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ABSTRACT

A two-pronged theory underlying literacy campaigns suggests that (1) the prevailing ideology of a society will determine the objectives of the literacy campaign as well as the language of justification used by the development elite in the promotion of adult literacy; and (2) the ideology, as expressed in the political culture of a society, will influence the technology of a literacy campaign in regard to the strategies used for the articulation of the national commitment; the mobilization of the masses; and the establishment of organizational structures, the management of incentives for the recruitment of participants and teachers, the development of curricula, and the design of systems for the delivery of instruction. This two-pronged theory can be seen at work in the literacy campaigns conducted in Tanzania and Kenya. where differing ideologies have resulted in differing methods for promoting literacy. Tanzania follows a socialist ideology, and emphasizes literacy as a tool for the participation of the masses in society in its very successful literacy campaign. Kenya, on the other hand, while following an espoused socialist philosophy, supports individual initiatives and thus uses different programs and incentives, with less success so far, in its less committed literacy campaign. Other studies of literacy campaigns also show much greater success rates in totalitarian than in free societies. Therefore, it is clear that democracies will have to better articulate their ideological positions on literacy and they will have to extend the conception of democracy to include political, social, and economic democracy if they expect to achieve success in literacy efforts. (KC)

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE MASS LITERACY CAMPAIGNS
OF TANZANIA AND KENYA

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ABSTRACT

It is asserted that a theory of the literacy campaign is now available. This theory has two dimensions to it: the ideological and the technological. The theory suggests that the prevailing ideology of a society will determine the objectives of the literacy campaign as well as the language of justification used by the development elite in the promotion of adult literacy. Again, the ideology, as expressed in the political culture of a society, will influence the technology of a literacy campaign in regard to the strategies used for the articulation of the national commitment; the mobilization of the masses and the establishment of organizational structures; the management of incentives for the recruitment of participants and pedagogues; the development of curricula; and the design of systems for the delivery of instruction.

The mass adult literacy campaigns of Tanzania (1971) and of Kenya (1979) are then briefly analysed to demonstrate how two different political cultures of these East African neighbors have indeed generated somewhat different kinds of literacy campaigns. Finally, some speculative comments are offered in regard to the political antecedents that might be necessary for the success of mass literacy campaigns in different areas of the Third World.

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By H.S. Bhola

Mass literacy campaigns are organized, large-scale series of activities, intensely focussed on the eradication of illiteracy, from among vast populations of youth and adults, within some pre-determined periods of time. Mass literacy campaigns are by no means new. The first ever nation-wide mass literacy campaign had its official birth when V.I. Lenin signed the Decree of the Council of National Commissars on the Liquidation of Illiteracy among the Populations of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (RSFSR) on December 26, 1919. Other literacy campaigns have followed over the years. Ho Chi Minh launched a literacy campaign for North Viet Nam within a few months of the August 1945 revolution. The Chinese announced their specific plans for the eradication of illiteracy in 1950. The 1960s and the 1970s have seen many national literacy campaigns including those of Cuba (1961), Burma (1964), Brazil (1967), Tanzania (1971), Somalia (1973), India (1978), Iraq (1978), Ethiopia (1979), and Kenya (1979), among others. The Nicaragua Literacy Crusade of 1980 has recently attracted considerable international attention. Other countries, Ecuador, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, to name a few, are getting ready to launch mass literacy campaigns in the near future.

It is quite defensible to make the assertion that a theory of the mass literacy campaign has now emerged. It is a two-dimensional theory, directing our attention both to the

ideological and the technological. The technology of the literacy campaign is well developed. We do seem to know the steps that must be followed and the issues that must be faced by planners and professional workers to increase the probability of the success of their mass literacy campaigns and to improve the instructional, social and economic returns on their literacy efforts. The following basic steps and processes seem necessary:

