University Crisis, Student Activism, and the Contemporary Struggle for Democracy in Kenya

Jacqueline M. Klopp; Janai R. Orina

African Studies Review, Vol. 45, No. 1. (Apr., 2002), pp. 43-76.

Stable URL:
http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0002-0206%28200204%2945%3A1%3C43%3AUCSAAT%3E2.0.CO%3B2-R

African Studies Review is currently published by African Studies Association.

University Crisis, Student Activism, and the Contemporary Struggle for Democracy in Kenya

Jacqueline M. Klopp and Janai R. Orina

Abstract: In many parts of Africa, university systems are in crisis; squalid conditions, student strife, and increasing state violence have turned many campuses into battlegrounds. Through an in-depth look at the Kenyan case, this paper examines some of the deep political dynamics of the current desperate situation. We demonstrate how in Kenya, state–university links involve attempts by higher-level government officials to control campuses through patronage, surveillance, and violence and how institutional configurations facilitate this. As the burden of repression falls on student activists who challenge current power configurations, we examine the current crisis through a student lens. By presenting and analyzing the historical narrative of student activism on campus, we show the inadequacy of overly structural, economic approaches to the crisis favored by the World Bank and some of its critics. Instead, we show the critical importance of understanding how the university crisis is organically linked to wider political processes, including local struggle over democratization of the state and economy.

Résumé: Dans plusieurs régions de l'Afrique, le système universitaire est en crise: conditions sordides, conflits étudiants, et violences croissantes de la part de l'état ont transformé bien des campus en champs de bataille. A travers une étude approfondie du cas du Kenya, cet article examine certaines des dynamiques politiques de fond dans la situation désespérée actuelle. Nous démontrons comment à l'Univer-

African Studies Review, Volume 45, Number 1 (April 2002), pp. 43–76

Jacqueline Klopp completed her Ph.D. in political science at McGill University in 2001. Portions of her thesis, "Electoral Despotism in Kenya: Land, Patronage and Resistance in the Multi-Party Context," appear in *Africa Today* and in a forthcoming article in the *Canadian Journal of African Studies*. She is a member of the Kenyan human rights organization People Against Torture and currently is an adjunct assistant professor of international relations at the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University.

Janai R. Orina is a former Moi University student activist in exile. In 1991 he was a student organizer and an active member of the banned Kenya University Student Organization (KUSO). After receiving two suspensions for coordinating

sité d'État du Kenya, il existe des liens impliquant des tentatives de contrôle du campus par des personnalités gouvernementales et officielles haut placées, à travers un système de népotisme, de surveillance et de violence, et comment la configuration des institutions facilite ces pratiques. Alors que le poids de la répression retombe sur les étudiants activistes qui remettent en question les configurations actuelles du pouvoir, nous examinons la crise actuelle à travers la vision de ces étudiants. En présentant et en analysant leur histoire de l'activisme étudiant sur le campus, nous démontrons comment les approches trop structurales et économiques favorisées par la Banque Mondiale et certains de ses critiques se révèlent inadéquates pour comprendre cette crise. Nous montrons plutôt l'importance cruciale de comprendre comment la crise des universités est liée de manière organique à de plus larges processus politiques, y compris aux luttes locales pour la démocratisation de l'état et de l'économie.

Introduction

Media images of riot police brutally beating university students are disturbingly common. Recently, Kenyan university students have faced unprecedented numbers of expulsions, university closures, and police crackdowns on campus. Over the last four years alone, six students have died in campus struggles, many more have been injured, and hundreds have been permanently blocked from furthering their education. In January 2001, massive expulsions and suspensions of more than three hundred students from three public universities prompted a worried newspaper editorial to comment on "a chilling trend emerging at the public universities" in which increasingly punitive actions by university administrations against "errant students" seem designed to "destroy them and render them useless" rather than instruct and "rehabilitate" them (*Daily Nation*, Jan. 10, 2001). This "trend" has appeared in other parts of the continent as well. In

student support for the University Academic Staff Union in 1994, he was expelled in 1996. He joined the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC) in 1996, and in 1997, as convener of the National Youth Movement (a youth reform lobby), he traveled for Amnesty International to the U.K., the Republic of Ireland, and the U.S. to speak on behalf of Kenyan university students and their organizations. He has written for the *Daily Nation*, Amnesty International, and the KHRC. In 2000, nearly a decade after he began his studies at Moi University, he received a B.A. in political science from American University, Washington, D.C. He currently works at a Washington-based international law firm, Jones Day, Reavis & Pogue.

February 2001, one student was killed and many more wounded when police violently attacked a demonstration at Cheik Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal. In April 2001, two violent police attacks on protesting students and sympathizers at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, left more than thirty people dead and hundreds wounded.

Current strains on many of Africa's institutions of higher learning are often attributed to the problems of scarcity. The combined pressures of increasing population growth and economic stagnation mean an expansion of student enrollment and declining public funds for tertiary education. Economic approaches to Africa's university sector, however, fail to grasp the deep dynamics of the crisis. While it is clear that many African universities face problems of empty libraries, huge classes, inadequate housing, and lack of educational facilities, we argue that this material crisis is a symptom of the profoundly problematic way that many universities are subjugated to a repressive state and economy. Quite simply, the embeddedness of Africa's system of higher education in a wider political process and struggle must be factored into any satisfactory explanation for the crisis.

Unsurprisingly, then, we take issue with World Bank policy prescriptions in the education sector, which are based on narrow economic models (e.g., World Bank 1986; 1988; 1994; 2000). Indeed, despite increasing recognition of the need for institutional reform and "good governance," World Bank policymakers fail to apply these concerns to the education sector, and their prescriptions in the form of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) tend only to deepen the crisis. Many of the adverse impacts of SAPs are well documented (Demery & Addison 1987; Federici, Caffentzis, & Alidou 2000; Reimers 1994; Riley & Parfitt 1994; World Bank 1990; Welch 2000). However, we argue against those critics of the World Bank who view the relatively recent structural adjustment programs as the root cause of the current crisis. Such a conceptualization of African states as hostages to international financial institutions strips state actors of agency, and hence of responsibility, both for their policies and for their often brutal actions against students and academics. It is also a position that can lead to the erroneous conclusion that the African state, as Federici says "is no longer a major player in the academic as well as in the economic scene" (2000:62)—and this from a scholar who otherwise has made important observations on the deleterious impact of SAPs. Further, the focus on SAPs turns theoretical attention away from the nature of the internal political linkages between universities and an authoritarian state and economy, which create an environment "singularly hostile to academic freedom" (Ake 1994:19). In brief, we do not deny the adverse impacts of SAPs. In fact, we show how in the Kenyan case structural adjustment facilitated President Moi's attack on university critics, particularly student activists. However, we emphasize the historical roots of the crisis in higher education and show how the integration of Kenya's university system into the wider system of repressive rule means that the struggle for university autonomy and academic freedom in

Kenya, as in many other parts of the continent, is fundamentally linked to wider struggles to democratize the state and economy.

Our first aim in this article, then, is to demonstrate, through an in-depth examination of the Kenyan case, some of the political dynamics of the university crisis. We illustrate how state–university links have involved attempts at higher-level government control of campuses through patronage, surveillance, and violence. Because the burden of this repression has fallen on students, and more particularly on student activists who challenge current power configurations, our second aim is to examine the current crisis on Kenya's campuses through a student lens. The role of a dedicated group of academics in fighting for academic freedom and wider democratization over the last decade has been well documented (Adar 1999; Munene 1997; Mutunga & Kiai 1995). In contrast, the role of student activists in these struggles and the specific forms of control they experienced have been less recognized and systematically examined in our histories of resistance politics (Rashid 1997:1). Unlike dissident academics, students who are expelled or suspended indefinitely from university tend to face unstable economic circumstances and, by and large, are unable to reflect, write, and speak out about their experiences. In this way, they are silenced and rendered invisible in narratives and theories of the crises on campus.

We emphasize this role of student activists not only because their agency has largely been marginalized in current accounts of university crisis, but also because this activism helps explain the increasing intensity and frequency of violent repression in Kenya's universities during the multiparty period, particularly as students have exploited what they perceive as new political space to demand more accountability and participation on campus. This paper explores how limited political liberalization beginning in 1991 simultaneously reinvigorated a tradition of student activism and led to an intensification of government strategies for fragmenting and undermining this movement. This increased repression, coupled with extreme economic distress exacerbated by SAPs, has contributed substantially to a deepening sense of crisis on campus over the last decade. We also show how some former student activists, drawing on their university experience, have found new ways to continue their struggles outside the university, becoming important actors within civil society, particularly in the constitutional reform movement. In many ways this was a logical step; student experience over the decade reveals vividly that democratization of the Kenyan state—and of the state in its relation to the economy—is critical for ensuring university autonomy, addressing the problems of higher education, and opening new avenues on campus to debate. Despite the difficulties and state crackdowns on campus, we also show that the university persists as a site of resistance and advocacy for democratic change.

In order to illustrate both the nature of the student struggles on Kenya's campuses and the interconnections between Kenya's authoritarian

state, university administration, and student grievances, we begin with a historical background of Kenya's universities, the rise of student activism around the problematic linkages between state and university, and the violent state reaction to this activism. Next we show how, in the 1990s, changes in political context, particularly the rise of multipartyism and the introduction of more stringent structural adjustment programs in education, both deepened the economic deterioration and desperation of students and turned up the frequency and intensity of violent state–student conflict and politicization of campuses. Finally, we show that, despite the increased repression, a number of student activists, often with widespread support from within the student body as a whole, persisted in confronting the government, a struggle they continue up to the present time. We highlight their critical support role in the 1994 academic strike to resurrect the University Academic Staff Union (UASU) and their continued attempt in 1995 to form an autonomous Kenya University Students Organization. By examining the dynamics of this contemporary history, we underscore and draw out the political nature of the university crisis in Kenya. In the process, we show the flaws in both the economic analyses of the World Bank and in the position that SAPs are fundamentally the cause of the crisis.

Colonial Power Configurations, the History of Student Activism, and Its Repression

Kenya's universities, like most of Africa's institutions of higher education, are recent creations. For most of the colonial period, British officials in Africa fought vigorously against higher education for Africans, both to prevent competition for administrative jobs and to discourage a potential cadre of new political leaders (Nwauwa 1996). Given the African struggle for schooling more generally during this time, the expansion of the educational system after independence had profound symbolic significance. New schools and universities served as "visible national monuments to independence" (Mwiria 1996:11), and building universities became a source of legitimacy for the newly independent governments (Hughes 1994). Access to education, including higher education, expanded rapidly over the next three decades, and literacy rates increased dramatically.[1] In Kenya, which has ploughed substantial resources into education, this achievement stands as one of the most remarkable successes of postindependence governments, and, insofar as a great deal of education was funded through community contributions, of the country's people.

