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Missions and the Mediation of Modernity in Colonial Kenya

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“One would scarcely believe it possible that a centre so new should be able to develop so many divergent and conflicting interests... There are already in miniature all the elements of keen political and racial discord... The white man versus the black; ... the official class against the unofficial... all these different points of view, naturally arising, honestly adopted, tenaciously held, and not yet reconciled into any harmonious general conception, confront the visitor in perplexing disarray.”

– Winston Churchill, *My African Journey*¹

European missionaries played a crucial role in colonial development. Colonial East Africa, throughout its history of settlement and control by the British, from early exploration to the State’s origin as the East Africa Protectorate (1895 until 1920) to its later status as Kenya Colony (1920 until independence in 1963), was an environment in which settlers, colonial authorities, and missionaries found themselves inextricably connected. Dependent on each other, these relationships were often symbiotic. However, while this “white man’s country” more than 4,000 miles from London encouraged the positive development of relationships between these disparate European coterie and allowed each group unique possibilities for expansion, the associations were not always without friction.² The relationship between settlers, missionaries, and colonial authorities in Kenya was also tenuous. Divided by socioeconomic background, economic interest, cultural pursuits, moral identity, and legal-political beliefs, the groups shared little beyond skin color. While all three parties were concerned with pacifying and proselytizing

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Africans, they often pursued conflicting agendas according to their interests. Settlers, those Europeans (usually British) who came to profit from the economic opportunities in East Africa, developed farms and cultivated livestock and were most focused on economic issues. The British government and its representatives and administrators in Africa were motivated by the economic development and political stability of Kenya. Missionaries, however, were focused on Africans' sociopolitical condition and concerned with disseminating religious ideology; their efforts resulted in the integration of Africans' into the new European socio-cultural and economic framework. During the later stages of colonial rule, the agendas of the settlers and the Government were increasingly in conflict as the British government attempted to provide more pacifistic legislation at the expense of settlers' economic and political-judicial interests. Missionaries found themselves caught between defending African interests and maintaining Kenya's position as a colony in the British Empire.³ Essentially removed from the economic concerns of settlers and colonial authorities, missionaries advocated for European policies that often amounted to a political-economic morality (though their own policies directed towards Africans ultimately imposed a certain religious and secular morality).⁴ Because they were largely unconstrained by government determined legal delimitations and managed to avoid much of the hostility Africans directed towards colonial agents, Missions were an efficacious means of influence.⁵ The activities of missionaries in Europe and Africa, while often motivated by self-interest, helped to balance the social, economic, and political agendas of settlers and colonial authorities. Moreover, missionaries fundamentally shifted African socio-economic culture towards the British model. They played a crucial role in developing stable relationships with sometimes-aggressive African ethnic groups and helped to provide pacification through non-militaristic means for the benefit of both settlers and colonial authorities alike. This essay will explore the relationships between the

three groups and ultimately suggest that missionaries played an important role in mediating the development of Kenya, helping to create a state that propagated and balanced settler, colonial, and African interests.

East Africa's geo-economic limitations imposed on both settlers and colonial authorities. Natural resources were less in Kenya than in other colonies and its industrialization was, for this reason, limited.⁶ The geo-economic realities of the Colony meant that economic development during the colonial period never progressed far beyond agriculture and trade, giving the small group of farmer-settlers who first colonized the region significant political-economic advantage. In order to develop agriculture in new colonial communities, settlers relied on British support and investment. In turn, these settlers were "deliberately encouraged... to make [colonial investment] pay"; the British government sought "to recoup imperial outlays on the defense, administration, and railway" and believed settlers were the means by which this might be accomplished.⁷ This dependency afforded the settlers political-economic influence in London. However, while colonial authorities saw the settlers as "agents" of the Crown, the comparatively small settler population viewed African labour as a crucial component in the Colony's development; in fact, it was so important that "the demand for labour [was] a sufficient basis for the conservation of native life." Settlers and colonial authorities both gave great weight to "the importance of the masses, to direct them in agricultural and industrial activities essential... to the larger economic operations of the Colony."⁸ While these limitations and considerations initially aligned settlers and colonial authorities economically, they would eventually prove divisive as questions regarding the place of African ethnic groups imposed politically and economically on both groups.