- (1) articulation of the nation's political will for the eradication of illiteracy;
- (2) temporary institutionalization of the first policy initiative, and later, the development of a comprehensive policy making and legitimizing organ;
- (3) study and diagnosis of preconditions to the conduct of the literacy campaign;
- (4) general mobilization of the public and establishment of structures of mass participation;
- (5) development of inter-ministerial and inter-agency structures both for (i) administrative and (ii) technical purposes;
- (6) ~~pre-operational~~ preparation and the actual implementation of developmental and instructional actions;
- (7) evaluation of context, processes and results; and
- (8) the design and establishment of post-literacy programs. (1)

The technology of communication, instruction, organization and evaluation needed for the actualization of the mass literacy campaign is indeed available. However, it is the ideology of the nation launching upon a literacy campaign which will determine its overall commitment to the eradication of illiteracy as well as the instructional and organizational choices made in the implementation of the general technology in specific socio-political settings. The ideological assumptions and the fervor

with which the national ideology is pursued seem to be crucial in regard to the successes and failures of mass literacy campaigns, and of any other literacy programs, for that matter.

The ideology serving as the engine of a mass literacy campaign may be that of Marxism-Leninism, African Socialism, Islamic Fundamentalism or democratic liberalism. Whatever the ideology pervading the mass literacy campaign, it must offer the illiterate a good deal -- politically, socially and economically. This means that literacy campaigns must offer the illiterate masses not merely the 3-R's but also full affiliation into the structures of their own societies. Following from, and concomitant with literacy promotion, there must be new distributions of power, status and economic goods. It follows that literacy campaigns are more than a matter of printing primers and shouting motivational slogans; and that structural adjustments -- drastic or less drastic, revolutionary or reformist, by decree or by popular vote -- must be made to give the newly literate a place in the sun.⁹ Partial affiliations (bread without social status, or participation without power) will most likely fail; and when they do succeed in the short-run, will have succeeded in the expectation of full affiliations later.(2)

In the following, we will compare the mass literacy campaigns of Tanzania and Kenya with each other and seek to show how the political cultures of the two countries may have led to two mass literacy campaigns with somewhat different styles and approaches to planning and implementation; and may, consequently, have determined the type and scale of success of each campaign.

The Tanzanian Mass Literacy Campaign
in its Historical Context

The British had made Kenya and Uganda into the East African Protectorate as early as 1895. Tanzania (then known as Tanganyika) became part of British East Africa when it was mandated to the British by the League of Nations at the end of the First World War in 1919. While both Tanzania and Kenya experienced British colonialism, each experienced it in significantly different ways; and each underwent different political, social and economic developments. As Tanzania became independent on December 9, 1961 and Kenya on December 12, 1963, each was ready to go its own way.

Tanzania, at the time of its independence, was the poorest of the three partners in the East African Community. The uncertainty of its future as a mandated territory during 1919-1945 and as a trust territory during 1946-61, had discouraged both settlers and investors. The British chose to govern by Indirect Rule and undertook no elaborate political planning. They built a minimum of infrastructures of transport and communication, and education. In 1964, as the British left, there were merely 486,470 children in all attending primary schools; 11,832 attended public secondary schools; there were 909 teachers under training; and 60 Tanzanian students were getting ready to enter the University of East Africa at Makerere. (3) Most of the 9 million Tanzanians lived on farms, engaged in subsistence farming, eking out a bare existence.

As Julius K. Nyerere took over the reigns of power from the British, he did have some advantages. He inherited an ethnic mix and a social class formation that would spare him

tribal rivalries, the language problem and pressures from narrow economic interests protecting their privileges. Tanzania had 126 tribes, but the ethnic mix was such that no single tribe by itself was large enough to be predominant. The President himself (a Zanaki from the Musoma district of Lake Province) came from a very small tribe thus avoiding any suggestion of the tyranny of numbers. The ethnic situation also enabled the President to cut the Gordian knot of language policy and declare Kiswahili as the national language -- this would later be the language of literacy in the Tanzanian mass literacy campaign. Most importantly, both the traditional elite (the Chiefs) and the new middle class were too weak to thwart the President as he sought to implement the policies of socialism and self-reliance through Ujamaa in independent Tanzania.

