

This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-
NoDerivs 3.0 Licence.

To view a copy of the licence please see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL
EQUALITY IN KENYA

By

Kenneth Prewitt

DISCUSSION PAPER NO. 157

INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

December 1972

Views expressed in this paper are those of the author. They should not be interpreted as reflecting the views of the Institute for Development Studies or of the University of Nairobi.

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL
EQUALITY IN KENYA

By

Kenneth Prewitt

Abstract

This paper develops the premise that schools are simultaneously involved in defining and justifying both systems of stratification and ideals and practices of egalitarianism. It argues that this apparent paradox is resolved in the notion of meritocratic selection and then draws on varied Kenyan data to assess the extent to which the notion is both a practical reality and an article of national policy.

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL EQUALITY IN KENYA

Kenneth Frewitt

Kenya places many burdens on its schools, its teachers and its educational administrators, for Kenya inherited not only the apparatus of formal schooling from the British colonizers but also the idea that education is indispensable to social and economic development. The attractiveness of this idea rests at least partly in its vagueness; it can cover a multitude of programmes and projects. But somewhere buried in the principle which links education and development are two specific thoughts.

There is, first, the notion that youth must be instructed in the tools and skills relevant to the economic tasks and the technology of the society. This includes everything from correct application of fertilizer to computer programming, and cuts across an occupational structure in transition from pre-modern agricultural and cattle-raising to modernized food production and incipient industrialization. Of course not every school-age child is instructed in the full range of skills necessary to the operation of the society. Different skills and different amounts of the same skills are distributed according to duration and type of schooling. This point can be put in the more familiar language that formal education involves selecting and sorting. Schooling is part of the basic process wherein persons are allocated into specific occupational roles. It is shown later that in Kenya, as elsewhere, allocation of person to task implies social stratification.

Formal education is expected to accomplish more than technological instruction, using that term in its broadest sense. It is also expected to accomplish cultural instruction, again applying the broadest construction to the term. Cultural norms and expectations are associated with adult membership in society, and this cultural learning occurs in a variety of pre-adult settings. Certainly one of these settings is the school. Here, in particular, civics and citizenship are commonly taught. Good conduct is taught along with good grammar. Just how successful schools are at deliberate political socialization remains unclear, but if a broad construction to the phrase "cultural learning" be allowed, there is little doubt that schooling is a time for learning the rules as well as acquiring the tools which pave the way to adulthood.¹ In Kenya education for citizenship includes a heavy dose of nationalism, especially as

interpreted through the themes of Uhuru, the self-help movement, and African Socialism. Whatever the practice, there is in principle an ideological commitment to egalitarianism as well.

Schools in Kenya thus are simultaneously involved in skill instruction — which implies differentiation and stratification, and in cultural instruction — which implies treating students as equals and telling them that social equality is part of the heritage of Uhuru. This makes Kenya an interesting setting in which to explore one of the most complex and fascinating of all issues in the analysis of education and society. We briefly explicate this issue, and then return to Kenya.²

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND EGALITARIANISM

Social stratification systems have persisted despite the widespread acceptance of egalitarian ideologies over the past two centuries. The facts of the matter, being well-known, merit only brief review. Democratic principles and the "equality of men" are almost universally affirmed, being political dogmas in agricultural and industrial societies, in capitalist and socialist economies, and in single-party and multi-party states. More to the point, proclamations have been followed by institutions, although the practice of equality has had a more checkered career than the pronouncement of the principles. Still, there has been some progression in the establishment of citizenship equalities. T.H. Marshall has demonstrated, for England, that initial breakthroughs were in the area of civil and legal equalities — "Liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice". Following the establishment of these rights came political citizenship — "the right to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of such a body". Finally citizenship equalities were extended to the social realm — "the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security."³ Most new nations of the world, including Kenya, have made strenuous efforts to establish all three forms of citizenship equalities soon after gaining their independence.

Despite the political successes of the democratic revolution, the spread of egalitarian principles and the universalization of citizenship, there has not been a "levelling" of societies. Men today are stratified in terms of wealth, power, and deference just as they were before Locke wrote. The persistence of stratification can be seen in societies organized under very different political charters and economic principles. Though socialism and social welfare policies have equalized important social services, the

distance separating the wealthiest from the poorest citizen remains considerable. Citizens are also distributed along power hierarchies, with enormous powers concentrated in very small groups. And although the way in which these powers are wielded is moderated in some countries by universal suffrage and political democracy, the facts of power stratification have not given way to a classless political order. Deference rankings have been stripped of many of their visible insignias under pressure from populists; but inequalities of status remain. Some people do count and are noticed while others, the large majority, are ignored and little noticed.