The colonial agenda for Kenyan development was dependent on a stable state and a favorable economic situation; thus, colonial authorities were necessarily focused on

socioeconomic development. Especially during the early period of colonialism in Kenya, the British government advocated for a policy of indirect rule in order to minimize the costs associated with colonial expansion – this meant that the relationships with local leaders in which colonial authorities, settlers, and missionaries alike were all necessarily involved were extremely important to maintaining sociopolitical stability and economic advantage.⁹ However, it largely fell to missionaries to cultivate a stable socio-political environment in which colonialism could be successful. The Kenya Report on Disturbances argued that “[t]he Government has shown very clearly that it looks to Christian forces to... [fight an] Ideological war.”¹⁰ Unlike the missions, settlers and colonial authorities remained physically and socially separate from African ethnic groups. Though missionaries were often able to establish amicable relationships with African ethnic groups through non-violent means (such as education or medical care), colonial authorities frequently used violence in order to reinforce European superiority and enforce British legislation. Accordingly, Sir Charles Eliot, the colonial administrator and Commissioner for the Protectorate wrote in 1905 that “[a]lthough [certain aspects of the colonial agenda] could only have been abolished by force and the strong arm of Government, we must not forget the immense debt which Africa owes to gentler methods, to moral influence and missionary enterprise.”¹¹ Britain’s efforts to establish economic and political control resulted in a decline in the African population of more than twenty-five percent in the generation after 1900, largely because of the Government’s nationally pervasive, “systematic[ly] aggressive” colonial agenda.¹² However, as Eliot suggests, the missions provided an alternative to the British government’s more aggressive policies, allowing Britain to exert comprehensive influence on colonial African society.

While they forcibly established political and economic control of East Africa, the British government depended on settlers to develop Kenya’s economy; in turn, those

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Unidentified Photographer, Missionary Fathers with Villagers, ca. 1920-1940, Kenya, postcard



Unidentified Photographer, Missionary Father with Villagers, ca. 1920-1940, Kenya, postcard

settlers were dependent on the government to subsidize their economic initiatives. Both groups believed in their racial-economic superiority and political dominance. British colonel Richard Meinertzhagen records his discussion with the High Commissioner Charles Eliot on that colonial administrator's vision of Kenya:

[He] envisaged a thriving colony of thousands of Europeans with their families [and] intends to confine the natives to reserves and use them as cheap labour on farms. I suggested that the country belonged to Africans and that their interests must prevail over the interests of strangers. He would not have it; he kept on using the word "paramount" with reference to the claims of Europeans. I said that some day the African would be educated and armed; that would lead to a clash. Eliot thought that that day was so far distant as not to matter and that by that time the European element would be strong enough to look after themselves; but I am convinced that in the end the Africans will win and that Eliot's policy can lead only to trouble and disappointment.¹³

Here, Meinertzhagen highlights the sentiment of superiority that shaped colonial and settler relations with African ethnic groups. He also describes Eliot's vision of an Africa economically dominated by British landowners and reliant on the exploitation of Africans. Though the conversation took place in 1902, Meinertzhagen presciently alludes to the conflict that such a system would precipitate. It is exactly this socioeconomic dichotomy that missionaries helped to mediate, minimizing violent conflict for decades by reshaping African ethnic groups in ways that made them more socioeconomically and politically compatible with settler and colonial ideologies (especially through educational programs) while also curtailing the extent to which these politically abrasive British policies could be

implemented. W. McGregor Ross, the Director of Public Works in East Africa between 1905 and 1923 and a member of the Legislative Council between 1916 and 1922, argued that “[m]issionaries were enlightened, in some measure, as to the possible trend of events, and were given to understand that they would be expected to use their influence to maintain calm in the native districts around them.”¹⁴ He suggests that an awareness of the parochial environment and of regional attitudes in conjunction with influence on their local communities often allowed the missions to establish a *détente* between European and African coteries with conflicting interests.

