's sister is your mother, your father's brothers were just like your father, all old people are the mothers and fathers and the young are their children, these are the laws" (F. Oct. 28, 1983).[12]

In the sphere of economics, the collectivity emerged in the time of their ancestor, Mulogoli, who immigrated to the area, designated some land as communal, for grazing or fuel, and gave other land to his sons. From that time land has been passed from fathers to sons in a family ownership. "Logoli fathers always give land to their sons. Even if it's a small one. And if your sons have sons, they will divide that piece of ground to [among] their sons" (Asava July 21, 1984). In turn, in order to get their land, sons must fulfil their obligations to their father. "Logoli sons are to know again their father. Whatever they get, they are to be friends to father. Whatever you get, well give to your father" (Muhavi July 21, 1984). Daughters too are said to be "important," providing bridewealth cattle and cash to facilitate the marriage of their brothers or to bring wealth to their fathers. Moreover, people say that girls "never forget" their parents, and "girls think of and care for parents in their old age." The cycle of giving and receiving also extends to food, i.e., millet for cassava, and to *silika*, working for one another in groups, building houses or digging land.

Generally speaking, all Avalogoli activity – being born and maturing, owning land and cattle, rejoicing in life and leaving it behind – is integrated with those who have come before, those who are now here, and those who are yet to come. Relationships within *tsinyumba* (houses) give members a sense of affiliation and continuity and are the basis of individual security. The bond created between the individual and the group provides the "good life," i.e., children, land and cattle, a common East African paradigm. Achieving the good life means living up to the requirements of "good" Logoli people, and that necessitates adherence to the power structure of the collectivity, the social and political realms, and to giving and receiving within the collectivity, that is, in the economic realm. However, the above, circular description of Avalogoli society mainly concerns life in the head and heart, that is to say, to the "oughts" which pertain to the idealized normative structure. For a better understanding of present-day life, let us consider the following data, collected mainly from Logoli women, and examine the strategies these data reveal.

The societal structure has, of course, undergone transformations, although rhetorically it remains remarkably intact. The control by male elders over many aspects of Avalogoli life is legitimized, as is social and economic adherence to the collectivity. This, at least, is the way it "ought" to be in order to follow the *vika* (steps) for the good life. The political structure is now state controlled, yet elders still wield influence.[13] Many juniors, female and male, do not push limits too far, no matter how much they may complain; it is not in their vested interest to do so. However, all adults are no longer parents to all children: "You may not interfere with the children of others, they will have the law on you," was a comment frequently heard in the field. In the economic realm, communal land has long disappeared, and fathers hold on to title deeds, excluding sons from ownership, or simply may not have the resources to buy land for them elsewhere. Fathers, sons and their families suffer from this. Daughters, who may have married into landless families, have difficulty providing for their own children let alone giving to parents. For the most part individuals, groups and *avafundi* (workmen) are paid for digging and building, so working for one another has become paid specialization. Also individual *maendeleo* (development) requires accumulation, an act which may not easily be reconciled with collectivism. "People have jealous eyes, they do not want to see progress in yards, they will even poison," or curse, or hire an *umulogi* (witch) to cast spells. All of this indicates transformation of traditional societal structure.

Some implemented strategies remain within the realm of (admittedly strained) traditions. Among Avalogoli, the capitalistic endeavour is dependent on the availability of cash which is, for the most part, found in wage labour, but cash has also partially supplanted the traditional system of reci-

procity, e.g., the exchange of millet for cassava. Those who cannot work in wage labour may obtain cash from other members of the collectivity. The cash economy engenders its own complaints: "These old people have no idea how much it costs the children to live, they continually harass for money, they have big pockets that never get filled." The demands are endless: money for school fees for younger siblings, money to buy land because there is not enough at home, money to build houses and to buy commodities. A constant stream of relatives, friends and children of friends expect some form of financial support from people who are barely eking out a living. Not giving means not receiving the support of the collectivity. This translates into not being regarded as "good" Avalogoli and, in the event of human difficulty, having nowhere to turn for assistance. The magnitude of difficulty involved in securing sufficient cash and land is largely the result of population pressure. Much of this difficulty devolves on women, who bear the children and most of the responsibility for feeding them.