It is thus a historical fact that stratification and inequalities persist despite the acceptance of egalitarian principles and the adoption of institutions intended to promote equality, especially the universalization of citizenship. To study this fact from the vantage point of political beliefs as formed in schools suggests a simple point: Education simultaneously promotes the conditions of equality and the conditions of inequality.

EDUCATION AND EQUALITY

It is primarily in connection with citizenship rights that education promotes and protects equalities. Public education, along with the church, was early accepted as a major means for instructing the newly enfranchised in their responsibilities and rights. The social conservative stressed the responsibilities, viewing mass education as prudent social insurance insofar as it would socialize the citizen and assure his loyalty and orderliness. The political liberal stressed the rights, viewing education as a way to equalize the capacity of all citizens to take advantage of legal and political rights as well as economic opportunities. Bendix has written, "It is probable, therefore, that systems of national education develop as widely as they do because the demand for elementary education cuts across the political spectrum. It is sustained by conservatives who fear the people's inherent unruliness which must be curbed by instruction in the fundamentals of religion and thus instill loyalty to king and country. Liberals argue that the nation-state demands a citizenry educated by organs of the state. And populist spokesmen claim that the masses of the people who help to create the wealth of the country should share in the amenities of civilization."⁴

EDUCATION AND INEQUALITY

If education promotes egalitarianism, it also promotes inequalities. Educational attainment constitutes a formidable advantage in the hierarchies

of class, status, and power; and lack of education puts one at a crippling disadvantage. Wealth and education are associated because the better educated have the skills and obtain the positions which are disproportionately rewarded in society. Deference and education are associated because the well-educated have disproportionate access to the cultural system which stands at the center of society and is held in high esteem, as well as because of the high intercorrelations between education, occupation, and status. Power and education are associated through the tendency of the educated to dominate recruitment channels into the ruling groups, and the tendency of electorates to choose leaders from among those who have demonstrated achievement and attainment. Reasons for these associations are well-known, deriving primarily from the fact that society uses educational accomplishment and formal certification as a method for allocating persons into different positions and, it might be added, for attaching different moral worth to persons.

Education has more than a contingent association with stratification systems. It is part of the social processes which retard the further institutionalization of equalities. There are, first, economic considerations. Limits to egalitarianism are imposed by the requirements of incentive systems. Incentives are designed to raise productivity, to insure that socially useful positions are filled, and to motivate the talented to be also the hard-working. The truth of such assertions can be accepted without adopting the functionalist thesis that inequality is necessary for social survival and thus benign in consequences. To say that incentive systems promote productivity leaves open the question of who benefits, those who manage or those who produce. But it does not serve sociological analysis to ignore that incentives everywhere play a role in getting the job done, whatever the job and whoever benefits from its performance. Schooling is very much part of any society's incentive arrangements. In its internal structure schooling is modelled on the belief that grades and promotion rates are incentives which should be directly associated with the performance of specific tasks. In its links to the society schooling serves the larger incentive systems through its selection, allocation, and certification activities.

Limits to egalitarianism are also imposed by the principle which allows for the equal the right to be different. Education is again salient, for both in instructional program and in structure, schools in most countries emphasize that the ethics of equality cut two ways. If equality implies that education should be accessible to all, it also implies that each individual has the right to be educated according to his talents and ambitions. The

bright and the dull student have "equal right" to demonstrate their intelligence and to be educated accordingly. Marshall writes that the Welfare State "must conceive of the basic equality of all as human beings and fellow-citizens in a way which leaves room for the recognition that all men are not equally gifted nor capable of rendering equally valuable services to the community, that equal opportunity means an equal chance to reveal differences, some of which are superiorities, and that these differences need for their development different types of education, some of which may legitimately be regarded as higher than others."⁵

Perhaps we arrive at a paradox, something seemingly self-contradictory but in fact not so. The "incompatibility" between the two functions of formal schooling, promoting egalitarianism and yet stratifying its products, can be examined theoretically, which we do shortly. It can also be examined in the context of actual schooling practices; this we will do using Kenya as the illustrative case. There is a theoretical solution to the paradox; it is commonly known as the liberal theory of meritocratic selection. When attention is turned to Kenya it will become clear that this theory only partially explains the pertinent facts. The gap between theory and facts will send us searching for something else in the Kenyan context which might account for the resolution of the incompatibility. We locate this "something else" in the political ideology, such as it is, of this country, and this in turn provides an important insight into the link between education and society.