Settlement was an instrument of British policy over which the Colonial Authority wanted to maintain control and which they tried to shape through their political and economic agenda.¹⁵ During the early period of colonialism in Kenya, land was given away to the East African Syndicate, “[a] powerful syndicate with influential directors in London”, and sold cheaply to settlers.¹⁶ This land was too valuable to white colonists for it to be “lock[ed] up” in African control.¹⁷ However, since land was widely available and political regulation was lax, its distribution became increasingly difficult to regulate: “the Norfolk [Hotel and bar] was dubbed ‘The House of Lords’ where, it was claimed, more [extra-legal] land transactions took place at its bar than anywhere else in the Protectorate.”¹⁸ This sort of informal distribution of land precluded government control (but might be considered part of their *laissez-faire* economic agenda for the early stages of the Colony’s development) and came at the expense of natives’ access to fertile grazing grounds and agricultural plots. In response, missionaries advocated for the ability of Africans to have guaranteed ownership of land and attacked the Government and the Kenya Land Commission for their inequitable land distribution policies. In a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Dr. Norman Leys, an influential member of the Church and its mission, a medical officer in Nyasaland, and an historian of Kenya, details the

problems associated with the Colonial Office's land policies and the "economic" unrest it produced. Reflecting on the difficult conditions under which Africans were living in 1918,¹⁹ Leys suggests that it is:

an immediate necessity that governments in Eastern Africa should ensure for every family rent free land as secure in law as the land that the Crown has granted to Europeans. This rent free land must furthermore be situated in the area of the tribe to which the family belongs, and it must be adequate to the cultivation of crops for sale. These conditions are each strictly necessary if the general suspicion natives have that they are being squeezed out of the free occupation of land in their own country is to dispelled.... Unrest is probably nowhere else so great in Eastern Africa as it is among those who pay Europeans every year in rent several times larger than the purchase price paid to the Government by the Europeans for the land used, land in many cases which natives regard as the property neither of Government nor of individual Europeans but as their own.... [T]here can be no reason why at this time of day the law should give the occupying native no protection against the confiscation of his land, except the fact that the government never knows when it may discover that it wishes to confiscate.²⁰

In a "Memorandum on the Land Question in Tropical Africa" written for the Mandates Committee of the League of Nations in 1922, Leys argues in a similar vein, outlining problems as well as potential policies in order to ensure the stability of the Colony and the well-being of its African residents.²¹ The Church's international influence highlighted those concerns that Africans were unable to voice. The Mission brought the regional problems of those who were disenfranchised to both a popular

and a political audience, describing land abuses in newspapers and in Parliament, the League of Nations and Whitehall. While the colonial Government ignored its regional commissioners arguing for similar policies,²² the powerful Church lobby would allow for a more politically assertive position on the part of the Missions. The intervention of the State and its efforts to develop the settler economy, balance settler and African political positions, and delimit African sociopolitical autonomy encouraged the development of a productive capitalist economy, but also had negative socioeconomic and political implications for Africans. Writing in 1939, Albert Colby Cooke, a contemporary of the colonial establishment, describes a “dependent empire” reliant on both “the British people”, who contributed to its expansion and the “good faith of the Colonial Office”, which made such individual outlays and national growth possible. He further suggests that it was predominantly settlers (rather than Africans) who benefitted from the “roads and water supply”, “[a]gricultural subsidies” and “scientific research services and agricultural education” provided by the Government.²³

The British Colonial Office leveraged its political authority, secured through its investment in the Colony, in a judicious manner. Though colonial authorities were involved in the economic development of the State, they limited their judicial and political engagement. At a dinner hosted in 1923 by the Royal African Society, a group representing settlers, the Duke of Devonshire, Secretary of State for the Colonies claimed,

[T]he policy which [the British Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin’s] Government was hoping to pursue was that which provided tranquillity to other people. I do not think that either [Baldwin] or any of his colleagues had any illusions on the subject that however successful they might be in attaining that object, they would not be able to participate to any extent in that state.²⁴