One of the great disappointments of independence in Kenya, however, was the persistence of colonial practices and mentalities, particularly within government. The new African government of Jomo Kenyatta, like the colonial government before it, harbored deep suspicions of any autonomous activity outside of the purview of the state. The university,

while a postcolonial institution in Kenya, became over time deeply embedded in the colonial logics of power that continued to pervade state–society relations. As a consequence, university administration in Kenya and its links to the state took on the institutional outlines of colonial rule. As in Nigeria after the 1966 coup, the Kenyan president, with the concentrated power of a colonial governor, became the chancellor of all public universities.[2]

University institutions came to work on the colonial prefecture principle: The governor (now president) delegated immense and arbitrary power to local appointees and these powers were, in turn, backed up by violence and patronage. In the university, the apex of this institutional structure is the vice-chancellor, who is directly appointed by the president and is directly beholden to him. Kenya's vice-chancellors have concentrated and fused all legislative, executive, and administrative powers within their domain, much in the form of a colonial chief (Tignor 1971; Mamdani 1996). They use these powers to appoint a coterie of higher-level administrators and department heads who work actively to reproduce this stranglehold on campus. More than 60 percent of university council members are government nominees (Sifuna 1997:38). These patronage appointees have powers to block loans, fail or expel dissident students, and prevent the appointments or promotions of intransigent faculty. Thus the university system is entwined with the familiar web of patronage relations and the related patrimonial culture vividly described by Bayart (1993). Kenya's university system truly is a microcosm of the country's repressive rule, and many of the patronage appointees/scholars serve as state ideologues and strategists. More recently, just as in Rwanda, some have played an active role in organizing and justifying the large-scale violence that has rocked the country since the advent of multiparty politics.[3]

Continual resistance to this stifling configuration of power emerged and persisted within the university, not only among the academic staff, but also, most vigorously, within the student body. Shortly after Kenya gained its independence in 1963, students were viewed as apolitical and "immune to opposition politics" (Savage & Taylor 1991:311). A 1966 study of Kenya's students at the first public university, the University College of East Africa, Nairobi, found that they appeared to "pursue their studies with little active attention to the political world" (McKnown 1975:215–16).[4] These highly privileged students, a tiny fraction of the population, initially had free education and a stipend. They faced a buoyant postindependence economy with an ample supply of jobs. Government officials, including President Kenyatta, reminded these university students of their privileged status. Students also knew that they depended on the good will of the government in order to gain coveted civil service positions upon graduation. Thus the state attempted to socialize university students into accepting the status quo, with its sociopolitical hierarchies and deep and increasing economic stratifications.

Such socialization was never hegemonic. Many university students felt that, as future leaders, they should take part in debates about events in the country. Already in the 1960s the Kenyatta government appeared to renege on what many took to be the promises of independence. As Kenyatta and his ministers made a series of moves to reinstate central control—including control of education—on the newly independent country (Gertzel 1970; Okoth-Ogendo 1972), the majority of students opposed this trend toward a one-party state dominated by the Kenya African National Union (KANU) (McKnown 1975:244). Indeed, as one participant in student politics in the early 1970s observed, as Kenya moved closer to a more repressive, one-party state, "the opposition relocated into the universities and the university student political institutions became the structures through which these battles were fought" (interview with Rok Ajulu, Grahamstown, Aug. 14, 2001). This trend would also mean increasing state intervention on campus.

Students and the government first collided in 1969. When the government prevented Oginga Odinga, leader of the opposition party, Kenya People's Union, from speaking at the University College of East Africa, Nairobi, students demonstrated, eventually boycotting classes. The government's response, which set the pattern for future crackdowns up to the present period, involved the use of a "classic 'divide and rule' tactic" (McKnown 1975:245). The government closed the university for a few months and made each university student reapply. Successful candidates were required to sign an apology for disobeying the government. Ultimately, five students were expelled, and the world-renowned author and professor Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o resigned in protest, "outraged by the silence of most lecturers and professors" (1981:107). University closures and such selective punishment of student leaders would persist and increase in length and frequency as a means to rein in opposition to the government and its control over the university.

The 1969 university closure marked the beginning of a legacy of repressing student organization and expression that worked in parallel with the suppression of dissident academic staff and wider societal opposition. In 1972, the University of Nairobi student paper, *University Platform,* was shut down and the lead editors, Chelagat Mutai and Ochieng K'Onyango, were expelled along with other students. In 1974, after a protracted struggle that brought lower-middle-class and poor students together for the first time, the government introduced a loan system, whereby students were required to pay the government back for their education once they were employed.

A key turning point was the brutal assassination of the popular Nyandarua North MP J. M. Kariuki in 1975. As a University of Nairobi student at the time explained,

> "When he was murdered, obviously there was a shock, a serious shock in the society as a whole, and in the university.... It was so ugly. He was treat-

> ed like a piece of meat and left to rot and be eaten by animals.... It was the ugliest form of violence. There was a lot of economic and physical violence, but his death was inhumane and it triggered a reaction where people said, 'We didn't have a government. We have a terrorist state.'" (Interview with Shadrack Gutto, Johannesburg, Aug. 17, 2001)

This murder of one of the few critics in the government prompted students and lecturers to join in demonstrations, demanding the resignation of the government and the arrest of the murderers. The "JM crisis" became the issue that galvanized students into vocally accusing the government of betraying the more equitable, populist vision of politics that Kariuki had come to represent. In response, the Kenyatta government sent in the paramilitary GSU (General Service Unit), which attacked the campus, brutally beating and raping female students. Sixty students were arrested and charged with "rioting" (Awiti & Ong'wen 1990:7). In subsequent years, student activists commemorated March 2, the date of the murder, with a procession through the city streets where they faced violent dispersal by the police. When the government failed to subdue the students through violence, they simply ensured that university holidays coincided with this day.[5] In brief, as the Kenyatta government consolidated its power and clamped down on opposition, a core group of students and faculty at the University of Nairobi continued to resist what they saw as the alarming betrayal of *uhuru*: freedom and independence.

Shortly after President Moi came to power in 1978, he attempted to garner populist support in the uncertain circumstances of the transfer of power, and he released a number of political prisoners, including Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o.[6] This brief opening would be short-lived. Moi followed in the footsteps of Kenyatta and eventually took measures to squelch any opposition. When he issued a decree barring two politicians, George Anyona and Oginga Odinga, from contesting the results of the 1979 national elections, this, along with sympathies for the doctors' strike and the desire to see Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o reinstated as an English professor, propelled students into the streets. Like his predecessor, Moi sent in the dreaded GSU and riot police to put down student protests, and the University of Nairobi was closed once again. A year later, following trends in student activism in other parts of the continent, students held a licensed meeting to protest the death of Walter Rodney and to condemn apartheid in South Africa as well as the role of multinational corporations in Kenya. In response, the Nairobi University Students' Organization was banned. The police—the feared Special Branch as well as faculty and student informers—became a regular presence on campus (Kenya Human Rights Commission 1992:3; Mwiria 1996:10). In the same year (1980), the University Staff Union was also banned. By 1981 a presidential decree demanded that all student organizations wishing to hold meetings on campus apply for permits from the Office of the President for scrutiny by the Special Branch. As a student

activist named Odour Ong'wen recalled, "apart from representation on faculty boards, there were no democratic and independent student organizations to articulate student interests" (Africa Watch 1991:390). Despite constant surveillance by the Special Branch and frequent harassment, including periodic arrest and questioning by the police, many student activists continued to agitate for the freedom to organize an independent student body.

In February 1982, the government capitulated and allowed the registration of the Student Organization of Nairobi University (SONU). However, in August of the same year, after a whirlwind of detentions without trial and a subsequent unsuccessful coup attempt, the university was shut down for fourteen months, the longest closure ever, and student activists were put under closer surveillance. To punish university students who celebrated the coup attempt, Tito Adungosi Aloo, chairman of the newly formed SONU, along with sixty-seven other students, were thrown into jail and tortured (Africa Watch 1991a:391; Kenya Human Rights Commission 1992:3). For participating in a demonstration in support of the coup, Adungosi Aloo was convicted of "sedition" and sentenced to ten years in the Kamiti Maximum Security prison. He died in 1988 from deliberate mistreatment, including the denial of adequate medical attention, a common form of torture in Kenya's prisons (Africa Watch 1991b:23).[7] Several other students, including Wahinya Boore, Francis Kinyua, Muga K'Olale, Jeff Mwangi Kwirikia, Peter Oginga Ogego, and David Onyango Oloo, were also convicted and jailed for terms of five to ten years.

By the mid-1980s, massive corruption and chronic public mismanagement had helped push Kenya into economic crisis, escalating popular discontent. The Moi government responded with deepening repression and more constitutional amendments, moving Kenya toward greater authoritarian control through the Office of the President.[8] On the campuses, President Moi and his clients relied heavily on a divide-and-rule strategy to keep students and lecturers under control, including the use of patronage and the denial of educational opportunities or jobs to those who resisted.

This strategy was clearly at work in 1985 when three student activists, Mwandawiro Mghanga, Tirop arap Kitur, and Karimi Nduthu, were arbitrarily expelled and five others lost their scholarships. All these students were known to be opponents of the progovernment SONU chairman, P. L. Lumumba. Questioning the legitimacy of Lumumba, who had been elected unopposed, these maverick students had been holding alternative public meetings (Minutes of the Student Representative Council, Jan. 31, 1985, SONU office, University of Nairobi). In response to the actions taken against the alternative representatives, students at all university campuses staged a peaceful sit-in and prayer meeting. They also decided to take the unusual and unprecedented step of filing a court injunction against the university. In response, on February 10, 1985, under the orders of Vice-Chancellor Joseph Mungai and his superiors in government, police

stormed a protest prayer meeting at the University of Nairobi, beating and shooting at students. A spokesman for the government, Simon Nyachae, issued a circular stating simply that the university decision was final (*Index on Censorship* 1985:5). Five students were arrested, including the past chairman of SONU, Mwandawiro Mghanga.[9] One student, Joseph Wandera, was killed, the first death by police action on campus, and more than sixty-five were injured (*Weekly Review,* Feb. 15, 1985; Kenya Human Rights Commission 1993:3).