THE THEORY OF MERITOCRATIC SELECTION

The key term in the theoretical resolution of the paradox is merit selection, for the liberal "is less concerned about inequalities of reward accruing to different positions than about the process of recruitment to these positions. The prime objection raised is against present restrictions on the opportunities for talented but lowly born people to improve their personal lot. Seen from this angle, social justice entails not so much the equalization of rewards as the equalization of opportunities to compete for the most privileged positions".⁶

It has been the accomplishment of Talcott Parsons to expand the principle of merit selection to the point of general theory. Parsonian theory assumes that common values can be shared across social strata and thereby integrate what might otherwise be divisive social arrangements. Applied to our immediate problem the argument proceeds as follows. Schooling is unavoidably selective, preventing some pupils and allowing others to

progress beyond critical terminal points. Because schooling is selective there must be criteria by which students are differentially allocated. If these criteria are commonly accepted and fairly applied, then the social differentiation which results is tolerated even by those who hold strongly to egalitarian principles.

Parsons contends that this is exactly what has happened in the United States. The criterion of school selection and advancement is achievement, and parents and children of all social strata place a high value on achievement. Thus the strain inherent in the differentiating activities of schools is bearable. The common valuation of achievement "helps make possible the acceptance of the crucial differentiation, especially by the losers in the competition. Here it is an essential point that this common value on achievement is shared by units with different statuses in the system. It cuts across the differentiation of families by socio-economic status."⁷ Marshall sounds a similar theme when he writes that school selectivity will not conflict with egalitarian principles if achievement criteria prevail over ascriptive advantages: all should "be judged by the same procedures, as impartially and impersonally as possible, and favouritism and privilege must be eradicated, and also the effects of differing social environments on the critical turning-points of life."⁸

This formulation rests on several empirical assumptions. To the extent that these are not confirmed in any given society, the meritocratic theory fails for that society; at the least it must be qualified. We consider two empirical assumptions as the core ones: 1) opportunities are equally available; 2) merit selection prevails. Each assumption can be briefly reviewed taking Kenya as our illustrative case.

APPLICATION OF THE PARSONIAN THEORY TO KENYA⁹

The Equal Availability of Educational Opportunity

Two factors suggest that educational opportunities are not equally available in Kenya, and these factors are cumulative in their consequences. The first is geography. Where you happen to grow up sharply affects your chances of entering the primary school system. One Province (Central) registers nearly 100% of the eligible age-cohort in primary school; at the other extreme is a Province (North-Eastern) which registers only about 5%. Even where school places are available the quality of instruction and facilities varies enormously. Central Province, for instance, has 27% of all trained primary teachers in Kenya, although it has approximately 15% of primary school age children. The Province most populous in school age

children (Nyanza) has only 16% of the trained teachers. Similar discrepancies exist at the secondary school level. The number of children between the ages of fifteen and nineteen in Central Province is 152,000, and they are served by 41 maintained secondary schools. Three Provinces, Rift (225,000), Nyanza (221,000), and Eastern (193,000), have larger school age populations, but many fewer maintained secondary schools: 29, 28, and 25 respectively.

Geographic inequalities are expressed also in rural and urban differences. Private nursery schools and the prestigious, better-staffed government-aided schools are nearly always located in or near urban centres. Educational opportunities in Kenya are not scattered around the landscape equitably, and they are not equally divided between rural and urban sections.

Educational opportunities are affected not only by geography. Equal opportunities are undermined in Kenya as elsewhere by the strong ties of family loyalty. There is a marked tendency for the better-educated families to ensure that their offspring are schooled, and preferably schooled in the superior institutions. Partly this occurs through the natural advantages linked to geographical distribution of educational opportunities, for the greater number of school places and the quality schools are located where children of the already educated families are concentrated. But there is more to it than this.