As mentioned above, the agricultural area of Western Kenya is very highly populated. Maragoli has a fast-growing population with an extremely limited land resource. Ssennyonga says that fertility indices in Western Province generally appear to be above the national average, 54.2 as against 50 births per thousand (population), and his general observation is, "as one narrows the spatial angle towards Maragoli from the national plane, the higher the densities soar" (Ssennyonga 1978:5). He continues by saying that the real impact of the trends emerges only when one relates them to the resource base and human potential. "Many will doubt whether this rural people has been able to build up a life support system with the capacity to sustain its phenomenal population" (ibid.:14). In 1982, the population density of the Maragoli area ranged from 277 to 1065 people per square kilometre.[14] The village area I studied currently has close to 1200 people per square kilometre. Thus women, who are the farmers, have tremendous difficulty in providing subsistence for their very large families on very small plots of land, ranging from one-sixteenth to one acre. A substantial majority of "yards" (compounds) have less than half an acre of land.

Logoli people say 10 children are the ideal. Government advocacy of family planning has begun to cause people to question that ideal, as has a growing local awareness of the relationship between large families and economic stress. Land scarcity has made multi-generational families and polygyny impractical. The decline in polygyny may actually be causing a population increase, however, as some men expect to have as many children with one wife as their fathers did with several.

The staple food is *ovuchima*, a posho (cornmeal porridge) made from ground maize flour, ideally accompanied by green (cowpea) vegetables cooked with onion and tomato, or by chicken or beef. Cooked bananas may

be substituted for *ovuchima*. However, not eating *ovuchima* constitutes not eating at all.[15] Other crops, such as vegetables, cassava, sorghum, millet and beans, are grown as space permits.

Because land is in short supply, subsistence crops are quickly exhausted by eating or perhaps by selling if other needs arise. Moreover, nowadays people require other items to subsist, and thus there is a heavy reliance on the market. Women, who are directly responsible for putting the food in people's stomachs and all that entails, need tea (a normative necessity introduced by the British), sugar and milk to go with it,[16] salt, tomatoes, onions, cabbages, green (cowpea) vegetables, cooking oil, maize flour and, if at all possible, fish, chicken or beef to accompany them.[17] Along with these, they need utensils, soap, kerosene, matches and firewood or charcoal to get the food ready.

Other commodities, supplied by both women and men, are also required. In the category of necessary items are water containers, clothing, shoes, blankets, utensils, seeds, fertilizer, batteries and newspapers. Highly desired items include supplies for repairing and building, furniture, lamps, animals and, above all, land. Some pay rent for pieces of land; all must pay school fees, buy uniforms and such supplies as exercise books, reading books, desks, pens and pencils. Everyone must contribute to the never ending requests for school *harambee* and "building" funds.[18] Furthermore, transportation, medical treatment from customary sources,[19] ceremonies, feasts, births and deaths all cost money. Access to cash, and therefore the needed and wanted goods, is an absolute and never ending requirement. The Logoli people say, "We have forgotten how to make salt," signifying that subsistence no longer comes from non-market commodities.

New consumption styles were gradually instilled in Logoli people as a result of their encounter with the commodity market, imported household goods, European style clothing, tea, sugar, soap and salt, etc. But the people of this village call themselves *avadaka*, poor people. They have limited access to cash and, although food and some commodities are bought in bulk by shopkeepers and broken down into tiny units for sale, it is very difficult to obtain the shillings required daily to buy them. Even if people could accumulate the larger amount of shillings required to buy in bulk, it would not be good management because, in the constant cycle of giving and receiving, they would be required to share it with others in the collectivity. Hiding places are limited in thatched-roofed, mud huts that contain few pieces of furniture. Cash is easier to conceal (see below).

Village people hear and want to heed the clarion of Moi's *Nyayo*, telling them they must engage in *Maendeleo* (development), which for them is better translated as "progress." Progress for these people means cash, and, although in the first instance it's cash to buy food so their "children may

sleep without crying,'' it is also cash to buy land so they may better feed their families and engage in cash cropping; cash to build a semi-permanent house and fill it with furniture, i.e., beds, chairs, tables; and cash for clothing, school fees, school requirements and market commodities. These are the elements contained in progress, and having cash is the only way to progress. There are examples to emulate: some people have these things; some even have cars. One person, at a market where electricity is available, even has a television. However, most people live on a day-to-day basis, hoping to borrow, or be given, cash from the few members of the collectivity who have access to it, and who will assist them in obtaining ''just a little tea,'' ''a bit of sugar,'' ''flour for the evening meal, we are starving'' or ''school fees for 'your' children.''

Cash enters the village from a limited number of sources. These include paid labour, petty trading and remittances from relatives. Of 70 male respondents in the village, 32 have full-time, 4 have part-time jobs. However, men usually provide a limited amount of cash, and mostly it is applied to larger expenditures, for example, school fees. Additionally, most men work outside Maragoli and, by the time they pay their own living expenses, have little left to contribute to the home.[20] Some even ''forget the home.''