At this gathering sponsored by those settlers who were often beneficiaries of the colonial system, the Duke of Devonshire suggests that it is in the best interests of the British state to minimize its involvement in the everyday social and political function of Kenya. His position of respect at the dinner demonstrates the cordial tenor and reciprocal nature of the colonist-settler relationship. The Duke of Devonshire's comments highlight the minimal role both settlers and colonial authorities believed the British government should play in the operation of the State in order to "provide tranquillity to other people." While the Duke of Devonshire does not specify who these people are, those to whom the Government most often afforded "tranquillity" through legitimized political means were settlers, though the stability of the State depended on the peaceable order of local interest groups. While district commissioners were involved in the State's functioning, their judicial, social, and political suggestions were often ignored by the colonial authorities in Nairobi or the British government in Whitehall.²⁵ The Colonial Office was cautious in dealing with complex or costly issues or becoming involved in situations in which the imposition of a political agenda could interfere with the socioeconomic stability of the state. In most cases, the British authorities shaped their agenda around the interests of settlers rather than Africans. It would take the strong political lobby of the Church to precipitate change within the colonial bureaucracy and to mediate the political and economic tensions that did arise between settlers and colonists.

Settlers advocated, in both London and Nairobi, for policies that would promote their own economic interests. These "economic nationalists" lobbied for policies that would stimulate the internal market by legitimizing a socioeconomic-racial hierarchy and favoritism that allowed for the exploitation of Africans and African land in order to support white settler industry and agriculture.²⁶ In an article in the *Kenya Weekly News* entitled, "Settler's Role?" an anonymous "Englishman"

describes the agenda and political-economic opinions of white landowners in Kenya:

Jefferson held that Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness are the right of every man. And Mozelijkatse, King of the Matabele, held the land, the rain, and the sun are his right. Are they? Show me the contract showing that you will not accept existence without these various boons. They are all, indeed, not rights, but rewards. If Africa, America, Australia lay uncultivated under wandering bands of lazy savages they were justly taken for the home-lands of those escaping from the weariness, the fever and the fret.... Where men sit and hear each other groan. ... Everyone then has the right to earn liberty, happiness, a place on the land, in the sun and the rain?' Surely this explains at least some of the reasons for the Settlers coming, and justifies their colonisation.²⁷

The passage suggests the capitalist political-economic agenda of the “Englishman,” or rather, English settlers en bloc. The “Englishman” argues for a political framework that accommodates, within capitalist doctrine, settlers’ land grabbing and their exploitation of natives. Moreover, the letter also alludes to the expectations settlers had of their government and the opportunities they were promised. Settlers colonized East Africa in tandem with the Government; the symbiotic relationship between the two groups shaped, at least in the late nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, expectations of policy and production. Settlers aimed “to ensure that the metropole makes no liberalising concessions to the black majorities, and the basic method is constant reactive clamour and blocking manoeuvres.”²⁸ And indeed, often, Kenyan settlers were effective. Their aristocratic position (one British paper called them “Bluebloods in the Wilds”) and social and educational background afforded them “close and intimate

connections with the ruling elites of twentieth century Britain.”²⁹ The socioeconomic similarities amongst the settlers also meant that they held similar positions on important political and economic issues and forged close connections with officials in London.³⁰

The political and economic sway settlers held allowed them to shape the colonial world in a significant way. In a letter to the Colonial Secretary in 1918, Dr. Norman Leys wrote, “[European landholders] control and direct... life in all its phases... These few hundred men with their agents and dependents in trade, form a highly organized body, represented on the legislature and acutely conscious of their position.”³¹ Leys, a Christian Socialist, draws attention to the political and economic power of settlers over the lives of Africans. However, Leys’s religious and political affiliations as well as the recipient of his letter, namely the Colonial Secretary, demonstrate the way in which religious-humanitarian ideology and its corresponding political principles were increasingly being communicated to government officials. His political ideology spread throughout Europe and became popular amongst church leaders such as Handley Hooper, a member of the Church Missionary Society; Randall Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury; and J. H. Oldham, the secretary of the International Missionary Council, all of whom eventually advocated similar positions.³² Leys also carried influence within the Colonial Office itself: J. H. Oldham wrote in 1925, soon after the publishing of Leys’ *Kenya*, that “I am told that your book has woken up the Colonial Office...”³³ Indeed, Leys himself had “no doubt that... my book has induced a change of policy.”³⁴ It was with the support of individual, influential members of the Church and with the advocacy of the Church institutions with which they were affiliated that policy in Britain could be influenced.³⁵ The ideological alliance of Church leaders, missionary organizations, and humanitarian groups amounted to an effective political lobbying tool, enabling the groups to advocate for a moral component of politics. The