Very early in the life of their children, educated parents are able to provide differential advantages. The home environment is especially significant when schooling, as in Kenya, is organized around formal and formidable terminal examinations. Wealthier, educated parents who purchase books and educational toys, who speak English in the home, who utilize private nursery schools, and who otherwise deploy resources in a manner creating pre-school conditions conducive to successful school performance provide initial advantages which are difficult to match in the poor, uneducated, and rural family. A survey of well-educated Kenyans in their thirties and forties showed the following educational advantages were being provided:¹⁰

Table : PROPORTION OF WELL-EDUCATED KENYANS WHO PROVIDE EDUCATIONAL ADVANTAGES FOR THEIR CHILDREN

Speak English in the Home	61%
Provide Special Tutoring or Lessons	62%
Read to the Children	73%
Send Children to Private Nursery Schools	74%
Purchase Books & Educational Toys	90%

There are scattered survey data which confirm that educational advantages are transmitted through the family. One study reports that a male child of literate parents has on the average a 60% higher education than a male child of illiterate parents; for females this figure increases to 75%. This survey also reports that respondents who themselves are well-educated come from much better educated families than do uneducated workers. Those who had completed 12 years of education had fathers whose average education was 5.6 years; those who had completed less than 2 years of education had fathers whose average formal schooling was 0.2 years.¹¹ These figures, and similar ones which could be reported, are partly to be explained by school fees. Fees are less of a hardship in families where parents or older siblings are already educated and have entered the market economy. And of course there tends to be inter-marriage within your own educational class, thus contributing further to the benefits which are automatically conferred by being born into the educated family. This is indicated in table 2.

Table 2: PROPORTION OF FAMILIES WHERE WIFE HAS FORMAL EDUCATION BEYOND PRIMARY SCHOOL*

Husband's Education:

Less Than Secondary (8)**	25%
Completed Secondary (32)	54%
HSC, University, etc. (30)	68%

Notes: * See footnote 10 for data source.

** Number of cases on which percentage is calculated.

Table 3 suggests that the advantages of family persist even into the university.

Table 3: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF FATHERS OF UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI STUDENTS AND ALL ADULT MALES IN KENYA

<u>Educational Attainment</u>	<u>Fathers of University of Nairobi Students, 1970</u>	<u>All African Males Aged 40 and Over in Kenya</u>
None	21%	80%
Some primary	56%	18%
Some secondary (Forms 1 - 4)	18%	2%
Post-Secondary (Form 5 or more)	4%	1%

Source: G.S. Fields and S.E. Rastad, "University Education in Kenya: Planning for Employment and Development," Working Paper No. A 39, The Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen, August, 1971.

We conclude, then, that access to educational opportunities is not equitably distributed in Kenyan society. In particular geographic and family considerations operate to penalize some children and reward others. This does not lead us to reject outright the Parsonian theory, but it does indicate that caution is advisable. Let us turn to the remaining empirical assumption.

The Prevalence of Merit Selection

No precise answer can be given regarding the extent to which merit selection prevails in Kenya. On the one hand, there is a rigorous examination schedule which effectively sorts the students into "passes" and "fails" at each terminal point in the educational system. There undoubtedly are instances of cheating, by students and by authorities, but such do not appear to be widespread. If we were to confine attention solely to progress within the school system, we would probably conclude that merit selection does on balance prevail.

On the other hand, there is considerable evidence, though mostly of an illustrative sort, which indicates that passage from the school system into the occupational structure is only partly determined by performance in school tasks. This slippage can be traced to two factors.

There is, first, self-elimination. Some students, irrespective of their performance in school, take themselves out of the competition for the best jobs in society. Conversely, some students who perform poorly on academic tests nevertheless express high aspiration for further education and, by extension, for superior jobs. This self-elimination and self-assertion pattern is partially explained by the quality of school the student is attending. Thus the poorer examination performer in the prestigious school has a higher aspirational level than the better performer in the inferior school.¹² It should here be kept in mind that examination performance is measured identically across the entire school system.

This finding bears directly on the larger theoretical question being explored. It indicates that cultural factors advantage and disadvantage over and above the neutral merit system on which social selection is supposed to take place. Recruitment into the higher status positions in society is linked to ability to gain entry into a prestigious school, which in turn is affected by family-provided educational advantages as well as economic resources. Performance on objective tests designed to measure merit is consequently rendered less important.

A second and broader comment on merit selection in Kenya relates to a widely recognized though little analyzed phenomenon. This phenomenon goes

under many names: tribalism, nepotism, brotherization, and, sometimes, corruption. And of course the various labels only indicate that there are in fact a variety of practices. But for our purposes they can be subsumed under one general heading. Considerations extraneous to the merit system do play a significant role in allocating Kenyans into status positions.