Fewer women work, and generally their only source of employment is digging for others. Out of 70 women respondents, 7 engaged in full-time digging for others, at 10 shillings a day and 12 dug on a part-time basis. Digging for others is an insecure occupation. Plots are small, so workers are not always needed. The work is seasonal. There may be unexpected interruptions such as sickness and funerals and, even if one does work, one may not get paid. Three women were teachers in *Harambee* schools, one did part-time sewing, one made and sold *chang'aa* (a local brew), and one was a prostitute. Wages are uncertain in all cases.

Even fewer women engage in petty trading than participate in casual agricultural labour, selling commodities purchased from the larger market with a fifty-cent or so mark-up. Eight women sold small amounts of cash crops, sweet and cooking bananas, cabbages, tomatoes, onions and green vegetables. However, such trading is also seasonal and really only provides 10 shillings here and 10 there.

Nevertheless, even though they may not be able to ''progress'' as they would want to, some of these women have strategies that enable them to survive and access cash for some of their needs and wants. The collectivity renders crucial assistance. Forty-three out of 70 women[21] were supplied with cash by others; some fairly regularly, some less so. The amounts ranged from 10 to 500 shillings, the smaller sums being more frequent. Cash came from husbands (who remembered the home), older children, real and classificatory parents and siblings, in-laws and neighbours. These same

categories of people may also donate and loan commodities, for example, food, soap, clothing, utensils, bedding, firewood, chickens, eggs and animals.

How do women manage to get this support? If they remain members in good standing of the collectivity, they are supported by the norms of exchange. It is said that Logoli people abhor the beggars who wander the market saying "*Saidia*," with their hands outstretched. Instead, their normative structure provides the means to draw upon the collectivity. They ask, *kotewa*, or say "*ngonya*," "help me." This is done in the context of reciprocity. It draws on reminders of previous assistance, e.g., "I prayed for you"; "I led the dancing group when you were holding *harambee*"; "I gave you advice." The act of begging implies no wider social ties; one begs, one gives; the interaction begins and ends in that framework. With *kotewa* or *ngonya*, there is always a reciprocal relationship, an interdependence. If a woman requires assistance to pay school fees for a child, it would be unfair and inappropriate to say that she went begging. There is usually a sealant among Avalogoli; if one is not there the request is quickly dismissed. People complain of the demands (as noted above) but they do not "kill" the one asking, that is, they do not dismiss the demands without a thought. They may not give, but they are polite and attentive in their refusal.[22] For example, Sarah says,

> It is the same as you people call banking. When I face problems I will send one of my children to the one I have given to and they will give to that child. It takes away my pain [uncertainty]. We help each other like that, we give according to our heart and what we can, forever we have done that, we are forever exchanging. (Dec. 12, 1987)

In most cases those who ask and are asked are from *umuliango gwitu*, meaning "from our door," symbolically our *inyumba*, our "house."

However, it should not be assumed from this discussion that intrahousehold and intra*inyumba* conflict does not occur within reciprocal relations. Arguments take place between husbands and wives, children, parents and siblings. In actuality, most relatives and affines debate who should provide resources and how the resources should be distributed. Wives complain that husbands do not share with them resources which they receive from relatives and affines. For example, wives believe that a portion of *uvukwi* (bridewealth) for their daughters should be given to them, saying, "Who gave birth to this child, did he?"[23] Husbands complain that women's provision of food to relatives and affines leaves the yard without food.[24] Both complain that children do not provide them with support, or argue about how much each should receive if the support is given, accusing one another of hiding the "real" amount provided. At such times, children accuse par-

ents of having "big pockets." In turn, parents hold up as examples other parents in slightly better economic circumstances; children's support has allowed these parents to progress. Daughters-in-law threaten to "walk" unless a part of their *uvukwi* is sent to their parents; their parents are "pushing" them for that. Men argue with their wives in this regard, but also "push" their fathers to assist in the provision. Siblings split apart over parental decisions in reference to provisioning or, in other contexts, band together against the parents. In today's economic circumstances everyone complains that they get too little and cannot give enough. Nonetheless, for the most part, intrahousehold exchange networks remain constant among kin, affines, even friends, as they follow *vika* (steps) appropriate to the "Logoli way." Women are very dependent on the resources mentioned above via reciprocal relations. Food gifts are exchanged on a daily basis as women visit one another with covered baskets containing the gifts they give and in turn receive. Baskets may never be returned to the giver empty.