In the same year, the government also manipulated student elections to make sure that the new SONU chairman would be favorable to the government. The rigged election was possible because the vice-chancellor appoints the chief returning officer for student elections. In response, most students rejected the leadership of Maina Kiranga, the winning candidate, and formed a parallel, independent interim student committee for free and fair elections. Wafula Buke led this committee and subsequently, on November 4, 1987, was elected SONU chairman with "an unprecedented landslide vote of 3,030" of the 4,000 ballots cast (*Weekly Review,* Nov. 20, 1987).

Immediately, on November 9, 1987, the new student government nominated SONU's vice-chairman, Munoru Nderi, and the secretary for finance, Miguna Miguna, to represent University of Nairobi students at the Fifteenth International Union of Students meeting in Cuba. The nominees were swiftly arrested, questioned, and threatened, and their participation in the international meeting was banned. On November 10, Buke held an emergency meeting where he condemned the ban, and the next day, to curry favor with the students, Moi announced a K.sh 300 increment to student allowances. The student government responded by issuing a circular arguing that increments to stipends should be tied to economic considerations and not be considered presidential charity, and Buke refused to thank the president publicly for his benevolence. As Miguna Miguna explained,

> "It was not all about money. And, in fact, most of our demands had nothing to do with money. It was about the freedoms we felt were being trampled on. It was based on the interference that they were having on the institutions. It was based on the spies they had in the institutions. It was based on the complete disregard of the human rights of the professors and the students." (Interview, Toronto, May 21, 2001)

By this point the government's patience was wearing thin; the last straw was a fiery student meeting on November 13 at which SONU leaders demanded autonomy for the university, security for students on campus, and the right to speak out on national problems, particularly corruption (Awiti & Ong'wen 1990:18; *Weekly Review,* Nov. 20, 1987). At 3:00 A.M. the next morning, the secret police stormed the university and arrested SONU

student leaders.[10] Riot police circled the campus in anticipation of student protest, and at the end of a daylong battle, one student had been shot dead and many others injured. Once again, the university was closed and SONU was banned. The popular SONU chairman, Wafula Buke, was jailed for five years, and President Moi threatened students with the introduction of university fees as punishment for their "riotous attitude" (*Weekly Review,* Nov. 20, 1987).

These events marked the beginning of a change of tactics. A core group of students, despairing of any possibility of nonviolent change, joined the underground socialist MwaKenya movement, which hoped to overthrow the government (interview with Kang'ethe Mungai, Nairobi, August 1998). This led to another government attack, and imprisonment and torture for many student activists. Magnified by a Cold War lens, the ineffectual MwaKenya movement became the excuse the government needed to crack down on hundreds of people whether they belonged to the movement or not (Duodu 1986). Further, to weaken the University of Nairobi, the center of this dissent, resources were shifted to the newer universities—particularly Moi University located in Eldoret, the president's home region—and loyal academics were offered lucrative positions in public corporations (Kenya Human Rights Commission 1992:5; Africa Watch 1991b:24; Chege 1998:B9). By the late 1980s, in addition to the loans for housing they already enjoyed, lecturers were given the right to borrow money through the university to buy cars, which they could import duty free (Adar 1999:8). This made them less inclined to risk their privileges and thus wary of student activism. Most of the more sympathetic academics were expelled, in jail, or silenced by fear. As in the case of Nigeria, many of the lecturers whose promotions were based on party loyalty and who enjoyed state patronage were hostile to students (Sifuna 1997:67).[11]

At this time, another important new government strategy emerged that drew on the deep habitus of colonial practice. President Moi, aided by his ministers Sam Ongeri, Mulu Mutisya, Nicholas Biwott, and the former education minister Oloo Aringo among others, fostered students' associations organized along ethnic or regional lines.[12] By fragmenting the student body, such ethnic organizations were designed to counter a centralized multiethnic student body in the universities. The president went as far as decreeing that these associations be incorporated into local, KANU-dominated district development committees, which served to funnel patronage to KANU supporters at a local level. Ethnic associations blossomed with prominent KANU politicians, academics, and civil servants as patrons, chief among them Joseph Kamotho, Simon Nyachae, Mwai Kibaki, and George Saitoti.

With central student organizations banned and only district associations allowed, this expedient strategy succeeded by the end of the 1980s in its aim of fragmenting student activism. Entering Kenyatta University in December 1990, one student observed, "The student movement had been

weakened to the extent that centralized student leadership was diffused by district, tribal associations, lobbies that depended on patronage. They would go to Kabarak [Moi's home] to get handouts. They were not interested in pursuing student interests" (interview with Njoroge Waithera, Nairobi, Nov. 7, 2000). Kepta Ombati, a student activist at Kenyatta University from 1993 to 1995, also emphasized the impact of this deliberate attempt at fragmentation:

> "There was a clear and systematic program by the state to disorganize and destabilize student organization. So that when I went to Kenyatta University, for all intents and purposes, we didn't have a students' union, and therefore the students were never united behind any united cause. Instead the government, through the administration, had reverted to creating these ethnic groups. So you had Kisii District Students' Association, Kamba, Kikuyu... that introduced division among the students themselves. The divisions that were being perpetrated outside of the colleges on the country by politicians were introduced into the universities and that seriously undermined nationalism that had always been one of the driving forces behind students' activism since the 1960s." (Interview, Nairobi, Nov. 6, 2000)

The government's policy was supported by the university administration, which understood that keeping a strong grip on dissent was part of its responsibility. By the end of the 1980s, much campus opposition to this administrative control had been violently confronted and tamed.[13]

The 1990s: Multipartyism, Structural Adjustment Programs, and Deepening Crisis

With the end of the Cold War and with massive corruption embarrassingly visible, donor support for the Moi's pro-Western regime wavered. In 1990 massive demonstrations calling for the reinstatement of multipartyism rocked Nairobi and surrounding areas. In November 1991, a group of Kenya's major donors cut off nonhumanitarian balance-of-payments support pending reforms. With remarkable haste, President Moi held a KANU National Delegates Conference and declared the repeal of the ban on multiparties. With this shifting political context, new opportunities for dissent arose, and student activism was reinvigorated. Indeed, student activists would be involved in many of the major events of the next decade, helping to organize and populate demonstrations. Many student leaders came out in direct support of FORD (Forum for the Restoration of Democracy), the coalition advocating constitutional change. This activism would also make them the target of intensified repression by the shaken KANU hierarchy, with at least seven students losing their life in this period.[14]

At the same time that Kenya was going through the rocky transition to

multipartyism, the government was moving toward implementing structural adjustment policies in the education sector, though without consultation with faculty or students who would be severely affected. In June 1991, Philip Mbithi, vice-chancellor of the University of Nairobi and chairman of the vice-chancellors' committee, simply announced that student allowances, or "boom," would end and that fees of K.sh 6000 (US$100) would be introduced. Spontaneous student protests broke out across the country, and in the mêlée a student at Moi University, Shadrack Opiyo, was killed by the police. As usual, universities closed down for periods ranging from nine months to a year (Nduko 2000:212).

When students returned, the new policy was a fait accompli. Students were required to pay fees, as well as pay for meals, accommodations, and other expenses. Part of the justification for this cost sharing, according to both the World Bank and the Moi government, was that university students, as members of an "elite," should contribute their share toward structural adjustment. However, many students in fact came from poor and increasingly impoverished families, and university education was one of the few modes of social mobility. Middle- and upper-class students could afford to go to university without public support, but these measures put a serious strain on poor students and caused large numbers of them to drop out.[15] Perversely, these measures, by selectively disadvantaging students from poorer families, made the university more of an elite institution. Further, those students most likely to be excluded were precisely the ones who tended to serve as "natural and credible channels for expressing popular resentment" (Hagan 1994:51).

Benefiting from this economic distress and looking to make themselves useful in the upcoming elections, KANU operatives tried to recruit university students with lures of patronage into a progovernment lobby group called Youth for KANU '92 (YK'92). As Justus Mochoge, a former student chairman at Kenya Polytechnic recalled, "They had formed Youth for KANU, and they expected student leaders, young men and women, to be their members.... Quite a number of us had already been approached to be members, but we rejected them.... I think that was one reason they kept harassing us. They made sure we would never get employment..." (interview, Nairobi, Nov. 2000). YK'92 was partly the creation of three pro-KANU university professors—Henry Mwanzi and Eric Masinde Aseka of Kenyatta University and Chris Wanjala of Egerton University—and was headed by Cyrus Jirongo, an aspiring politician and Moi client. Lavishly funded through illicit channels, its members became a means for the government to intimidate opposition leaders, funnel illicit money to their candidates, and rig elections (Throup & Hornsby 1998:354–57).[16] Recruits to YK'92 also became increasingly involved in violent acts on behalf of those KANU politicians who paid and entertained them.

The presence of YK'92 on campus had a number of effects. Well-connected YK'92 students and faculty members paraded their conspicuous

consumption and flashy wealth at a time when other students were experiencing economic dislocation, deepening demoralization, resentment, and conflict. University administrators supported YK'92 "activities," using university resources to shuttle district student association members to State House dinners and events where they were entertained, received handouts, and made contacts that would land them plush jobs after graduation. At Moi University the administration diverted resources that previously had been used for students' field trips and club outings to these State House "study tours." While YK'92 was eventually disbanded after Moi "won" in the December 1992 elections, it marked the beginning of a trend of politicians' using students directly to serve their wider political goals.

Despite these conditions, a number of student leaders continued to express their sympathies for the opposition and to fight for representative organizations and an expanded political space on campus. They also continued to get elected. Part of the reason for this was that ethnic associations involved exclusion; following the example of their patrons, heads of ethnic associations often "ate" the resources that were provided to them. The ensuing disillusionment ensured that more principled student leaders were a strong presence in student government. During this period, such student leaders pushed for genuine university autonomy and against "the arbitrary and highly inconsiderate policies of introducing changes to the educational system that are not in line with the socio-economic values/aspirations of the citizenry" (Student Leaders Forum 1996:4). Among their demands was the call for President Moi to vacate his position as the chancellor of all the state universities and for political appointments at the public universities to cease. Groups of students also demonstrated against state-instigated "land-grabbing" and "ethnic clashes," offered crucial support to efforts by the university's academic staff to revive their union (UASU), and persisted, under hostile conditions, to form an autonomous national student body, Kenya University Students Organization (KUSO).[17]

Taking a Stand: Supporting the University Academic Staff Union (UASU)

Unsurprisingly, basic material conditions on campus worsened during this time. The university system had expanded rapidly, in part because directives "from above" made the universities double their intakes without being provided with commensurate resources.[18] Structural adjustment in the education sector made this situation worse. Lecturers watched their workloads increase and their pay shrink in real terms. In 1985, a professor received a minimum basic monthly pay of K.sh 11,500 (US$500). By 1994, the salary was K.sh 16,000 (US$229). Taking inflation into account, this meant a steep decline in wages, and clearly a giant loss in terms of ability to purchase foreign currency required for travel and purchasing foreign

books (Munene 1997:101). An internal report on the welfare of academic staff suggested that some junior staff wages were as low as US$40 per month (Senate Sub-Committee on the Welfare of Academic Staff 1993:5).