Ujamaa, Tanzanian version of communitarian socialism, was based on the principles of equality and respect for human dignity; work by everyone and exploitation by none; and equitable sharing of the resources produced by individual and collective effort. This political philosophy found further resolve and operationalization in the Arusha Declaration of 1967. (4)

Education was the cornerstone of socialism and self-reliance preached in the Arusha Declaration. And, in a very real sense, the mass literacy campaign of 1971 was an inevitability. As early as 1964, while introducing the First Five-Year Plan (1964-69) to the nation, President Nyerere had said:

First, we must educate adults. Our children will not have an impact on our economic development for five, ten, or even twenty years. The attitude of the adults ... on the other hand, have an impact now.

The emphasis on adult education was more than rhetorical. By 1968-69, an administrative network for the delivery of adult education (and political education) had materialized from the center down to the ward. At each level, from the center through the region, down to the district, division, and ward interfaces were established with the party, now called Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). This was done to make adult education a people's movement.

It was not until 1971, however, that literacy per se (as distinguished from general adult education) came center-stage. The President in his 1970 New Year's Eve address called literacy "the key to further progress" and added that illiterates "will never be able to play their full part in the development of our country." The Party followed with a resolution that all of the 5,200,000 illiterates 10 years old and above should be made literate by the end of 1975.

The organizational structure already in place for adult education was now to be put at the service of the literacy campaign. In building a technical structure, the useful experiences of the Unesco/UNDP Work-Oriented Adult Literacy Pilot Project in the Lake Regions (1968-72) and Unesco/UNDP Curriculum, Programmes and Materials Development Project (1972-76) were put to excellent use. The methods of field organization; of recruitment of voluntary teachers and adult learners; of training of teachers and orientation of leaders; of writers workshops to develop primers and follow-up materials including rural newspapers; and of supervision and evaluation developed within the Unesco/UNDP projects were now adapted to the new phase of expansion under the national campaign.

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The mass literacy campaign began in earnest in 1971 and by the end of 1975, some 5,184,982 adults had actually been enrolled in literacy classes. They all sought to learn to read and write in Kiswahili, using 12 different sets of primers, covering such functional areas as cotton growing, banana growing, home economics, fishing, tobacco growing, maize growing, rice farming, cashew nut growing, coconut farming, wheat farming and political education. The nation-wide literacy test administered in August 1975 indicated that the illiteracy percentage of 67% in 1967 had been brought down to 30% in 1975.

Literacy work was continued with the hope of achieving more than 90% literacy by 1981. The second nation-wide literacy test conducted in 1977 showed that illiteracy rate had come down to 27%. A third nation-wide test has just been completed in August of 1981 and the results will be available in November of this year. Mr. Z.J. Mpogolo, director of adult education in the ministry of education in Dar-es-Salaam told this author recently (5) that in terms of participation the 1981 tests had been a greater success than the December 1980 elections. The President had encouraged the people to participate and the Party had done an excellent job of mobilization. The hope is that the goal of 10% illiteracy in Tanzania in 1981 will indeed be fulfilled by the results.

A strong national commitment to literacy as a tool for socialism and self-reliance; the strong mobilizational role of the Party; the use of volunteers, typically VII grade school leavers as teachers; concerted use of print and broadcast media; and the allocation of needed resources have been the important

features of the Tanzanian literacy campaign. But what have been its effects?

Literacy is leaven, not dough. The economic effects of the Tanzanian literacy campaign have not been dramatic because the constraints on the Tanzanian economy have been severe and beyond the control of the State. Tanzania has remained one of the three poorest countries in the world, with per capita GDP in 1978 of US\$ 126. But as conditions sufficient for agricultural and industrial growth become available, literate farmers and literate workers will be able to make significant contributions to national productivity. (6)

In the social and political aspects of Tanzanian life, literacy has already had tremendous consequences. The peasants have acquired a self-confidence they never had before. They have broken out of the culture of silence and are making their demands on the government. (7) Newspapers are in short supply; intake of nutritious foods has increased; and there is a healthy demand for washing soap, an indicator of improved health habits. (5) Most significantly, the political culture of Tanzania has changed. Most Tanzanians today are inside politics, in Lenin's words. They vote and they get elected to political assemblies. They have learned their rights -- some say, too well, for they have not always learned their responsibilities. (8)

These effects of literacy are based on anecdotal data. During 1982-83, Tanzania with the help of SIDA, will conduct an evaluation of the economic, social and political functionality of the mass literacy campaign. The results will be worth watching.