Some, of course, do not help. These people are called *avamani* (mean). These are the people who dismiss requests without a thought, who are selfish, who do not give when they ought to. They are described as low, uncaring individuals. Young children are criticized for not sharing; those adults who can share and don't have lesser minds than children. It becomes difficult to live in a social group when one becomes known as one "who does not share," or identified by the phrase, "there will be no help coming from that one." Such people are isolated. People say that even those who are *avamani* will help some, not everyone they should, but at least someone. After all, "this is rooted in the past." Yet many acknowledge that in the past it was easier to help. Now that the elusive cash has entered the picture, sharing becomes increasingly difficult. Reciprocity works both ways. Those who are unable to assist tend to receive scant assistance and they have a derogatory self-image rather than a more sustaining one. They say, "It's just like that," or "It's God's will," as they live in extreme poverty and neglect.

The strategy involved in accessing the collectivity takes effort; members do not appear in needy yards with a donation. Those who require assistance must travel the network, walking, or perhaps scraping up the shillings required for transport. Women are likely to be carrying babies on their backs and perhaps bananas on their heads. One does not visit with empty hands. They call on the yards where they hope to get support, waiting, sometimes for most of the day, and then return home, hopefully with the needed cash or commodity. They will always be given tea, often something to eat, perhaps even food to take home but, because many people are in the same economic position as themselves, they will not always have their request ful-

filled. If the need is dire, and it most often is, they will have to do the same the following day, trekking to a different yard.

Also, as people are now dealing in cash, it becomes more difficult to ascertain who is really unable to assist. It is easy to establish who has a full granary if the request is for maize; it is not as easy to detect an availability of cash. Cash is easily hidden; even in a collectivity secrets exist. It may be difficult to disprove the assertion, "I have no money." Suspicion often arises between husbands and wives. There is an assumption among Maragoli people that women "always" have cash, somewhere, somehow. There are "known" places where women hide money, within their clothing or in their headscarves. Some husbands ask, demand, search and beat for the money they are sure wives have hidden away. Should they find some, rather than acknowledging the cleverness of women's strategies for having it, i.e., the sustaining benefits, they rather imagine the deceit or the untrustworthiness contained in its possession. Certainly, considering the strategic manoeuvres women go through to get cash, their statement in this context, that "life is not fair," is understandable.

Life is not fair, either to those who have or to those who have not. For those who have, the demands of others, under the guise of traditionalism and *Nyayo*, become onerous, and strategies of avoidance become as difficult as earning the cash in the first place. Amy agrees with Moi, "The traditional ways were better, then we had trust. If someone knew certain things they shared [the information], now we pay [for specialization]. Now, people flock aimlessly, back and forth to the market" (Nov. 23, 1987). According to Ritah, "They only sit, they do not know where they are coming from or where they are going" (Nov. 7, 1987). Jane says, "Today the world is difficult, things are more expensive, life is hard for women. When I was growing up, 10 shillings would buy so much, a dress even. Today, with so many children, 100 shillings will buy one a dress, one a shirt" (Dec. 11, 1987). For Asbetta, however, "A long time ago the world was black, nowadays it is white" (Dec. 28, 1987). She is asserting that before there was no progress, now there is. Atypically, Asbetta's husband has a job in wage labour, and he "remembers his home." Linas, with six young children and a husband "somewhere" in Nairobi, says, "When people have money, they can have a good life, not to depend on others" (Dec. 28, 1987). Despite the challenges she faces, Linas has managed well; currently she has three children in primary school and twins in nursery school.

For those people who must utilize strategies, and access the collectivity, the ingredients contained in Moi's *Nyayo* are necessary, rooted as they are in the footsteps of their own ancestors and in their current life. They simply cannot do without them. Thus *Nyayo* has become a significant part of local discourse and practice. The political sphere for all Logoli people encom-

passes government officials and their actions on a national level, i.e., the President, Ministers and Members of Parliament, and on the local level includes the particular Member of Parliament for the area, the District Officer, Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs with their *mugutu* (headmen), Kenyan police (including the Criminal Investigation Department, CID) and members of the local council. Until February, 1989 when he died, the elected M.P. for the area was known as a "right hand of the President." Thus progress in the area, most particularly regarding roads and market renovations, is credited to his connection to the President and his attention to reciprocal relations. Although the people speak of many elected officials as having a great deal of money (evidenced by their private businesses and large farms) which must have come from the people, the President is seen as benevolent. He is the person who on occasion steps in (usually after visiting an area), slaps the hands of the local politicians and says we must do more for the people, i.e., provide them with government services, assist them to educate their children, lower the price of maize or beef, build roads, get water, engage in reforestation and so on. His "clean up" statements are given national newspaper coverage. On subsequent days, the newspapers report that local politicians agree with him. The latter defend their records, and offer solutions to the problems in question. These "clean up" statements are discussed locally. For example, Logoli people say, "The President has said," going on to give their interpretation, and so his words circulate. Thus many people separate their President from corruption; seldom is he held directly responsible for any difficulty or hardship. In fact he is often seen as their only rescue, as through *Nyayo* he advocates love, peace, unity and sharing within the traditional normative structures.[25]