This fiscal deterioration was coupled with the daily indignities of being an academic under an administration that was a proxy for the state and exercised total authority. A student representative at Kenyatta University from 1993 to 1994 described the way Vice-Chancellor George Eshiwani ran faculty Senate meetings: "He would come with his own decisions. He would open discussions, but at the end of it, he would rubbish everything, put on the table his own decisions and force the deans of faculties, chairmen of departments, senior scholars to rubber stamp very incoherent and questionable decisions" (interview with Kepta Ombati, Nairobi, Nov. 6, 2000). Any travel to present conference papers required clearance through the vice-chancellor using guidelines from the Office of the President (Munene 1997:104–5). Public lectures by anyone, including the academic staff, also required clearance through the vice-chancellor, in contravention of university statutes. For example, on April 28, 1993, Eric Makokha's talk on "The Sociology of Voting Behaviour" was canceled at short notice (Mwiria 1996:10). Few lecturers would openly dissent from the vice-chancellor's position since he had the power to hire and fire at will. Indeed, a stray comment in class could lead to immediate dismissal. As one former University of Nairobi professor recalls, a relatively apolitical colleague who complained in class about the doubling of student enrollment was dismissed the very next day (interview with Dr. Korwa Adar, Grahamstown, Aug. 13, 2001).

Not only did university lecturers have no say in matters of university administration, but they also were expected to echo the KANU line or stay silent on debates of national importance. These conditions drove the majority to join the ongoing agitation for political freedoms. In early 1992 a group of lecturers reformed the University Academic Staff Union (UASU), an umbrella organization that aimed to articulate the interests and concerns of all lecturers in the public universities and to promote academic freedom generally. The UASU criticized the authoritarianism of the campus and called for the removal of President Moi as chancellor of all universities, demanding that chancellors and vice-chancellors be elected internally.

As usual, the KANU government acted to protect its domination in light of these challenges. For a year, the registrar of trade unions, Paul Omondi Mbago, ignored the UASU's application for registration as an official organization. On November 29, 1993, the lecturers decided to take drastic action and went on strike. Mbago finally responded with a denial of the application, claiming the union was "not in the interest of security and stability of this country" (*Daily Nation,* Dec. 29, 1993).

Throughout this struggle, student leaders and their constituents joined the side of the UASU, linking their own striving for representation and free-

dom of assembly and thought to that of their teachers. Though most accounts of the UASU strike tend to minimize the student role, lecturers recognized its importance. [19] On the first anniversary of the beginning of the strike the UASU at the University of Nairobi made the following statement:

> On November 29th, 1993, a historic event took place. Lecturers from all the four public universities took a unified stand to state that the time had come for a body to be registered to cater for academic interests in all the universities. It had become apparent that university administrations had been perverted to cater for political interests only. The body, UASU, is to effectively cater for staff as well as students' welfare but above all to ensure that further deterioration in academic standards is stemmed. To demonstrate this in the most dramatic manner, the lecturers in all the public universities went on strike. The students, realizing that this was the way out for them and for generations of students to come, supported the move to the hilt. Hats off for their bravery and foresight.

It is worth narrating the student experience of the 1993 UASU strike at Moi University in some detail, because it illustrates graphically the degree to which the campuses had become battlegrounds, with remarkable levels of force used against students engaged in peaceful demonstrations and attempts at dialogue. It also illustrates the lengths to which the government was willing to go in order to keep its grip on the universities.

During the faculty strike, the students were willing to sit for their exams only when the lecturers agreed to return to campus to administer them. The striking lecturers then decided to use these exams as a bargaining tool with the administration, threatening to withhold the exam results until their concerns were addressed. When students returned to Moi University in June 1994, university administrators told them to proceed to their next year of study without the exam results.[20] Knowing that striking lecturers had been fired and were barred from entering campus by a court order, students vowed to boycott all activities until a negotiated settlement was reached.

Janai Orina, who was given the task of acting as liaison with the Moi University chapter of the UASU, recalls that students were willing to continue supporting the strike by maintaining the boycott. However, they wanted assurances from the lecturers that the exams had not been destroyed as the government and university administration claimed. On June 15, 1994, the UASU National Treasurer, Odhiambo Nyaduwa, risking arrest, addressed the students at a meeting and reassured them that their results were safe. In reaction, Vice-Chancellor Shellemiah Keya appeared with a group representing almost all of the violent capacities of the state: the intelligence chief for the region, the GSU commander, the police chief, and the criminal investigation department chief from Eldoret. With GSU troops and riot police standing ready, the vice-chancellor shouted through a

microphone, "The university is closed." Initially he gave the students ten minutes to pack up and leave, but because it was already nighttime he allowed the students to sleep out on the meeting ground and then leave in the morning. That night, student leaders were arrested and badly beaten by the GSU.

Once at home, students were supposed to report to the chief or local police station once or twice a week—a particularly colonial method of local control. Through the chief and his network of administrative police, jails, and bands of young KANU thugs, the government was able to keep students under surveillance and prevent them from continuing to organize at a national level. Requiring students to report regularly to the chief also interfered with their work opportunities. Authorities made sure that all household heads received copies of the students' suspension letters, and they appealed to the families to pressure their troublesome children to stop their activities. Especially in poorer households, in which a child's university education was seen as the means to support the family in the future, student activists frequently faced strong family discord and disgrace and, in some cases, ostracism.

Eleven student leaders from Moi University were singled out as the leaders of the boycott in support of the UASU and called before a disciplinary committee—a necessary step, according to university statutes, before suspension or expulsion. While the statutes allow for representation, including legal representation, the common experience of students at all the public universities is that disciplinary committees rarely honor this provision, even when a student is facing criminal charges. During Orina's hearing, phones kept ringing, and members of the committee emphasized that the callers were authorities "from above"—meaning, in Kenyan parlance, from the president's office. With classic divide-and-rule tactics, six students were offered clemency in exchange for serving as witnesses against the others. After a two-day "trial," five students were suspended and, as is typical, barred from the student halls of residence. The grounds for the suspension, outlined in a letter to the students from the chief academic officer, Ole Karei, on August 29, 1994, were:

(a) That on the 13th and 15th June 1994, you organized and participated in an illegal meeting/procession or

(b) demonstration which culminated in the closure of the university on 15th June 1994.

(c) That you incited other students to violence.

(d) That you uttered slanderous/irresponsible statements about matters affecting the University.

As for the university lecturers who led the UASU, Airo Akodhe, Kilemi Mwiria, Korwa Adar, Nyaduwa Odhiambo, and Omari Onyango all lost

their salaries and housing. Some were jailed, and all were finally dismissed after similar hearings before disciplinary committees.[21] With all the public universities shut down at once, the state reaction to the UASU strike and the student support for it created perhaps the greatest sense of crisis on campus during the decade.

Kenya Universities Student Organization (KUSO), 1995–1997

In the aftermath of the concerted crackdown on the UASU and its supporters, student activists regrouped. In May 1995 they formed a national association of their own, Kenya University Students' Organization (KUSO), with the objective, according to the secretary-general, Otsieno Namwaya, of providing "a forum through which the students could address issues of national importance." It was also to serve as a forum that would "look into the problems affecting students nationwide and consequently advise both the university administration and the government on the same." The ultimate goal for KUSU was to "help in reducing the misunderstanding between students and government" (1997:2). KUSO hoped to promote dialogue as a means to overcome the deep sense of crisis on campuses and asked for the reopening of all the public universities.

This attempt to form an autonomous organization in the aftermath of the UASU strike was met with a swift response. All student leaders involved were immediately expelled from the university. As with the UASU, the registrar turned down KUSO's application for registration, arguing that "peace, welfare and good order in Kenya would be likely to suffer prejudice by reasons of your registration as a society" (*Dialogue,* Oct. 1996). Then began a period of prolonged harassment on the part of the government to prevent any further organizing, with many students arrested and tried on various trumped up charges, which were later withdrawn.[22]

In September 1995, while this harassment continued and the universities remained shut, the government announced a new student loan policy based on World Bank prescriptions (World Bank 1986; 1988; 1994) and to be managed by an "independent" Higher Education Loan Board (HELB) under the Ministry of Education. The justification for HELB was that it would independently evaluate who was needy enough to require a government loan. Instead of the previous fees of K.sh 6,000 (US$100), students were now expected to pay K.sh 50,000 (US$833), with needy students eligible for loans of up to K.sh 42,000 (US$700).[23]

With no time allocated for a smooth transition to the new loan scheme, serious problems of implementation arose. HELB had neither clear guidelines nor the institutional capacity to determine which were truly needy cases. Furthermore, the president appointed William Chelashaw as head of HELB, the same person who had run the public corporation Kenya National Assurance Co. into the ground. To add to the chaos, there was no offi-

cial application procedure, and most students were not informed that they were expected merely to submit a hand-written request. Nor was there a set procedure for notification; students could only check at the bank to see if loan money had come through. If it had not, they had no time to prepare for alternative funding. Even before the universities opened it was becoming clear that many poor students did not have the money to attend.