The Kenyan Mass Literacy Campaign
and its Historical Context

As Kenya became independent on December 12, 1963, it had a lot more going for it than Tanzania nextdoor. The British had meant to stay in Kenya. They had built a reasonable infrastructure of rails, roads and communication to serve both politics and business. The educational system in place was much more extensive than in neighboring Tanzania. While Kenya yet was a predominantly agricultural country, significantly for our comparison, it had got a massive dose of British capitalism. Already a middle class had emerged with a stake in the capitalist economy.

Kenya too, like Tanzania, had a rich ethnic mixture in its population but the history and the chemistry of numbers had led to rivalries between and among the major tribes. The Kikuyu who had been displaced from the Highlands by the British settlers and who had later fought the British as Mau Mau / underground had learned both trading and political skills from their oppressors. They felt that other Kenyans owed them not only gratitude but leadership to govern in post-independence Kenya. (9)

The ethnic situation, naturally, confounded the language policy. English and Kiswahili were both retained as national languages, with Kiswahili as a poor relative. Kiswahili has been taught, over the year, as a subject upto grade VII in the primary schools; at the secondary school stage, Kiswahili is optional while English remains the language of instruction. Debates in the parliament are now permitted in Kiswahili, but

almost all government business is conducted in English. The use of Kiswahili is neither mandated by the government nor enforced by law.

At the time of independence, the language of politics in Kenya was also of socialism -- Democratic African Socialism. It still remains the avowed political ideology of Kenya. (10) Kenya wants to create a society "in which every man accepts his duty to his neighbours and the community and the community in turn is the source of his security." (11) There is emphasis on family and on Harambee, self reliance at the community level.

Kenyan Democratic African Socialism has, however, created a political culture quite different from that in Tanzania. Individual entrepreneurship is both admired and promoted. The emphasis on the family is quite different from Tanzania's familyhood (Ujamaa). Private property is protected though the Government seeks to encourage group and cooperative ownership. Kenya is a mixed economy where foreign investment is welcome. The ideology of Democratic African Socialism, thus, has less of both passion and socialist substance than Tanzania's socialism.

Not unlike Tanzania, Kenya puts great emphasis on education for development. The crucial role of adult education and community enlightenment has been well understood throughout its 20 years' history of independence. The National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies in its report issued in December 1976 made these recommendations: To aim at achieving universal literacy in the country; To treat literacy as a serious national objective based on strong political directive along

with massive mobilization of people and funds through the Board of Adult Education; and To teach literacy in the vernacular in view of the difficulties experienced in attempts to teach literacy along with a new language like Kiswahili. (12)

The fulfilment of the Basic Needs of the Kenyan people had come to be the central theme of Kenya's Five Year Plan (1979-84) and adult literacy was seen as one of these basic needs. A mass literacy campaign was declared by President Daniel arap Moi on December 12, 1978. After a year of preparation, his government would fully eradicate illiteracy from Kenya by 1983. The language of justification used in promoting the campaign was developmental. "The individual Kenya cannot become effective enough in promoting development, or participating fully in our social and political system, if he is illiterate," the President declared.

The task was not going to be easy. Population counts in 1979 had put the total population at 15.3 million. Between four to five million adults, more than half of the total adult population was estimated to be illiterate. Illiteracy in rural Kenya was as high as 60% and for every one illiterate male, there were two illiterate women. Lack of universal primary education made matters worse: 45% of the children of school age did not attend school and 60% of these non-attenders were females.