Most women hear government statements at church and discuss how their lives may be influenced by them. For example, Finasi says, "Now Moi, with the government of Kenya, the way it is today, Moi definitely specifies with his government that they, women and men, ought to work together for progress" (Oct. 20, 1987). According to Edelia, "Before women were seen as weaklings, controlled, but government emphasis is on women and *Maendeleo* [progress], the women have become productive. The President has announced the young should help their parents, some do—some do not" (Dec. 20, 1987).[26] However, another, very old, lady disagrees with Edelia about women's former weakness and submissiveness. At an early morning Assistant Chief's barazza, she said,[27]

> Women have forgotten their place [authority], and so have men [forgotten women's authority]. When the ancients went to war it was the men who went first, but it was the women who dragged the rocks [ammunition]. Without the rocks the men could not fight the war. Politics is the same as war in

> ancient times, it decides who owns the land and who leads the people. (Anonymous, Feb. 17, 1988)

Most women, along with most men, agree that the government provides little in the way of assistance for them to follow the edicts of *Nyayo* or the canons of traditional norms. In fact, the collectivity is resisting its members' demands; more and more people are hard pressed to supply a nuclear family's needs, let alone extend themselves to the collectivity. More and more people are labelled mean, perhaps not through choice but from the economic situation in which they find themselves. Missing from Moi's *Nyayo* are the strategies for achieving economic sufficiency, the tangible means to access cash, a wage-paying job.

Harambee also is beginning to take on evil connotations. For example, in an attempt to supply schools, laboratories and equipped workshops in order to fulfil government requirements for the recently adopted 8-4-4 system of education, Maragolians met and decided on a large *harambee*. A levy of 200 shillings was imposed on every Maragolian wage-earner or home-owner. "This was passed by saying a person cannot contribute according to his liking but we must use power to get the money" (an official March 25, 1988). If the money was not forthcoming, items from yards were confiscated, for example, chickens or livestock. If the owner did not appear with the cash, the confiscated item was sold and the sale was witnessed by officials. If it brought more than 200 shillings, the remainder was returned to the owner. If it brought less, something else was taken and sold to make up the difference. Imagine the scenario in which local officials were chasing chickens around the yards to make up a "donation."

Thus, for many it is the government actions which exacerbate the need for cash. Many people see the government as making change,[28] and most label change as bad.[29] Most Logoli people have a poor opinion of the role of government and its employees in the raising of prices. For those few who see change as good, "good" is contextual, based on having cash. "Life for women becomes more and more difficult. Before, there was food, big land, now, I am experiencing no land and starvation" (Jacinta Dec. 28, 1987). "Who is to give me work, there is no work, Moi says, 'You sweat, then you get', but what can I sweat over, there is no progress without money and no money without work" (Robai Nov. 20, 1987). People's lives are beginning to go round and round from a constant cycle of demands and expectations, rather than moving "from darkness to light" as one woman translates Moi's words. Others' lives simply stagnate.

It is questionable how much longer Avalogoli culture, dedicated, at least rhetorically, to a collectivity, will be able to resist the complete domination of a capitalist ethos of individual accumulation. Adherence to a collectivity

appears to impede the "productivity and creativity of the individual" that is contained in *Nyayo*; the burden simply becomes too arduous for the individual to bear. Yet *Nyayo*, with all its seeds from the past, shows no signs of weakening. People do criticize its idealism or note the contradiction embodied in trying to follow a middle path between capitalism and socialism. They do not lose faith in *Nyayo* when they fail to experience the "progress" that would be contained in the self-reliance implicit in land ownership, and the possession of semi-permanent houses, furniture, etc. Socialism may be largely rhetorical in an economic sense but not as a strategy for the people. Not to abide by it is more than anti-*Nyayo*, thus anti-Kenyan, anti-government . . . it is anti-Avalogoli. *Nyayo* is given hegemonic status by its potential to subsume all possible internal contradictions.[30] It is an ideological discourse which ignores the actual performance of the regime, particularly on this local level. People are aware that a few tarmac roads, a rural health clinic and market electricity are counterbalanced by hunger and limited access to needed and wanted commodities. Finasi sums up the situation, "What will market electricity do for me, I need food, water and firewood" (Oct. 28, 1987). However, neither *Nyayo* nor Moi are blamed for current conditions. The very discourse of *Nyayo* can be used to blame perceived shortcomings on vaguely specified others who do not live up to *Nyayo*'s demands.