It is no exaggeration to insist that status selection and occupational recruitment are determined by a two-part system, one part being educational attainments, merit considerations, qualifications, job performance, and the like; and the other part being favoritism, patronage, social connections, ethnic origins, and to some degree political loyalties. Unfortunately much less is known about just how this dual system works than we wish, but that both dimensions are salient can hardly be denied. In interviews with 70 well-placed Kenyan leaders, three different questions were asked about the criteria of recruitment and advancement. The answers could be clustered into two broad categories: merit and performance, including educational qualifications; and extraneous social-political considerations, including tribalism, social contacts, etc. Data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: CRITERIA FOR RECRUITMENT AND ADVANCEMENT PERCEIVED BY MID ELITE LEADERS¹³

	What Are The Most Important Things Which Account For Who Becomes Leaders in Kenya?	What Accounts for Inability of Some to Get Ahead?	What Determines Recruitment Into Political Leadership Positions?
	%	%	%
Merit & Performance: educational qualifications, seniority, ability, hard work, etc.	24	24	13
Extraneous considerations: social contacts, patronage, corruption, tribalism, political loyalties.	18	32	36
Both Types of Answers:	55	36	42
Declined to Comment, no Information:	3	8	9
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>
	(70)	(62)	(70)

What perhaps is most interesting is the tendency for a sizeable group to emphasized simultaneously both factors. On the face of it this appears inconsistent. How can career mobility and occupational status be determined on the basis of merit and performance if such extraneous factors as tribal origin or patronage contacts play a decisive role? Indeed, this same problem is raised even by the respondents who tend to emphasize only one or the other. For these are all well-placed respondents, and yet the collective picture which emerges is clearly one in which recruitment is seen to depend on two very different clusters of factors.

We might be tempted to dismiss these data except for the nagging feeling that reality is indeed being described. Anyone who lives in Kenya is well aware of the tremendous emphasis placed on educational certification, and the near worship of the degree as a passport into the higher positions of society.

Academic performance is stressed time and again. None doubt that schooling and performance level within school is decisive in affecting occupational opportunities.

But it is also clear that a conflicting, and "non-merit," set of factors also affects career mobility. Certainly no close observer of Kenyan society will be surprised to learn that approximately four out of five well-placed informants describe career advancement in language typified in the following responses:

Promotion depends on political patronage and how you get along with your superiors; there is tribalism, nepotism, and some corruption through bribery.

You get ahead because of who you know, especially personal contacts based on tribalism.

Loyalty matters more than anything else, i.e., there are senior people who are less qualified than their juniors, but they are senior because they are loyal to the right people.

If these quotations ring true, so also do the following ones which suggest that non-merit considerations are tempered by qualifications, academic performance, and job skills:

I can say nowadays that what matters most is educational level, one's influence and hard work, and also who is who's family.

Academic achievement, and practical achievement in their performance. And I think nepotism and patronage cannot be ignored.

Education and experience count. Also integrity, initiative and drive. And loyalty to Government and the ruling party, and the weight and influence of one's tribe in the current regime.

Just how this dual system operates is not easily ascertainable, but at least brief comment can be suggested. The number of qualified Kenyans available for any given position exceeds the number of openings, often by a substantial amount. This situation gives ample play for ethnic arithmetic (or tribal power plays), for patronage and nepotism, and for corruption. But these factors operate within constraints established by merit considerations. Academic achievement and related performance criteria establish the eligible recruitment pools, and then non-merit criteria affect the rate of promotion, the range of responsibilities allocated, and the opportunities for future success. It is a two-tiered system, operating sequentially rather than simultaneously. Thus academic qualifications are a pre-requisite for many civil service positions, but since more persons have those qualifications than there are positions, picking and choosing from among the eligibles is bound to involve some judgement on the part of superiors. Judgements of this sort, in Kenya just as any other society, cannot avoid some attention to personal influence, family connections, political outlook, and similar non-merit considerations.

EDUCATION AND MERIT RECRUITMENT IN KENYA: A SUMMARY STATEMENT

The potential tension between egalitarian values and stratifying activities is reduced, according to the Parsonian theory, when the formal educational system ensures that merit criteria generally determine movement into the better paid and more prestigious occupations in the society. Evidence from Kenya indicates that the empirical assumptions underpinning the meritocratic recruitment hypothesis are only partially confirmed. We can see this in summary by noting the three major stages at which non-merit factors can be introduced.