The government made an impressive administrative response for the implementation of the campaign. The old adult education division within the ministry of housing and social services was reorganized as a full-fledged department of adult education in the ministry of culture and social services, headed by one of the most respected professional adult educators in the

country. The department was given the funds it needed and the personnel to do the job. Administrative leadership was placed and strengthened at all levels from the center through the provincial, district, divisional, locational and sublocational levels. This meant the addition of some 80 district level adult education officers, some 120 assistant adult education officers to work in the divisions and 3,000 full-time literacy teachers.

To make the mass literacy campaign a popular campaign, a system of advice and participation was established, going, again, from the center down to the locations and sublocations. It may take some time before this advisory system becomes robust. Significant while the Party (KANU) has, of course, given its blessings to the literacy campaign, it is not able to play the sort of mobilizational role that CCM has been able to play in the mass literacy campaign of Tanzania. KANU is not entrenched into the Kenyan polity as CCM is in Tanzania.

The appointment of 3,000 full-time literacy teachers was, well-intentioned. One of the objectives was to create jobs for VII grade school leavers. The other objective was to introduce a new role of a full-time literacy and adult education teacher within the development setting of Kenya. The hope was that the full-time literacy teacher will undertake motivational work within communities; teach two or more literacy classes a day in different locations; and serve as an agent of integration for all extension work at the village level. The role has not been fully actualized yet, and, in the meantime, has created a dialectical opposite -- the drying up of voluntary initiatives in literacy

undertaken on self-help basis. A big pay (Kenya shillings 885 a month) for the full-time teacher who may often teach no more than one literacy class a day, seems unfair to the part-time teacher (making 150 shillings a month) and the self-help teacher (who makes nothing at all). Yet the turnover among full-time teachers is quite high: 20% of those trained and appointed leave their jobs.

The technical-pedagogical system set up for the mass literacy campaign meets high professional standards. The experience of the Institute for Adult Studies at Kikuyu has been put to excellent use for the training of supervisors and of teachers through correspondence courses. The German Foundation for International Development has been called upon to sponsor short-term workshops on evaluation and curriculum development for the staff at the headquarters and at the provincial levels. Some 14 primers have been written in the regional languages, using functional approaches already tested in the Kenyan setting. A curriculum for post-literacy, with Kiswahili as the language of instruction, is now being planned by the department.

Enrollment figures (13) as of December 1979, the latest available so far, are as follows:

Full-time teachers	2,925	Their learners	149,383
Part-time teachers	1,059	Their learners	48,127
Self-help teachers	5,533	Their learners	216,124
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Total teachers	9,517	Total learners	413,634

The size of the effort can be surmised from the figures above.

It is too early to talk of the effects of the Kenyan mass literacy campaign on the economy, society or polity of Kenya. In the meantime, some comments on its performance may be appropriate. It is being said that the Kenyan campaign was born in an unlucky year. The year of the campaign was followed by two severe droughts, low coffee prices, high oil bill and diversion of resources to the defense needs on the Somali border. This has made a difficult situation even worse. While the difficult geographical terrain and lack of infrastructures do not help, the lack of a "social demand" for literacy, within an illiterate environment, makes action frustrating. Some classes are overflowing with as many as 100 adults enrolled; those in the remote regions are difficult to maintain. Overall, there are more women than men in literacy classes -- for every 100 men, there are 340 women -- and this may be an indicator of the perceived uselessness of literacy by adult men in Kenya. (14) The government support for the mass campaign continues. Like all other departments of the government, the campaign is also promised a budget increase of 6.9% over last year. But this increment may be deceptive, with the recent devaluation of the Kenyan shilling by 23% and an inflation rate of 20% annually. It seems quite clear that the target date of full adult literacy by 1983 will not be met.

Speculation on the Necessary Conditions
for the Success of Literacy Campaigns

We have tried to show, in the preceding, that while "socialism" is the avowed ideology of both Tanzania and Kenya, the two countries have come to create two distinctly different political cultures. These different political cultures, by determining the choice of

objectives for the literacy campaigns and the modes of mobilization and participation, have generated two somewhat different mass literacy campaigns. This is not to imply that Tanzania is a genuine socialist state and Kenya is not; nor that the Tanzanian campaign is already a great success and the Kenyan campaign is foredoomed. However, a comparison between the two literacy campaigns provides us with an occasion, if not the cause, for speculation in regard to the political conditions that must prevail for the conduct of successful mass literacy campaigns in the Third World.