In Kenya it has been in the arena of politics and ideological discourse, centred on the struggle to exercise state power, that the fate of local economics has been decided. Many observers would agree that this rural economy is faltering, if not failing altogether, even though strategies prevail for some of the people, allowing them to hold on, however tenuously. The dual imperatives of *Nyayo*, perceived as consistent with traditional Avalogoli life, on the one hand, and capitalism, on the other hand, continue to dominate political discourse. One watches with interest to see if they will continue to do so.

Notes

1. Fieldwork was conducted during 1987 and 1988. Funding for this fieldwork was provided by SSHRC, IDRC and the Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto. Permission to engage in research was provided by the Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, and the Office of the President, Kenya, East Africa. Affiliation was provided by the University of Nairobi and the Institute of African Studies, University of Nairobi. Earlier versions of this paper were presented prior to publication: University of Western Ontario, London, Canada, April, 1989; CESCE, 16th Annual Congress, Ottawa, Canada, May, 1989. I thank those who offered valuable suggestions in both presentation spheres, this journal's reviewers and Harriet Lyons, editor, who provided helpful and constructive critiques.

2. The Kenya African National Union is the political party in Kenya. Except for a brief period, 1966-69, Kenya has followed a one-party political system.
3. Daniel T. arap Moi is the President of the Republic of Kenya, East Africa.
4. Methods from which these data are drawn consisted of, first, participant observation stemming from residence in a Maragoli village. My presence in the village was legitimized by my status as a researcher in anthropology and by a kinship tie; I am married to (an) Umulogoli. Secondly, open-ended, in-depth interviewing of 410 women along with members of their families took place during 1987 and 1988 fieldwork. The "n=" utilized in this paper signifies the number of cases (Loether and McTavish 1980:47), that is, the number of people who responded, in order to provide the contextual detail stated.
5. This idea of sharing ethos may be designated as a form of African socialism in Kenya. Some have labelled African socialism as a "first official wave of ideological construction [occurring] immediately after independence" (Chazan et al. 1988:150), that took place to "provide theoretical legitimation for the incoming regimes and their leaders" (Chazan et al. 1988:149). In other words, whereas a number of independent African states advocated some aspect of socialism, for some, it was a strategy of nationalism. Although the concept of African socialism was and is utilized in Kenya (in the 1960s, Jomo Kenyatta labelled himself a socialist [Chazan et al. 1988:178]), in actuality, socialism is mainly rhetorical ideology that assisted in the anti-colonial struggle (cf. Rosberg and Callaghy 1979; Friedland and Rosberg 1964) and currently assists in nation building in the form of political ideology (Moi 1986:18), and economic strategy (ibid.:9, 29), see below. For example, Liebenow (1986:174) says of Kenya, "The state paper on socialism . . . sounded remarkably like capitalism under a new label."
6. A Swahili word, usually said to mean "working together."
7. For example, see Katz (1985) for the development and necessity of this discourse.
8. It is interesting that Moi portrays traditional Africans and Africa as utopians and utopia. Most ethnographic investigation, from oral histories, discerns class conflict and power struggles within and between ethnic groups in Africa. Logoli people certainly went to war, wars were fought for land and cattle with the Luo and the Nandi. Within the Avalogoli group, power and land confrontations between clans took place. Within clans, friction between elders and juniors often contributed (and contribute) to conflict, even death (cf. Abwunza 1985).
9. Published statistics (Republic of Kenya, Central Bureau of Statistics, Oct. 2, 1982) show the Maragoli population as 142 205, however the census taken in 1987 gives 197 324 as the population count (personal communication, District Commissioner's Office, Kakemega).
10. The Avalogoli are not unknown in research. Wagner (1949) did an incomplete and often inaccurate ethnography in the 1920s, including the Avalogoli as one of the Western Kenya Bantu groups he investigated. In his opinion the Logoli people were manifesting a rise in individualism (what we might today designate as a decline in the collectivity), based on the growing capitalist economy. As a particular example, he mentions the change in the land tenure system to individual ownership by title deed. I take issue with his sweeping generalization in Abwunza (1985), and here, as is evidenced in a still strong notion of the collectivity over 60 years later. Barker (1950), Ogot (1967), Osogo (1965) and Were (1967a;1967b), all mention the Avalogoli in the context of the historical aspects of migration and settlement, along with the customs, of Western Kenya Abaluyha groups. Lonsdale (1970), includes Avalogoli in his study of the Western Kenya political associations. Ssennyonga (1978) speaks of demographic aspects, see below. Unpublished information on Avalogoli includes research conducted by Ligale (1966), Mmbulika (1971), Moock (1973) and Moock (1975), and Obayo