KUSO took action immediately. On October 23, 1995, the leadership wrote a letter to the minister of education, Joseph Kamotho, in which they criticized HELB, Moi University's penalty fee of K.sh 50 for late registration, and the regulation that after seven days "any student not registered will forfeit his chance." Given the problems that were emerging with the new loan scheme, these regulations could only be seen as extremely punitive and aimed at eliminating truly poor students who could not scrape together fees in time. At Kenyatta University a protest march broke out within days of the students' arrival on campus. Even the committee commissioned by the vice-chancellor of Kenyatta University to inquire into the students' protest noted in its report,

> The HELB and its operations were unpopular to students right from the day it was launched. When students reported for the new academic year they were already emotionally charged. There was little time between the awarding of loans and the opening of Kenyatta University (Friday and Monday). Reportedly some needy cases were not given loans either in full or in part (or got the least—K.sh 25,000). Cases of orphans missing loans either in full or in part have been cited. This provided a fertile ground for students to be easily swayed by ill motives. (Vice-Chancellor's Committee 1995:7)

As Njoroge Waithera, a Kenyatta University student activist, also pointed out, this situation was exacerbated by the ongoing corruption scandals generally and also by the fact that sons and daughters of the well connected often received aid they did not need. At Kenyatta University, students discovered that the son of the opposition MP Agnes Ndetei received a full bursary, while, as Waithera put it, "people from Starehe (a school for mostly poor but brilliant orphans] did not get even a cent" (interview, Nairobi, Nov. 6, 2000). At Egerton University, those students who were sent home refused to leave, and at the end of 1995 a protest march broke out there, too.

As it turned out, in order to be considered for a HELB loan, students needed letters from local authorities in their home area (the secondary school headmaster, the local chief, the district officer, and the district commissioner) who had received the application forms in the first place. This process allowed for easy screening of activist students and provided a means for harassing them. For example, in 1995, when the KUSO chairman Suba Churchill was arrested for "causing a disturbance," he was

accused of having forged the documents for his loan request and was then denied the loan. When Janai Orina, the KUSO chapter coordinator, was engaged in the process of challenging his expulsion orders in court, his loan too was denied.

The following years (1996 and 1997) marked another change. KUSO activists started to join the resurrected constitutional reform movement, and as a result, the Moi government redoubled its campaign of terror against KUSO. Student leaders, already worn down by the loan denials and unending court battles and in many cases suffering the medical effects of police brutality, now began to receive a series of death threats from the Special Branch. Although they received support from the Kenya Human Rights Commission, Release Political Prisoners, the International Commission of Jurists (Kenya), the Coalition on Violence Against Women, and the legal aid organization Kituo cha Sheria, this local human rights network was stretched to its limit. At this point, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch stepped in to provide crucial assistance, offering moral support, petitioning the government, and publicizing human rights violations against students.

On February 23, 1997, KUSO experienced the most violent attack to date when Vice-Chairman Solomon Muruli was locked in his University of Nairobi dorm room and burned to death.[24] Unlike former student deaths on campus, this was a coolly calculated murder. In light of this escalation of terror, a number of KUSO members decided they could not remain under such conditions and in April 1997 accepted Amnesty International's offers to facilitate their political asylum. With KUSO broken up in this way, those who stayed behind were perceived as less of a threat, although they, too, after continuous and ongoing court battles, lost all hope of either completing their education or being awarded their degrees.

Resistance and Renewal: Toward a Youth Agenda and Constitutional Change

In the repressive atmosphere of 1996 and 1997, another movement was afoot. Student leaders from KUSO, shut out of the campuses, began to join both local NGOs and the movement for constitutional reform, the National Convention Executive Council (NCEC), an umbrella group of Kenyan associations pushing for democratization of the state. In the process, these students injected energy into civil society. For example, in 1997 NCEC drew much of its membership, especially its mobilizers, and its ideological position from the students, while the students, in turn, found a new, more structured way to be involved in national politics (Mutunga 1999:161). Former student activists created Youth Agenda, an autonomous constituency of young people supporting the reform movement. On March 7–11, 1997,

Youth Agenda organized its first national youth convention. According to Kepta Ombati,

> "The national youth convention had about four hundred delegates, and it was divided into various categories, depending on the issues that were identified as being core to the young people and one of those was political leadership. There were excellent recommendations that came out of it. The recommendations were that young people needed to start penetrating the existing structures and start establishing themselves and take the values that had been crystallized at the convention and before the convention into these organizations. To do this we had to get into leadership, to use one of the phrases that was trendy, 'by invasion rather than by invitation.' So the strategy wasn't to wait until you were invited to join NCEC. It was to assert yourself until you were part of it. If you go to Abantu, RPP (Release Political Prisoners], you will find people who were part of the convention. So we are part of a network." (Interview, Nairobi, Nov. 2000)

At the NCEC convention that followed at Limuru on April 3–6, 1997, organized youth were an influential constituency.[25] In the face of a deep divide between those supporting minimal reforms and those advocating more far-reaching reforms before the next election, the youth constituency vociferously argued for more comprehensive change. The National Youth Movement statement at the convention declared their resolve to "pursue the agenda of comprehensive reform" and "stand for the overhaul of the current constitution and system."

In the mass actions that would follow, up to the present, many former student activists played a critical mobilizing and organizing role. They came to make up the backbone not only of the NCEC, but also of such human rights organizations as the Kenya Human Rights Commission, Release Political Prisoners, the Citizens' Coalition for Constitutional Change (4Cs), and People Against Torture. The presence of an older generation of student activists from the 1980s in these organizations, such as Tirop arap Kitur, Odenda Lumumba, Kang'ethe Mungai, and Wafula Buke, facilitated the movement of student activists into civil society. But this engagement in human rights organizations followed an even older tradition, one going back to at least 1973 when a group of librarians, university professors, and law students set up Kituo cha Mashauri, the first legal aid organization for poor Kenyans. An enormously successful project, the center, now called Kituo cha Sheria, continues to play a critical role in providing assistance to the large number of disadvantaged Kenyans. Thus student activism in Kenya has had a long tradition of going beyond protest to constructive engagement in social change. After decades of repression and frustrated attempts at autonomous student organizing and democratization of university campuses, this support for human rights organizations and the reform movement generally is a logical step; if "the state was not

going to relax its hold on public universities" (Munene 1997:111), then there was no route to academic freedom and university autonomy other than through transformation of the state itself.

Theoretical Lessons and Conclusions

Viewed from the vantage point of student struggle, the Kenyan university crisis appears deeply rooted in the repressive institutions of the postcolonial state, a state too often backed by narrowly interested international actors, including the World Bank. The introduction of structural adjustment in 1989 made this ongoing political crisis of Kenya's universities more acute. As we have shown, however, the root cause of this crisis lay neither in the SAPs nor in the economics of scarcity that the World Bank uses as justification for these policies. Both the World Bank and those who see their policies at the root of the crisis tend to ignore the critical role of a highly repressively structured state and its appointees on campus. While the World Bank is not an innocent actor, the highest echelons of the state have margins of maneuver regarding which international conditionalities they implement.[26] For example, regardless of World Bank pressures, the Kenyan government successfully fought off liberalization of the maize sector, changes in the Agricultural Finance Corporation, and any semblance of land reform (Mosley 1986; 1991). Indeed, as we have shown, the Moi government held off on implementing structural adjustment in the higher education sector until 1989 when the threat of political liberalization emerged, and then increasingly wielded adjustment almost as a deliberate tool against politically active and oppositional students. In 1995, for example, the Moi government set up the Higher Education Loan Board, which was subsequently used as a source of selective patronage and became a convenient political tool to screen out politically active student leaders. This could have been predicted if the political embeddedness of what the World Bank policy documents call "education managers" (e.g., World Bank 1988: 81) had been recognized. In a perverse twist, student activists who demanded accountability from these "managers" tended to be conceptualized in World Bank policy documents as obstacles to change, because, according to one report, fear of student protests creates difficulties for administrators trying to "tackle the misallocation of resources" (World Bank 1994:173)! As we have shown through our narrative of student protest in Kenya, protesting students were, in fact, often highlighting the profound problems created by a system in which an appointed administration was supposed to carry out reforms—reforms that, in any case, were never discussed in any meaningful way with those most likely to be affected.

World Bank policies for solving the Kenyan education crisis pay little or no attention to how structural adjustment gets implemented by the highly repressive state, even though its own study noted that Kenya's university

loan system had "problems collecting payments not because graduates could not generate enough income to repay the loans but because of faulty administration" (World Bank 1986:28). This view was backed up by Education Minister Aloo Aringo in 1988 when he quite openly confessed that the "ministry of education is ill-equipped to undertake the recovery of loans from students.... A bank would be better placed to do this..." (*Weekly Review*, May 6, 1988).

Arguments about scarcity—claims that the Kenyan government could not afford its current educational system—fell flat when corruption scandals in the 1990s revealed that the government had lost millions of dollars through corruption. For example, between 1991 and 1993, an estimated US$430 million, more than the combined health and education budgets of the Kenyan government, were lost to financial fraud involving the falsification of export and import invoices in connection with structural adjustment loans (Watkins 1995:40). Indeed, part of the problem with underfunding in universities stemmed from the fact that resources approved by parliament quite simply did not reach university coffers (Republic of Kenya 1999:209). Prompted by complaints from UASU officials—which were duly ignored by World Bank officials who failed to respond to written or oral communications from the university professors—the Public Investments Committee of the Kenyan parliament discovered that "on 27th of May 1998, out of an approved estimate of 17,522, 789 Kenyan pounds (US$44,381,000), Nairobi University only received 3,885,431 Kenyan pounds (US$971,400)" (Republic of Kenya 1999:209). As patronage appointees took their rewards for loyalty, substantial resources got lost between the Treasury and the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Education and the universities. Because these patronage networks extended deep into the university, even much of the funding that actually arrived on campus often was misappropriated, along with existing university assets such as agricultural resources (Republic of Kenya 1999:209–28). For example, a former student leader from Egerton University, George Morara, related this experience:

> "Egerton University... [is] an agricultural university and used to produce a lot of milk, but there was a tender where Egerton was selling milk out from the school and Egerton had a tender ordering milk in from outside the school! These were some of the things that didn't make sense to us. Why would you procure milk for higher than you were selling? We got this information and became really vocal about it. We wrote a letter to the World Bank telling them the money you are giving to the school is not being used in a beneficial way. That was when we started to get into major problems." (Interview, Toronto, May 22, 2001)

Regardless of this reality, World Bank policymakers persist in conceptualizing the crisis in the educational sector as one of economic scarcity,

rather than one that is intrinsically connected to issues of governance and political reform.[27] Perhaps this is because their analyses rely on the experience of the industrialized world, which tends to "underemphasize the relationship between education and the State and overemphasize economic relationships" (Hughes 1994:199). Alternatively, this technocratic approach serves to mask the profoundly political nature of reform and hence removes the need for a public debate about it. Within such a public debate, some of the Bank's most vocal critics come from within the student circles (Caffentzis 2000:10). As one student activist explained,

> "Our position was that Kenyans were being punished by collaborators with the World Bank and IMF. These two institutions gave money to a government which they knew was actively stealing, looting those funds. And now the problems were being shouldered by people who were victims of those laws and the people who pretended to be their representatives in negotiations." (Interview with Kepta Ombati, Nairobi, Nov. 2000)

Many students were clearly angry that they were expected to pay the costs incurred by an authoritarian government that turned around and used public resources to repress dissent and reproduce its current form of rule (Klopp 2001). Students experienced this reality directly through the presence of lavishly funded youth associations on campus, like Youth for KANU '92, which, with the approval of the West, helped President Moi "win" the 1992 elections regardless of the large-scale fraud and mass violence (Brown 2001).