1) School Entry: Kenya does not have a mass education system. Not even primary education is universal, and very small proportions of relevant age-cohorts progress into the secondary schools, universities, or professional training. There is evidence that the opportunity to enter the formal school system is not equitably distributed. It is not equitably distributed across the geographical regions and between the urban centres and the rural areas. And it is not equitably distributed across the social class categories which themselves are based on who among the older generations received formal education. To be the child of a well-educated and wealthy urban resident provides substantial educational advantages over those available to the child of the illiterate, impoverished, rural resident. Of course family status and geographic location are not perfectly correlated, and the Nairobi day labourer's children are not excluded from school by virtue of the lower

status of their family, though these children will probably not have attended private nursery schools or have benefited from private tutoring. Whatever the association between family status and geography, it remains that both factors reduce equal access to the school system for all children in Kenya.

As mass primary education becomes a reality it is likely that quality differences between the schools will take on increasing significance. Getting into school will become less important, and getting into the "right" school more important. Family background will continue to advantage and disadvantage.

2) Promotion Through the School System: The structure of educational opportunities in Kenya is sharply pyramidal. The criteria which promote ever fewer students from one level to the next take on considerable importance. Most observers of Kenyan educational practices agree that merit criteria prevail over non-merit ones. There is, to be sure, pre-school preparation which qualifies this. There is also the uneven allocation of trained teachers, educational facilities such as science laboratories, and related factors which allow us to distinguish between low quality and high quality schools. There are also the cases of corruption which ensure that the sons and daughters of well-placed persons manage always to be promoted, irrespective of performance.

Taken in the aggregate, however, the progress of a cohort from primary school to Form I, and from Form IV to Higher School Certificate and from Higher School Certificate to University, as well as allocation into various technical colleges, is less affected by these extraneous factors than it is by performance on standardized examinations. The series of examinations is the overriding factor influencing promotion up the education ladder. Once students get into the school system they do have near-equal opportunities to demonstrate skill and intelligence, or at least to demonstrate the type of skill and intelligence required on the type of examinations given. Merit criteria prevail over non-merit considerations in determining promotion.

3) Movement From School to Job: Here the picture is not entirely clear. On the one hand, great emphasis is placed on educational qualifications in occupational recruitment. On the other hand, much is heard of patronage and corruption in the awarding of scarce jobs. Both facts are true. Schooling and occupational recruitment are linked at three very general levels: primary school leavers and any type of job in the cash economy; secondary school leavers,

and graduates of technical colleges, and recruitment into lower and middle-range public and private sector positions; university graduates and professional degree holders, and access to the top management and political positions. At each of these levels there are more candidates than openings. At each level, then, non-merit considerations are invoked to select the fortunate few into the more desirable positions.

CONCLUSION: THE MERITOCRATIC THEORY REVISED

Our puzzle has become more complicated. We first learn that the apparently inconsistent principles of egalitarianism and stratification are both promoted in the instructional program and activities of schools. Then we discover a theoretical formulation which accepts and accounts for this paradox, a formulation emphasizing merit recruitment as a mechanism adjusting the egalitarian ideology to the realities of status differentiation. Next we find evidence about schooling in Kenya which questions the empirical assumptions on which the theory rests. Despite this evidence, Kenya continues to preach egalitarianism and practice social differentiation, and to use the schools in both respects.

Kenya, that is, behaves consistently with what we have outlined as a paradoxical situation. If this social behaviour is not to be explained by the theory stressing merit recruitment, how is it to be explained? An alternative or at least greatly modified theory is necessary if we are to understand the role of Kenyan schools in promoting doctrines of egalitarianism and in stabilizing systems of stratification. It will be valuable to follow Parsons in his emphasis on the beliefs which are learned in school though it will be necessary to consider a different set of beliefs than those he proposes. The following comments are preliminary and partial, but are intended as a step in this direction.

There is a strong emphasis on patriotism and paternalism in the Kenyan schools, patriotism for those destined to occupy lower positions in society and paternalism for those headed for the higher positions. Lessons in patriotism and paternalism are nothing new, but even the superficial plea to be a "good citizen" or a "responsible future leader" can if repeated often enough have implications not initially noticed. One such implication is to narrow the perceptual distance between self and society. I doubt if the preachings of "duty and obligation" make the Kenyan pupil less self-interested, but they may convince him that his personal interests are closely associated with the national interest. Self and nation have interlocking destinies.