(1980). Moock's (1975) study centring on migration processes as they are connected to economic behaviour concludes that the Avalogoli investment in social ties in the rural area (what is called here an adherence to the collectivity), is an "insurance policy" against unemployment in the wage labour sector. I would agree their adherence to the normative structure of the collectivity provides "insurance" in the form of security; however this pervades all aspects of life, not only wage labour contexts. Moreover, this security demands obligation, as is shown here.

11. In the pattern typical of British colonies, labour migration became necessary in order to pay tax, compensate for famine years and fulfil European settlers' demands for labour. Because of a relatively high level of education, Avalogoli, especially Logoli men, probably enjoyed an advantage over other western Kenyans in seeking waged employment.
12. Most people who informed this study asked that their real names be used in any resulting publications. However, politics in Kenya is an area of sensitivity, and I consider it unwise to identify those who candidly offered their opinions in this context. I have attempted to resolve this ethical problem by referring to people by what is considered their English, rather than their Avalogoli names. They will, thus, be able to recognize themselves in my text but will not be easily identifiable to others.
13. For example, Chief's and Assistant Chief's meetings are in barazza form and frequently *inyumba* (house) meetings are held by elders, attempting to solve family or neighbourhood problems. These meetings are presided over by an Assistant Chief who acts as chairman and the representative of the government. Gathering in groups without a government representative is an illegal assembly.
14. Republic of Kenya, Central Bureau of Statistics, 1982.
15. On one occasion we fed a young man a very large plateful of meat, rice and vegetables. Upon leaving our house he went to the kitchen hut and complained he had not eaten. We had not given him *ovuchima*.
16. Cows are scarce; there is no land to graze them.
17. Protein sources for the most part require cash, i.e., buying chickens, legumes, fish or beef. Beans are grown but only eaten in season. Where n=70, 13 yards had meat once a week; 3, every two weeks; 4, every three weeks; and 22 were able to purchase meat once a month. The remaining 28 seldom were able to purchase meat. However, eating meat means that usually one-half a kilo must stretch to all members of the yard, which averages eight people. Children are not usually given meat, however they may be given some of the soup (broth) to soak up with their *ovuchima*.
18. Where n=70, 55 have a total of 230 children of their own to pay school fees for, ranging in numbers from one to nine. Primary school education in Kenya is "free." However, free is rhetorical. For example, there is always a "building" fund; costs per term range from 200 to 300 shillings in rural areas to 750 shillings in Nairobi. Also, parents must pay for desks, supplies ("books for writing in, books for studying from, pens"), uniforms, watchmen fees, and so on. The procedure is to request from the child, and if the parents do not provide the cash, the child is sent home to remain there until it is supplied. Moreover, in the *Harambee* schools (more schools are *Harambee* than government-run or government-assisted), if parents do not pay, teachers do not get paid. All nursery schools are *Harambee*, one nursery school teacher reported she is fortunate to receive 100 shillings a month as parents seldom pay. Nursery schools are becoming compulsory; people say that if the children do not attend nursery, it is very difficult to get them enrolled in primary school. This will bring about even more expense. "Free" primary education is compulsory, parents *must* find the money to pay. Many women said they preferred the old system of fees, they would then know what the fee amounted to and could plan for the expenditure. "This way, you never know, the chil-

dren are always being sent home, back, home again. They miss too much." Teachers agree that children miss far too much school, and that far too much time is spent sending them home for money. Teachers would prefer to teach, rather than be involved in collecting fees. However, if they don't involve themselves, they will not get paid.