Clearly, SAPs deepened the ongoing university strife in the 1990s. "Cost-sharing," in direct contradiction to its proposed rationale, selectively punished poorer students at a time when one corruption scandal after another demonstrated vividly how public money was being misspent. This fueled the sense of crisis that was experienced by hungry students who attended unmanageably large classes taught by demoralized lecturers, were crammed four at a time into dorm rooms designed for one, and faced empty libraries just when they could no longer afford books (personal communication, Grace Gathoni, Jan. 2001). Interestingly, more than ever before, poverty on campus has created links between the university and the Nairobi "crowd" much as Rashid (1997) has vividly described in the Sierra Leone context. Female students turn to prostitution to raise fees, and students resort to other "informal sector" jobs on the side to survive, some hiring themselves out as thugs in Kenya's increasingly violent political scene. Others quite simply go hungry as they use their meal allowances to pay their fees (UASU 1994). This situation was one of the many causes of student unrest described in a recent vice-chancellor's committee report, *The Cause of Riots in Public Universities* (*Daily Nation,* Nov. 6, 2000). While the committee asked for better funding, it also recommended breaking down campuses into smaller units of two thousand students. Unsurprisingly, this

proposed restructuring, rather than dealing with the root causes of the crisis, would allow more effective surveillance of increasingly disgruntled students.

The only permanent way out of this continual university crisis in Kenya, as elsewhere on the continent, is through democratization of the state and its underlying political economy, including the severing of patronage-inducing institutional configurations. Critically, as student activists have been demanding, removing the president as chancellor of all of Kenya's public universities, and eliminating his centralized powers to appoint and fire administrators, must be placed squarely on the constitutional reform agenda. As we have shown, Kenya's universities desperately require a more internally accountable system of administration with institutionalized means to communicate and work with freely elected student and academic staff representatives. Otherwise, an open discussion of Kenya's university crisis among those who live it—students, parents, lecturers, and administrators—will remain muted; valuable resources will continue to be squandered by presidential appointees; endless university closures and protests will persist; and Kenya's university system will continue to be inefficient, wasteful, and perpetually in crisis.

As a recent World Bank report acknowledges, the university crisis, particularly the low tertiary education levels, "limits the development of society's leaders" (World Bank 2000:105–6). Any way out of the university crisis must involve careful attention to the lessons learned by Kenya's student activists with their vision of a democratic university system and, by extension, a democratic society. The decoupling of presidential authority from university governance and the extension of human rights and good governance to campus must be part of any agenda for meaningful change. Finally, given the vulnerability of many of these activists, with most of them barred from employment and deprived of the resources to continue their education, they deserve more support from those organizations and individuals genuinely concerned with combating the university crisis on the continent. Such support might include facilitating a network of student activists, past and present, and providing these former students with correspondence courses that would allow them to continue with their activism while gaining access to the education they are currently denied. This would be a small step toward mitigating the punitive nature of the current system, which now seeks, in the words of the *Daily Nation,* to "destroy" and "render useless" some of its most talented students, the very citizens who are playing a critical role in building a free and democratic Kenya.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all those former and current university activists who took the time to give us interviews, particularly Korwa Adar, Rok Ajulu, Shadrack Gutto, Miguna Miguna, Justus Mochoge, George Morara,

Kang'ethe Mungai, Judy Muthoni, Hassan Omar, Kepta Ombati, Njoroge Waithera. Atieno Aluoka, Kabando wa Kabando, Korwa Adar, Willy Mutunga, Shadrack Nasongo, Onyango Oloo, Waikwa Wanyoike, and Wachuka Warungu. We also would like to thank the anonymous reviewers of this journal who provided valuable commentary. Special thanks to Grace Gathoni who helped to collect documents, conducted interviews, and provided valuable insights while Moi University, Maseno campus, was closed down.

References

Ackers, Jim, James Migoli, and Juliana Nzomo. 2001. "Identifying and Addressing the Causes of Declining Participation Rates in Kenyan Primary Schools." *International Journal of Educational Development* 21: 361–74.

Adar, Korwa. 1999. "Human Rights and Academic Freedom in Kenya's Public Universities: The Case of the Universities' Academic Staff Union." *Human Rights Quarterly* 21 (1): 179–206.

Africa Watch. 1991a. *Kenya: Taking Liberties.* New York: Africa Watch.

_____. 1991b. *Academic Freedom and Human Rights Abuses in Africa.* New York: Africa Watch.

Awiti, Adhu, and Oduor Ong'wen. 1990. *Academic Freedom, State Repression and Opportunism in Kenya.* Dakar: CODESRIA.

Bayart, Jean-Francois. 1993. *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly.* London: Longman Press.

Berman, Bruce. 1990. *Control and Crisis in Colonial Kenya.* London: James Currey.

Biobaku, Saburi. 1985. *Have the Academics Failed the Nation?* Ibadan: University of Ibadan.

Brown, Stephen. 2001. "Authoritarian Leaders and Multiparty Elections in Africa: How Foreign Donors Help to Keep Kenya's Daniel arap Moi in Power." *Third World Quarterly* 22 (5): 725–39.

Caffentzis, George. 2000. "The World Bank and Education in Africa." In *A Thousand Flowers: Social Struggles against Structural Adjustment in African Universities,* edited by Silvia Federici, George Caffentzis, and Ousseina Alidou, 3–18. Trenton, N.J., and Asmara: Africa World Press.

Chege, Michael. 1998. "Academic Apparatchiks in the New Kenya." *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* January, B7.

Duodu, Cameron. 1986. "Secret Party Leads to Arrests." *Index on Censorship* 15 (6): 18, 35–36.

Federici, Silvia. 2000. "The Economic Roots of the Repression of Academic Freedom in Africa." In *A Thousand Flowers: Social Struggles against Structural Adjustment in African Universities,* edited by Silvia Federici, George Caffentzis and Ousseina Alidou, 61–68. Trenton, N.J., and Asmara: Africa World Press.

Gertzel, Cherry. 1970. *The Politics of Independent Kenya, 1963–68.* Evanston, Ill.: Northeastern University Press.

Hagan, George. 1994. "Academic Freedom and National Responsibility in an African State: Ghana." In *Academic Freedom in Africa,* edited by Mahmood Mamdani and Mamdou Diouf, 39–58. Dakar: CODESRIA.

Hughes, Rees. 1994. "Legitimation, Higher Education, and the Post-Colonial State: A Comparative Study of India and Kenya." *Comparative Education* 30 (3): 193–204.

Human Rights Watch. 1999. *Leave None to Tell the Story.* New York: Human Rights Watch.

Ihonvbere, Julius. 1993. "The State and Academic Freedom in Africa: How African Academics Subvert African Freedom." *Journal of Third World Studies* 10 (2): 36–73.

Index on Censorship. 1985. "Nairobi University" 14 (3): 4–5.

Kariuki, J. M. 1976. *J. M. Kariuki in Parliament.* Vol 2. Edited by Kareithi Munuhe. Nairobi: Lengo Press.

Kenya. 1975. *Report of the Select Committee on the Disappearance and Murder of the Late Member for Nyandarua North, the Hon. J. M. Kariuki, M.P.* Nairobi: Select Committee.

Kenya Human Rights Commission. 1992. *Haven of Repression: A Report on the University of Nairobi and Academic Freedom in Kenya.* Nairobi: Kenya Human Rights Commission.

Kihoro, Wanyiri. 1998. *Never Say Die.* Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.

Kinyatti, Maina. 1997. *Mother Kenya: Letters from Prison, 1982–1988.* London: Vita Books.

Klopp, Jacqueline. 2001. "Electoral Despotism in Kenya: Land, Patronage and Resistance in the Multi-Party Context." Ph.D diss., McGill University.

_____. 2000. "Pilfering the Public: The Problem of Land-Grabbing in Kenya." *Africa Today* 47 (1): 7–26.

_____. In press. "'Ethnic Clashes' and Winning Elections: The Case of Kenya's Electoral Despotism." *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 35 (2).

Mamdani, Mahmood. 1996. *Citizen and Subject.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Mazrui, Alamin, and Willy Mutunga. 1995. "The State vs. the Academic Unions in Post-Colonial Kenya." *Review of African Political Economy* 64 (22): 257–62.

Mazrui, Ali. 1994. "The Impact of Global Changes on Academic Freedom in Africa: A Preliminary Assessment." In *Academic Freedom in Africa,* edited by Mahmood Mamdani and Mamdou Diouf, 118–49. Dakar: CODESRIA.

McKnown, Roberta. 1975."Kenya University Students and Politics." In *University Students and African Politics,* edited by Hanna William. New York and London: Africana Publishing Company: 215–55.

Médard, Claire. 1998. "Dispositifs électoraux et violences ethniques: réflexions sur quelques strategies territoriales du régime kényan." *Politique Africaine* 70 (June): 32–39.

_____. 1996. "Les conflits 'ethniques' au Kenya: une question de votes ou de terres?" *Afrique Contemporain* 180 (Oct./Dec.): 62–74.

Miguna, Miguna. 1994. *Disgraceful Osgoode and Other Essays.* Toronto: AV Publications.

Mosley, Paul. 1991. "Kenya." In *Aid and Power,* edited by P. Mosley, J. Harrington, and J. Toye. Vol. 2, *Case Studies,* 270–310. London: Routledge.

Mosley, Paul. 1986. "The Politics of Economic Liberalization: USAID and the World Bank in Kenya, 1980–84." *African Affairs* 85 (338): 107–19.

Munene, Irungu. 1997. "The Struggle for Faculty Unionism in a Stalled Democracy: Lessons from Kenya's Public Universities." *Journal of Third World Studies* 14 (1): 91–114.