This of course is a profoundly conservative doctrine in many respects. It leads among other things to a stress on reciprocity and interdependence, including the belief that the lower classes are dependent for their well-being on the talents and ability of the higher classes. Who you are, how you live, and what you become are not simply matters of initiative and ability, but matters of where the society is going and how quickly it will get there; economic and social development is in turn viewed as related to what the well-educated are accomplishing.

Schools figure prominently in an image of the mutually interdependent society. Differentiating activities are necessary to locate the persons who can provide social direction and leadership. In practice this means that those who are ushered off the important career ladders, because of no schooling or because of poor performance in the early years, see the differentiating activities as benign. Perhaps they even come to believe in the "necessity" of unequal rewards being associated with different social tasks. In a curious way the benefits of the egalitarian revolution will be won only if stratification is allowed to take its course.

This is not a new theme in political thought, but it primarily has been applied as a "functional" hypothesis about social stratification. What I propose is that the functionalist argument, or something resembling it, is actually a political ideology widely enough shared so as to provide a rationale for holding to egalitarian principles while sustaining social stratification. It is a conservative set of political and social beliefs in part formed by the schools, both in the instructional program and in the structural arrangements.

FOOTNOTES

1. Essays relevant to schools as political socialization agencies in East Africa can be found in K. Prewitt (ed) Education and Political Values: An East African Case Study (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971).
2. The utility of distinguishing between "selection and socialization" was first suggested to me by a paper prepared by J.E. Anderson, "Socialization and Selection: Incompatible Functions for Schools in Lesser Developed Countries," undated.
3. T.H. Marshall, Class, Citizenship, and Social Development (New York: Doubleday Anchor Edition, 1965, pp. 78-79).
4. R. Bendix, Nation-Building and Citizenship. Quotation taken from a chapter reprinted in Bendix (ed.) State and Society: A Reader in Comparative Political Sociology (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1968), p. 247.
5. Marshall, op. cit., p. 266. It should not go unnoticed that the phrase "equal right to be different" has been used by the privileged to protect and pass along their privileges. Still, as Ralf Dahrendorf has recognized, the phrase points to an important if paradoxical truth: "within certain limits defined by the equality of citizenship, inequalities of social status, considered as a medium of human development, are a condition of a free society." See "The Origin of Inequality" in Laumann, Siegel, Hodge (eds.) The Logic of Social Hierarchies (Markham, 1970) p. 30.
6. F. Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1971), p. 13.
7. T. Parsons, "The School Class as a Social System" in Social Structure and Personality (N.Y.: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 145.
8. Marshall, op. cit., p. 266
9. The structure of educational opportunities is sharply pyramidal in Kenya. There are approximately 1.2 million primary school students, 130,000 secondary school students, 14,000 in technical and teacher's colleges, and fewer than 4,000 in any of the universities in East Africa.
10. Data are taken from an unpublished survey of 70 Kenyan leaders interviewed in December, 1971. These leaders are mostly in "mid-elite" positions. The present table reports the responses of those 38 who have completed secondary schooling and who have children of the appropriate age for answering the question. All respondents had at least completed secondary school, and half had either HSC or university education.
11. Data taken from a report based on a sample of 4,472 wage-earners in three urban areas (Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru) interviewed in 1968. It was prepared for the World Bank by Heinrich Thias, with Martin Carnoy as consultant, and published as Cost-Benefit Analysis in Education: A Case Study of Kenya, (Washington DC, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, no. EC-173, 1969).
12. This finding is reported in H.C.A. Somerset, "Educational Aspirations of Fourth Form Pupils in Kenya", Discussion Paper 117 (University of Nairobi, Institute for Development Studies) 1972.

13. The precise wording of the three open-ended questions used to elicit perceptions of criteria for recruitment and advancement were:

"Speaking very generally, what are the most important things which account for who becomes leaders here in Kenya?"

"Would you agree that there are many persons here in Kenya who are well-trained and hard-working, but who find it difficult to move ahead? If YES: What might account for this?" 10% of the respondents did not agree with the assumption. They are excluded from the table.

"There are many young and talented persons in Kenya today. What sorts of things do you think will determine which few of them will rise to positions of political leadership in the future?"