vocal lobby, comprised of such groups as the Church Missionary Society, Aborigines Protection Society (with its Quaker roots and affiliation), the International Missionary Council, and the London Missionary Society, articulated the concerns of missionaries in Kenya to politicians and to the public, precipitating shifts in British colonial policy.³⁶

Both missionaries and settlers formed powerful political lobbies. Though missions did not share the same socioeconomic relationship that settlers did with colonial authorities and British politicians, they invested in a similar approach, competing for the ear of politicians in Whitehall, especially through public campaigns. Public outreach would galvanize the public and encourage the response of the political establishment. In a letter to Norman Leys, J.H. Oldham wrote, "I agree with you entirely as to the primary importance of publicity.... Publicity is a comparatively clear issue. I agree, as I have said, that it is the first thing and I am trying, so far as time and strength permit, to assist in it.... Assisting in publicity is a continuous job and I am doing, and will continue to do, all I can find time for..."³⁷ Major political-ideological advocates for missionaries included the London Missionary Society, the Church of Scotland Mission, and the Church Missionary Society while the Archbishop of Canterbury helped missionaries engage the public and influence the political elite. In 1918, Protestant missions established an alliance, which served as a liaison with the Government, facilitating discussion based on empirical research in the Colony, and sociopolitical policy suggestions.³⁸ The missions also sought sympathetic members of Parliament and influential government figures or members of the aristocracy to promote their ideological agenda politically. During the circumcision debates in 1929 for example, though missionaries failed to change public policy, they obtained the support of Katharine Stewart-Murray, the Duchess of Atholl, who became a keen political advocate for them.

While lobbies may not have been the most productive way for missions to effect sociopolitical change, the politicized

advocacy of the Church in support of African interests was difficult to ignore.³⁹ Settlers, colonial authorities, and Christian missionaries themselves recognized the role the missions played, or could play, in influencing government policy. W. McGregor Ross, writing in 1927, described the “remarkable” efforts of the Church Missionary Society, which “can now be seen to have had a profound influence upon British policy in Central Africa, and consequently upon the destinies of millions of African natives....”⁴⁰ The lobbying effort of the Church in conjunction with the missions’ public outreach, affected politicians to such a degree that the British “Government found it a matter of increasing difficulty to face Parliament with any concurrence.”⁴¹

Education proved to be a crucial tool to develop and control Kenya. The size of the state made administration difficult, especially because Kenya had a relatively small administrative staff. The 250,000 square miles and the numerous African ethnic groups that made up the Colony were challenging to pacify and shape.⁴² Education allowed Europeans to mold the state from the bottom up and its power to influence Africans made it a point of contention for settlers, missionaries, and colonial authorities. It was, however, missionaries who primarily controlled education during the colonial administration of the colony. Settlers argued vociferously that missionary education was “spoiling the native” and caused “the disruption of tribal life... which made administration difficult.”⁴³ These British settlers supported missionary efforts in so far as they overlapped with their own interests, but had little regard for African societies or developing natives for any purpose other than their own economic benefit.⁴⁴ The limited investment of the Colonial Office and their expenditures aimed at developing the economic infrastructure of the country left little money to devote to education; consequently, missionary education proved the most efficacious manner by which colonial authorities could provide instruction at least approximately like that they had imagined. Moreover, it was through their educational