19. Westernized health care is free except in private hospitals and clinics. The Maragoli area has a rural health clinic. If available, medicines are given free at the health clinic. However, customary or "bush medical" treatment as it is called, is very expensive. A trip to a healer, herbalist or magician may cost 50 to 400 shillings plus medicine. Currently all private clinics must be licensed and health care abilities are closely assessed. Most "bush doctors" practise illegally.
20. Of the 32 men working full-time only four work in Maragoli. Maintaining living accommodation elsewhere is expensive. For example, a budget kept by a man working in Nairobi gives the following as shilling expenditures for one month: rent, 500; area watchman, 50; transport and food, 1020; laundry, 38; donations (funeral), 90; medical, 769 (an unusual expense, as one is not sick every month, yet interesting, as obtaining medical care in Nairobi is seldom free); repayment of debt, 200 (borrowed the previous month); transportation to Maragoli 250; for a total of 2917 shillings. His monthly salary is 2100 shillings, he was not able to take money home and he remained 817 shillings in debt. Even without the medical treatment he would not have been able to contribute to the home in Maragoli. Men also engage in strategies; for example, many do not come home on a regular monthly basis in order to save on transport, and attempt to accumulate cash to provide home assistance three or four times a year. This is a precarious situation, however, as they may end up spending it on relatives, emergencies or women and alcohol. The strategy used by the man above was to draw upon wage labour and the collectivity. He received a 650-shilling salary advance, borrowed 200 from a friend (to be repaid the next month), his sister (cousin) gave him 100 and his mother-in-law gave him 250 to cover his transportation cost to Maragoli so that he could attend to a family responsibility at home.
21. Monthly budgets filled out by the women at my request were utilized to provide the preceding and the following information.
22. Some characterize Logoli people as "people with the gimmies." George Abwunza, a Logoli, provided this analysis of the differences that exist between begging and asking in an attempt to counter the "gimmie" label.
23. This may be seen as a constant complaint of women.
24. Another constant complaint, in this case made by men.
25. The difficulty lies in getting the President's attention directed to the plights of the people, so his visits to any area, including Maragoli, are welcomed with joy as they may provide such opportunities.
26. Edelia's statement is debatable as far as Kenya is concerned, although she is correct in her assessment of an emphasis on women and "development," which for her, means "progress." Normative structures and Kenyan law often support men at the expense of women. In November 1987, a video conference made up of Kenyan and U.S. participants was held in Nairobi in order to determine, two years after the United Nations World Conference on women, if women's lot had improved. One of their findings stated, "Women are totally invisible in policy making." This statement has merit in Kenya. On a national level, since independence Parliament has had a maximum of three women Members of Parliament at any one time. In 1988, at least 10 women vied for the 188 seats, 360 candidates overall; all but four were casualties of the nomination process. Of these four, one was nominated and one elected for a total of only two women Members in the current Parliament. In the Maragoli area, during the 1988 national election, one woman ran unsuccessfully for (council) office.

When men and women were asked how they felt about women political candidates, invariably their first response was laughter. It was an amusing thought! After the initial reaction, some people said "It's good for women to run." A number of women said, "Women know women's needs." A few men believed women engaging in politics to be appropriate, "It's just alright, times are changing," was the comment from one man. However, any comments received could be suspect as all knew the research interest was mainly in women. A pictorial presentation (*The Weekly Review*, March 11, 1988) speaks to a general attitude toward women engaging in political activity. It shows (in an undetermined location) women voters laughing, standing and waving, with the caption, "Prospective voters seem to have enjoyed the rare public drama to which they have been treated." The companion picture portrays a number of solemn, pensive, sitting men, captioned, "while some – though noticeably not the candidates – think it's still a serious business after all." "Laughter" (equating women) and "serious" (equating men) are the key words.

27. This "Mummy" refused to allow me to "take her name to Canada."
28. Where n=64, 32 women believed that it is the government that makes changes in their society. The question was not answered by two; sixteen believed that people generally make change; five did not know; two answered that it is the church; two answered "men"; four replied "the government and the people"; and one woman believed that it is the government and the church.
29. Change is seen as bad by 36 out of 64 people. Change can be both good and bad, that it is good if you have cash, otherwise bad, by 17; five see change as good; four did not answer; and two did not know.
30. I should like to contradict those who write that the Kenyan government does not "use *Kanu* as a vehicle to shape ideology and formulate policy" (Okuma and Holmquist 1984); who refer to Kenya as a "no party state" (ibid.:61); and use these citations as argument support (Bradshaw 1990:24). We also disagree with Fatton's point that African states generally have non-hegemonic character as the "ruling class expresses its class power through its unmediated control of state power. Such a fusion of state and class powers reflects its nonhegemonic character" (Fatton 1989:63). In Kenya, unmediated control of state power assists in legitimizing the national hegemony of *Nyayo*.

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