Mutunga, Willy. 1999. *Constitution-Making from the Middle: Civil Society and Transition Politics in Kenya, 1992–1997.* Nairobi: SAREAT.

Mutunga, Willy, and Maina Kiai. 1995. "The State of Academic Freedom in Kenya, 1992–1994." In *The State of Academic Freedom in Africa,* 81–97. Dakar: CODESRIA.

Mwaura, Apollos. 1997. *Imperialism, Academe and Nationalism: Britain and University Education for Africans, 1860–1960.* London: Frank Cass.

Mwiria, Kilemi. 1996. "Democratizing Kenya's University Education Sector." In *Sectoral Studies: Focussing on Kenya's Future Policy Reforms.* Vol. 1, 1–18. Nairobi: International Commission of Jurists.

Namwaya, Otsieno. 1997. "K.U.S.O." Kenya University Students' Organization. *Report.*

Nakuru Clashes. 1998. Kenya: New Age Productions for Release of Political Prisoners. Videocassette.

Nduko, James. 2000. "Student's Rights and Academic Freedom in Kenya's Public Universities." In *A Thousand Flowers: Social Struggles against Structural Adjustment in African Universities,* edited by Silvia Federici, George Caffentzis, and Ousseina Alidou, 207–14. Trenton, N.J., and Asmara: Africa World Press.

Odinga, Oginga. 1967. *Not Yet Uhuru.* Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers.

Ogot, Bethwell. 1995. "Transition from Single Party to Multi-Party Political System 1989–93." In *Decolonization and Independence in Kenya,* edited by B. A Ogot and W. R. Ochieng, 239–61. London: James Currey.

Okoth-Ogendo, H. W. O. 1972. "The Politics of Constitutional Change in Kenya since Independence, 1963–69" *African Affairs* 71 (282): 9–24.

Orina, Janai. 1997. "Students and the State in Kenya." Kenya University Students' Organization. *Report.*

Prunier, Gérard. 1997. *The Rwandan Crisis: History of a Genocide.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Rashid, Ismail. 1997. "Subaltern Reactions: Lumpens, Students, and the Left." *Africa Development* 22 (3/4): 19–43.

Republic of Kenya. 1988. *Economic Survey.* Nairobi: Government Printers.

_____. 1999. *Eighth Report of the Public Investments Committee in the Accounts of State Corporations.* Vol 1. Nairobi: National Assembly.

_____. 2000. *Economic Survey.* Nairobi: Government Printers.

Savage, Donald, and Cameron Taylor. 1991. "Academic Freedom in Kenya." *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 25 (5): 308–21.

Senate Sub-Committee on the Welfare of Academic Staff, Moi University. 1993. *Report.*

Sifuna, Daniel, and Kilemi Mwiria. 1993. "Key Obstacles to the Development of African Universities." *Journal of Third World Studies* 10 (2): 195–227.

_____. 1997. *The Governance of Kenyan Public Universities.* Nairobi: Lyceum Educational Consultants.

Southall, Roger. 1972. "The Politics of Medical Higher Education in East Africa." *Social Science and Medicine* 6: 413–24.

Student Leaders Forum. Moi University. 1996. "Conceptual Framework." *Report.*

Throup, David, and Charles Hornsby. 1998. *Multi-Party Politics in Kenya.* Oxford: James Currey.

Tignor, Robert. 1971. "Colonial Chiefs in Chiefless Societies." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 9 (3): 399–59.

University Academic Staff Union (UASU). 1994. "New Varsity Funding Scheme." *Report.*

Vice-Chancellor's Committee of Enquiry into Food Riots at Kenyatta University. 1995. "Report to the Vice-Chancellor on Students' Riot."
wa Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ. 1981. *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary.* London: Heinemann.
Watkins, Kevin. 1995. *The Oxfam Poverty Report.* London: Oxfam.
Winkler, Allan. 1997. "How Can We Help African Universities?" *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* March.
World Bank. 1986. *Financing Education in Developing Countries: An Exploration of Policy Options.* Washington: World Bank.
_____. 1988. *Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policies for Adjustment, Revitalization, and Expansion.* Washington: World Bank.
_____. 1990. *World Development Report, 1990.* New York: Oxford University Press.
_____. 1994. *Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, Results, and the Road Ahead.* Washington: World Bank.
_____. 1997. *World Development Report 1997.* Washington: World Bank.
_____. 2000. *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?* Washington: World Bank.

Notes

1. The World Bank estimates that enrollment rates at all educational levels increased about 9 percent annually in the 1970s. At the primary level the gross enrollment ratio went from 36 percent in 1960 to 75 percent in 1983 (World Bank 1988:1). Some of these positive trends are now taking a turn for the worse in many parts of the continent. For example, in Kenya the gross enrollment rate for primary school (i.e., the total number of pupils enrolled, divided by those in the primary age bracket of 6–14) declined from 105.4 percent in 1989 to 88 percent in 1998, where it has remained over the last six years (Ackers, Migoli, & Nzomo 2001:364).
2. Oginga Odinga's autobiography, *Not Yet Uhuru* (1967), vividly describes the disappointment in postcolonial Kenya and the colonial continuities. This book has had a great deal of influence on successive generations of student activists. On the parallels between universities in Kenya and Nigeria, see Biobaku (1985:9–10). Kenya's public universities are Nairobi University (1970), Moi University, Eldoret campus (1984), Moi University, Maseno campus (1990), Egerton University, Njoro (1987), Kenyatta University, Nairobi (1985) and Jomo Kenyatta University College of Agriculture and Technology (1993). There are also a number of prominent polytechnics such as Kenya Polytechnic, Nairobi, Mombasa Polytechnic, and Eldoret Polytechnic.
3. On the colonial prefecture form of rule in Kenya, see Berman (1990). For a more general treatment of its current manifestations, see Klopp (2001). The vice-chancellor's powers have rarely been challenged by Kenya's dependent court system, although there have been a few cases in which the court has ruled against the administration.

   In Rwanda, a number of scholars became chief ideologues for the *genocidaires*, including the once respected historian Ferdinand Nahimana, now indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal in Arusha (Prunier 1997:224n25). Some professors, along with some university students, were actively involved in the killings (Human Rights Watch 1999:435–36, 471, 483, 507, 591). Others, such as Emmanuel Ntezimana, became human rights advocates (Human Rights Watch 1999:37n7). Even within highly repressive systems, individuals have choices: to collaborate actively, to be passive, or to resist pas-

sively or actively. In Kenya, where state-instigated violence has left approximately ten thousand people dead and three hundred thousand displaced (Médard 1996, 1998; Klopp 2001, in press), some academics also were involved. The vice-chancellor of Egerton University, Japeth Kiptoon, has been implicated in organizing the violence in Nakuru (*Nakuru Clashes* 1998). A former Nakuru civil servant and witness backed up this claim made by a National Council of Church of Kenya representative involved in assisting victims (personal communication, July 14, 2001). Kiptoon has been promoted to the position of permanent secretary in the Ministry of Education. Other academics, such as Phillip Mbithi (former head of Civil Service and secretary of the cabinet and vice-chancellor, University of Nairobi) and Bethwell Ogot have played a deliberate masking role (see, for example, Ogot 1995:250). Subsequent to his demotion from head of the Civil Service, Mbithi confessed to the press that "he was not fed with proper information" and that now he believed a "clique of power barons were responsible" for the violence (*Daily Nation*, June 11, 2000).

4. The University of Nairobi is a recent creation. It began as the Royal Technical College of East Africa in 1951 and became University College, Nairobi, in 1964. For a helpful overview of the politics that led to the collapse of an East African education system and the rise of Kenya's own university, see Southall (1972). When Kenyatta became Kenya's first president, he also became the "visitor" or chancellor of University College. In this role, he appointed members of the college's governing organ, the College Council, thus entrenching the colonial foundations for control of autonomous institutions evident in state–student tensions to this day.
5. J. M Kariuki consistently criticized the corruption involved in land distribution at independence, which benefited the well-connected and wealthy disproportionately. In a famous statement he complained, "A small but powerful group of greedy, self-seeking elite in the form of politicians, Civil Servants, and businessmen, has steadily but very surely monopolized the fruits of independence to the exclusion of the majority of the people. We do not want a Kenya of ten millionaires and ten million beggars" (1976:2). A special parliamentary committee that was set up by the government in response to the public outcry about his murder implicated high-level government officials (Kenya 1975).

   Before the planned symposium to commemorate J. M. Kariuki on March 2, 1981, students were sent home early and lecturers who were to speak at the symposium, including Shadrack Gutto, Oki Ooko-Ombaka, and Willy Mutunga, were arrested and questioned (Awiti & Ong'wen 1990:8). As Gutto explained, "We got into trouble because JM was an enemy of the state and we stood up and said, 'This is a murder that cannot be forgiven. We want it to be investigated and the perpetrators brought to book.' The perpetrators were known, or at least the inquiries that were supposed to cover it up pointed directly to those people involved. We wanted justice" (interview, Johannesburg, August 17, 2001).
6. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, then chairman of the Department of Literature, University of Nairobi, and a vocal critic of the Kenyan government was arrested by the Kenyatta regime in 1977. The detention order was signed by Minister of Home Affairs Daniel arap Moi (see Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1981:205). Even when Ngũgĩ was released from prison, he was not reinstated at the university. The vice-chancellor at the time, Maina Mungai, told the academic staff union that "the ques-

tion of Prof. Ngũgĩ rests with authorities other than the university authorities" (*Weekly Review,* Jan. 21, 1994). See Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1981) for more details. He is now a professor of literature at New York University.

