

Defeat through Victory? The case studies of Africa Nationalist Movements:

Kenya 1940s to 1969 and Zimbabwe to 1988

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This study into nationalist mass movements is intended to examine the conditions under which the attainment of political sovereignty and majority rule rapidly led to widespread disillusionment and the demobilisation of the social classes that formed the backbone of the struggle for independence. It argues that it is in the nature of socially differentiated political alliances within nationalist movements, that this phenomenon can be understood. The study outline takes as its focus the two case studies of Kenya and Zimbabwe between the years 1940s to 1969 and 1960s to 1988 respectively. The case for the two case studies is made in the context of the contemporary struggles around democracy and the one party state in Africa. These struggles have brought considerable attention to bear on the very nature of political representation within the national fabric. In Kenya, the turbulent months of 1990 culminated in the Saba Saba demonstrations. In Zimbabwe, 1990 saw intense debate over the mooted legislation of the one party state, the closure of the University in October as a prelude to the elections and difficulties for the newly formed opposition party Zimbabwe Unity Movement. 1 As the study will demonstrate, the conflation of historical experiences within Kenya and Zimbabwe by the SRC illuminates the inherent paradox of nationalist movements so far, that is, the tendency to abandon goals and lose direction after the seizure of state power. The statement on the hand, obscures the differences between the two experiences. The trajectory of the Kenya nationalist movement by 1963 was encapsulated within the period of decolonisation during the sixties. For the Zimbabweans however the trajectory of the movement took as its declared intention not only the attainment of universal suffrage and independence, but also a commitment to socialism. This and the form that the struggle had taken most notably from the 1970s onwards, led analysts to categorise the movement as a national liberation movement. Yet notwithstanding this difference, the central question traced through this project is the same. At the point of independence, why did the victorious national organisations fail to carry through anti colonial policies in line with their programmes? Why was there widespread

disillusionment marginalisation of the social forces that brought KANU and ZANU to power in 1963 and 1980 respectively ? How did these processes lead up to the formation of the defector one part state in both countries by 1969 in Kenya and 1988 in Zimbabwe? historical experiences within Kenya and Zimbabwe by the S.R.C. illuminates the inherent paradox of nationalist movements so far, that is, the tendency to abandon goals and Jose direction after the seizure of state power. The statement on the hand, obscures the differences between the two experiences. The trajectory of the Kenyan nationalist movement by 1963 was encapsulated within the period of decolonisation during the sixties. For the Zimbabweans however the trajectory of the movement took as .it's declared intention not only the attainment of universal suffrage and independence, but also a commitment to socialism. This and the form that the struggle had taken most notably from the 1970s onwards, led analysts to categorise the movement as a national liberation movement. The lines of confrontation over the nature of political representation in Kenya was best captured in the Nairobi Law Monthly August issue, 1990. The edition was entitled "The great Debate". For Zimbabwe see Sylvester C. "Unities and Disunities in Journal of Modern African Studies. 2. In the document the S.R.C. argue that 1980 marked the transition from colonialism to neocolonialism and growth of the petite bourgeoisie from a ruled class to a ruling class. The line of arguments at the level of explanation follows the positions of Mandaza in Mandaza I. (ed) "Zimbabwe: The political Economy of the Transition 1980-1986. CODESRIA. 1986. Dakar. However, unlike Mandaz's reliance in the belief that " the masses will rise up" and the personage of Robert Mugabe (on this criticism of the book see Orwood N. 'S Review Article in Journal of Social Development in Africa 1988, 3, 2. Pp67-80.) the students called at two levels; "A) Whither Zimbabwe? B) what should be done?"