programs that missions were able to shape African society. John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman argue that one of the colonizers' primary goals in Kenya was "to convert [their] superior coercive force over Africans into a legitimate authority accepted by Africans and therefore mediated through their own pre-existing or emergent relations of power."⁴⁵ Missionary education introduced European ideology to Africans in an acceptable, or indeed, even socially and economically valuable way, while encouraging African ethnic groups to empathize and at least tacitly accept colonial authority.⁴⁶ Members of the Kikuyu, an ethnic group in East Africa, claimed that "[t]he Gospel... began to form a new nation from that of old Kikuyu... We are at the beginning of a great building up of new customs and the forming of Christianity."⁴⁷ Through their intellectual and spiritual proselytization, missionaries exerted such influence that they were able to establish the Kikuyu Association, which was led by chiefs who sided with British colonial authorities. Missionary education connected African ethnic groups to British colonial authorities by legitimizing Europeanization and providing the ideological and moral structure upon which the colonial authorities could establish their own authority⁴⁸ and institutions as well as providing Africans with the skills they would need to survive in (or support) a European-structured economy. Leys argued that the "chief aim" of the State-sponsored education the missions provided was "[exploitive] wealth production" while the Kenya Missionary Council argued that "[t]he main needs of the adult population are agricultural rather than literary. The efforts of Missions must be ancillary to the activities of Government, which alone can plan on an effective scale."⁴⁹ Both passages suggest an inextricable connection between Government and Church that was manifest in education, one which reinforced the racial-economic hierarchy and supported Africans only in so far as it allowed them to function within, and provide support for, the colonial sociopolitical and economic construct.

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Unidentified Photographer, Children in a Classroom, ca. 1920-1940, Kenya

While settlers and colonial authorities blamed missionaries for destabilizing African ethnic groups and interfering with “tribal life,” colonial authorities recognized the importance of developing a European-educated ethnic population familiar with colonial culture, rather than one only trained to work on settler farms. Ultimately, these divergent interests were reconciled through the educational program of the missions:

The primary object of mission education is to make Christianity intelligible. The Government’s chief care is to make Africans obedient subjects and diligent producers of wealth, while the great aim of European planters and merchants is to make as many Africans as possible work for wages. These obviously different motives involve different educational ideals. Some compromise between them is of course possible and, as things are, inevitable.... Missionaries recognise perfectly well that education should not only provide information

and stimulate intelligence, but also fit Africans for their place in society... [I]ndustrial training on any scale by both Catholic and Protestant missions began only when, several years ago, Government first gave substantial grants in aid.... European opinion in Kenya thinks it is the duty of missions to turn out large numbers of workers in metal, stone, bricks and wood, clerks, printers, telegraphists, and so forth for work in both official and private employment. Many missionaries nowadays accept that duty thus urged upon them.... inevitably mission education is increasingly devoted to supplying ordinary commercial demands.⁵⁰

This approach to education, one that integrated the pedagogical objectives of the colonial administration and settlers with the spiritual emphasis of the missions, stemmed directly from the colonial government that subsidized academic outreach. However, this synthesis of objectives was not manifest clearly in the classroom, especially after the Government began to support education financially. The confidential minutes of J. H. Oldham's speech at the Conference on Christian Education in East Africa in June, 1930 detail the problems of this sociopolitical-economic-academic construct in practice: "[t]he accepted theory was that Government and missions were partners in education and that missions should not only have a share in the conduct of education, but also be allowed a voice in the shaping of policy. In actual fact the partnership tended to work out in a very one-sided fashion [in favour of the Government]."⁵¹ In effect, missionaries had established themselves as social and economic agents of the empire, acting through education to shape the Colony and the Africans therein.