On October 28, 1980, the Venezuelan President Dr. Luis Herrera Campins, while officiating at the ceremony launching ACUDE's literacy campaign, said:

In the last few years only the countries under leftist totalitarian rule have had successful massive literacy programs... Venezuela could set an example for the world by being the first democratic and free country that eliminates illiteracy (in a national campaign).

An analysis of the Venezuelan hope is important, because that is also the Kenyan hope and the hope of many other free democratic states.

In a report submitted to Unesco earlier this year, eight successful mass literacy campaigns of the 20th century were analysed, among them, those of the USSR, Viet Nam, China, Cuba, Burma, Brazil, Tanzania and Somalia. (1) It so happens that almost all of the successful literacy campaigns (with the significant exception of Brazil) were conducted by states that claim to practice some form of socialism. The temptation has been strong for some to draw the unwarranted conclusion that only the

socialist states are capable of launching successful mass literacy campaigns. Socialist states, they suggest, want to, and are able to, act in behalf of the people and to eradicate illiteracy to create new political and technological cultures.

— They go further to suggest that the so-called free and democratic countries have no successes to show because they never wished to succeed in the eradication of illiteracy from their midst. The governing classes in these societies have a vested interest in widespread illiteracy to keep the masses out of politics and on the fringes of the economy. Mass literacy campaigns may be declared by such states to pacify, to depoliticize and to domesticate certain sections of the populations, but never with the intent to succeed; for success of the peoples will be the failure of the governing elite.

To develop a proper understanding of the past successes and failures of literacy programs and campaigns, and of the possibilities of literacy and post-literacy campaigns in the future, the discussion will have to be conducted at a level above the polemical. To begin with, it must be understood that all planned social action --including mass literacy campaigns-- involves a calculus of means and ends. Preferred ends must be established and appropriate means must be marshalled for the actualization of a particular social initiative. More significantly, the leadership must be able to exert control on the calculus of means and ends. This control will have to be multi-dimensional involving political, institutional, communicational, professional and infrastructural control. The greater the control of the

means and ends calculus, the greater the likelihood of successful planned social action.

The socialist states have had greater success with literacy campaigns because they have had better control of the means and ends calculus. They have used more articulated, doctrinaire ideologies and they have been less squeamish about people's rights in the name of people's ultimate rights. The means they have used have often been drastic. They have been able to use what we have elsewhere called structural-developmental models of change with literacy. (15) They have been able to change the rules of the game to transform existing economic, social and political structures and to challenge the illiterate to become literate to take control of the changed institutions and thereby to invent new political and technological cultures. This has been possible because of a particular conception of the use of state power in the management of social change.

The free democratic states do have an ideological commitment to literacy. Informed opinion, after all, is the essence of a democratic society. But democratic ideology is difficult to articulate because it does not have an identifiable doctrinal source. Again, in democratic societies, the capacity to control is itself subject to control and "socialist" means of changing economic, social and political structures are neither philosophically nor pragmatically acceptable. Understandably, the favorite model of literacy for development has been motivational-developmental. The model focuses on individual motivations as the basis of successful literacy campaigns. The hope is that adults will be motivated to become literate for reasons of personal growth and

to increase their capacity to participate in the economic, social and political institutions within their communities. In this process of participation, they, as new literates, will make new demands on these institutions and thereby make those institutions more responsive to their needs.

The conclusion can be drawn that literacy need not be the special preserve of the socialism. There is nothing incongruent between literacy and the democratic state. It is clear, however, that democracies will have to better articulate their ideological positions on literacy and they will have to extend the conception of democracy to include the trinity of political democracy, social democracy and economic democracy. This would mean change and reform of existing structures by democratic means. Nothing less than this would work.

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