7. Oloo Onyango suggests that Adungosi Aloo's death was one of the "saddest and most cruel of ironies" since he was a pro-KANU leader and a staunch Christian who believed in supporting the status quo (personal communication, Feb. 20, 2001). In the aftermath of the coup, Adungosi was jailed by the government he supported and stayed in jail, because his strong religious beliefs prevented him from signing a statement that would entail lying.
8. The president removed the security of tenure of the auditor general and attorney general and further instituted an immensely unpopular form of queue voting whereby voters lined up behind their candidates.
9. For a more detailed account of the students' expulsion, see the article in the pro-establishment *Weekly Review,* February 15, 1985. Some of the other eighteen students who were expelled were Gupta Ng'ang'a Thiong'o, Gacheche wa Miano, Tirop arap Kitur, Karimi Nduthu, Odera Okumu, and Atanasio Ondiek. The five arrested students were tried on March 11, 1985, for convening and participating in an illegal meeting. Although the court repealed the sentences on July 19, 1985, all these students were tortured while in detention.
10. These student leaders were Wafula Buke, Munoru Nderi, Kaberere Njenga, Munameza Muleji, Miguna Miguna, and Oyuo Amuomo Ngala. Margaret Ben was also arrested in the hope that she would assist in identifying the student leaders. She was released after one night and was never subjected to any form of persecution. The rest were eventually released. See Miguna's account (1994) of his arrest and time in jail.
11. Some of the students or former students who were associated with the MwaKenya movement and were imprisoned in this period were Gacheche wa Miano, Gupta Ng'ang'a Thiong'o, James Opiata, Mwandawiro Mghanga, Wanderi Muthigani, Tirop arap Kitur, Karimi Nduthu, George Oduor Ong'wen, David Njuguna Mutonya, David Murathe, Nixon Wekesa, Wafula Buke, Kang'ethe Mungai, and Odenda Lumumba. For details on the kind of treatment they received in prison, see Africa Watch (1991a:391–92), Kenya Human Rights Commission (1992:5), Kinyatti (1997), Kihoro (1998), and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1981). Interestingly, the government used Kihoro's student activism as a reason for imprisoning him many years later! Rumba Kinuthia faced a similar situation. Some of those arrested in 1986 were the former student leaders Mwandawiro Mghanga and Mukaru Ng'ang'a; Ngotho Kariuki, a former lecturer; and two lecturers, Kariuki Gathitu and Kamonya Manje.

    For a discussion of promotions of progovernment faculty in Nigeria, see Ihnovbere (1993:57–58).
12. As a means to stave off a nationwide independence movement, the Kenyan colonial government fostered regional and ethnic associations and parties and banned nationwide organizations of any kind. Successive postcolonial governments populated by many former bureaucrats of the colonial regime followed the spirit of these basic practices. The interventions in the university are only one graphic example of this persisting practice.
13. This strategy of deliberately fostering fragmentation to suppress dissent and the organization of opposition would become central to the government's fight against democratization in the next decade of multiparty politics, mani-

festing itself particularly as government instigated "ethnic clashes." See Médard (1996; 1998) and Klopp (in press, 2001).

14. These students were Shadrack Nyamolo Opiyo (1991), Kenneth Makokha Mukabi (1996), Eric Mutwiri Kamunde (1996), Festa Etaba Okon'yo (1996), Andrew Ominde (1997), Daniel Mugendi (1997), and Solomon Muruli (1997).
15. In arguing for decreased aid to university students, World Bank policymakers have argued that the social return to investment in primary education is 28 percent, while the social return to investment in tertiary education is only 13 percent. Further, World Bank researchers suggested that the benefits to university graduates have been disproportionate to the public investment in them (World Bank 1986; 1988; 1994). Therefore, they claimed, the system was inegalitarian and "intrasectoral imbalances" needed to be adjusted with a focus on primary education. See Caffentzis (2000) for a critique of these policies.

    It is true that the university is an "elite" institution, enrolling less than 2 percent of university-age Kenyans (Weidman 1995); many students never get that far because poverty has forced them to drop out at the primary and secondary levels. Nevertheless, the university population is not exclusively a prosperous one; many poor but bright students have in the past made it to university because their communities and families pooled limited resources or because of the constructive interventions of organizations like the Canadian Harambee Education Society, the African–Canadian Continuing Education Society, and World Vision.

    It is difficult to measure the number of students who dropped out when student allowances were withdrawn. The Kenya University Students' Organization, in their October 23, 1995, letter to Education Minister Joseph Kamotho, suggested that by 1995 the figure was close to two thousand. In many cases the hardship now extended beyond the students themselves, since some of them had used their stipend to help their families back home. One of the authors, while teaching in Western Kenya in 1988–90, knew of secondary school students who were being supported by a relative's "boom" at university.

    Middle- and upper-class students, who were less affected by the new fee policy, have also enjoyed expanded access to higher education over the last decade. Besides educational opportunities abroad and in Kenya's private universities, the country's public universities, as part of World Bank prescriptions for diversifying income sources, opened up "parallel courses" to those who were minimally qualified and were able to pay their own way. While this expansion of opportunity, at least for those able to pay, is a welcome change, there are serious concerns that the already overworked and underpaid academic staff at the public universities are diverting time and effort to paying students at the expense of the most highly qualified students. This is a source of grievance on campus in part because the less qualified students taking parallel courses diminish the prestige of a university education and generate competition for jobs. However, the declining quality of education in the public system is a serious concern. Medical students at the University of Nairobi (who are required to have an A/A- average in highly competitive exams) were furious when they discovered that students with C+ averages were being admitted to parallel courses in medicine, and their concern about the decline in standards merits greater attention.

16. Eric Mwanzi was an executive officer for KANU. Eric Masinde Aseka was a consultant who wrote regular columns in the KANU-owned *Kenya Times* in support of the party. Njoroge Waitheram, a student activist, claims that these professors deliberately failed him as punishment for confronting them in the student union about their activities (interview, Nairobi, Nov. 6, 2000).

    At the YK'92 inaugural dinner in February 1992, the guest of honor was the chairman of the Kenya Commercial Bank, Ahmed Abdallah. As the *Weekly Review* (April 30, 1993) noted, they raised "a remarkable shs. 2.4 million with hefty donations from President Moi and Vice-President Saitoti. The impromptu fund-raising seemed to mark the beginning of what was to become the group's high profile operations characterized by seemingly unlimited spending of funds whose origins few people seem to know." Some of the YK'92 funds may also have come from irregular transactions with the National Social Security Fund (the statutory body that invests private worker social security contributions) as well as from money printed by the government prior to the election, which caused massive inflation (Throup & Hornsby 1998:352–55).
17. Not all ethnic associations were mere patronage machines. As economic conditions grew worse, some provided some social welfare. We are indebted to Kabando wa Kabando for this point.

    On the role of students in fighting land grabbing, see Klopp (2000; 2001). On student demonstrations against state-instigated violence, see the *Daily Nation* (May 1, 1992; Oct. 30, 1993); the *East African Standard* (Oct. 24, 1993); and the Student Leaders Forum (1996:8). According to one former student leader from Egerton University, students intervened directly in the clashes to protect victims around Laikipia (interview with George Morara, Toronto, May 22, 2001).
18. The system had about 300 students at independence in 1963. In 1984–85 there were 9,091. By 1991–92 the number was 41,674. By 1999–2000 the enrollment had leveled off at 41,825 (Republic of Kenya 1988; 2000). Generally, however, the expansion was not accompanied by a commensurate increase in expenditure or any greater accountability over how current resources are used in the university.
19. For example, Adar (1999) and Munene (1997) barely mention it.
20. Not having these exam results had potentially serious consequences for students. Failing an exam meant repeating a class. Failing twice meant repeating the year, an expensive and time-consuming enterprise. If students did not know ahead of time whether they had passed or failed, they would not know which classes to attend. Switching classes later also involved problems because a university rule is that students missing 21 percent of the total course consecutively must repeat the course. Not having these results obviously caused chaos.
21. The eleven students from Moi University who were called before the disciplinary committee were David Ochollah, Evans Okoth, Gathoni Ndun'gu, Janai Orina, Ohito Aol, Ojuki Nyabuta, Paul Awenge, Peter Mwangi, Peter Jowi, Simon Ngetich, and Wasai Nanjakululu. In some cases suspended students are barred from the public university grounds. Njoroge Waithera, a student activist from Kenyatta University, recalls that "[Vice-Chancellor] Eshiwani told us not to enter and when one student tried he was thoroughly beaten [by Eshiwani's goons] as a caution to others" (interview, Nairobi, Nov. 6, 2000).

    For the list of the twenty-one dismissed lecturers and more details on the

UASU, see Adar (1999). The UASU chairman, Korwa Adar, was accused by the state of "inciting violence" and "holding a public gathering contrary to the Public Order Act" (Criminal Case No. 908 of 1994, Republic versus Dr. Korwa Adar) in a case that dragged on for years. When David Makali, an investigative journalist, wrote an article accusing the state of interference in the case (*The People,* March 4, 1994), he and his colleague Bedan Mbugua were charged with contempt of court. They refused to pay the fine out of principle and spent time in jail (Adar 1999:n92). Adar eventually left the country for South Africa and became part of the exodus of highly qualified academics. For other analyses of the UASU strike, see Munene (1997) and Mazrui and Mutunga (1995).

22. These student leaders were Suba Churchill, Morara George, Njoroge Waithera, Waikwa Wanyoike, Mwangi Njagi, and Janai Orina. The vice-chairman, Solomon Muruli, was killed. This use of the courts to bog down dissidents in legal procedures and drain resources through legal fees would become an increasingly useful strategy as the government resorted to less obvious forms of repression in an attempt to keep up its liberalizing credentials in the international arena.
23. To put some perspective on what these figures mean to the average Kenyan, in 1995 the per capita GNP was only US$280 (World Bank 1997:214).
24. While the circumstances around Muruli's death are far from clear, some sources suggest that he was playing a dangerous double game by acting as an (unreliable) informant to a senior cabinet minister, who killed him (interviews with activists, Jan. 2000, names withheld on request). In the current political context, it is difficult to explore the exact circumstances around this grisly murder.
25. The most important youth groups are identified by Mutunga as "mainly the Youth Agenda (YAA), The National Youth Movement (NYM), the Kenya University Students Organisation [*sic*] (KUSO) and MUUNGANO WA VIJIJI youth groups from the slums of Nairobi. ILISHE Mombasa had also sent its representatives..." (1999:187n13).
26. There are a number of reasons why a margin of maneuver exists, or in Mosley's words, "strong cards remained in the Kenya Governments' hands" (1991:291). First, donors rarely act in concert, particularly as they are competing for lucrative contracts for their national firms. This gives scope for playing one off the other. For a good treatment of this see Mosley (1986; 1991). Second, the government holds the key to the political stability required for macroeconomic stability. The Moi government deliberately creates the specter of large-scale violence to keep both the Kenyan population and donors in line (Klopp 2001; in press).
27. Note that increasing the reliance of Kenya's public universities on private funds does not fundamentally change patrimonial dynamics, because the president still has control over appointments on campus, whether these are private or public in origin. Attempts at political reform via economic mechanisms have tended to be counterproductive, in large part because higher-level actors in patrimonial regimes straddle the public and private sectors and have substantial control over what would be accountability mechanisms in both.