A Christian, European education provided a means by which African ethnic groups could be pacified and encouraged them to more easily receive European ideas and institutions than they would be had they been educated in, and acculturated

to, a more traditional African milieu. The Church recognized the importance of mission schools and in the 1926 edition of *The Church Missionary Outlook* argued that “[i]n Kenya... the mission school is the most successful evangelistic agency that we have”.⁵² This intellectual proselytization was important because “[w]hat alone in the end really matters in Kenya is what goes on in the minds of Africans.” The Church played a seminal role in this process, “forming afresh [Africans’] conceptions of duty and their ideas of society.”⁵³ In a letter to the Director of Education in Kenya the Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa lists, among other benefits of education, the “[e]limination of political, economic, and social unrest [and the] [d]evelopment of Colonial patriotism and loyalty to the Crown.”⁵⁴ The letter also suggests that education could provide “sensible native leadership entirely loyal to the real interests of the Colony” and might “encourage all forms of co-operation both with Government and also with the non-African elements of the population who are vitally concerned in the welfare of the Colony.”⁵⁵ Indeed, a report by the Headmaster of the Kikuyu Alliance High School confirms that missionary schools had the “opportunity” to mold students, as “[m]ost of the future leaders of the country pass through our hands.”⁵⁶ These were leaders that had been “raise[d] up... both for the Church and for the State.”⁵⁷ Missionary education, Norman Leys suggests, “enabled Europeans to subjugate [Africans]” and “taught [them] their place in the world” – it provided a means by which the Government could pacify, shape, and control an unruly African populace, giving them the skills to succeed (or survive) in a European-structured economy and shaping their character in such a way as to encourage a receptivity towards the European system.⁵⁸

While the education missions provided mediated the development of Kenya by Europeanizing African ethnic groups and encouraging the adoption of British ideology, it also gave Africans the tools to resist colonial authority later in the twentieth

century. Missions supported local governments (even while trying to influence them) and missionary education allowed African ethnic groups to respond to colonialism, articulating themselves in a linguistic, cultural, political, and economic manner that Europeans could understand. Settlers believed that missionary education encouraged the dissolution of the “racial hierarchy” and while this might not have been the agenda all of the missions had in mind, education certainly helped to precipitate some of the African-led socioeconomic shifts that occurred towards the end of colonial rule (for example, Jomo Kenyatta, the first prime minister of Kenya and an outspoken critic of the colonial Government, was a product of mission schools).⁵⁹ Many African communities appreciated the education they received from missions for exactly this reason.⁶⁰ Despite their amenable relationship with the colonial Government, missionaries were able to advocate for social changes that shifted the socio-political position of Africans and altered their relationship with settlers, disrupting the established hierarchy. The education missions provided, even while it imposed on natives from the colonial level, would encourage social, cultural, and economic change from the subaltern level, allowing Africans to redefine the structure of Kenyan society even while being influenced by Europeans.⁶¹ Though lobbies and government petitions were not always an effective way for missionary groups to create societal change, education allowed them a chance to encourage certain cultural shifts through the influence of Africans themselves.

While the British government shaped policy and law in the colonies, its proclivity towards indirect rule meant that its presence was not overbearing in Kenya. Rather than petition for specific legislation, settlers often advocated for decreased government involvement in what they saw as their land and their state.⁶² This philosophy persisted until the mid-nineteen twenties at which point the threat of rebellion amongst African groups required British intervention. In early colonial Kenya, there was an “essential irrelevance of constitutional forms in a

settler society.”⁶³ In one instance, when the Land Office would not approve a site chosen by Lord Delamere for a flour mill, he arranged for a band of natives to light a fire under their building – after they piled firewood around the stilts of the structure, the bureaucrats inside reluctantly acceded to his requests.⁶⁴ In another instance of recalcitrance, settlers threatened to kidnap the governor and take political and administrative control of the Colony when they were worried about their interests being ignored. James Griffiths, the British Colonial Secretary, claimed after his visit to Kenya that “settlers ‘indicated that any [political] changes imposed on us against our wishes would be resisted, even to the extent of unconstitutional action.’”⁶⁵ Lord Cranworth, a British settler managing a farm in Kenya, “was only half-kidding” when he described the country as a place where “[t]here are some settlers who stone their Governors and shoot natives.”⁶⁶ However, the British government frequently condoned behavior of settlers because often, the agendas of the two groups overlapped: the settlers’ economic interests constituted a crucial component of the Government’s plan for colonialism. In addition, the conservative political stance of settlers and their position of economic control made it difficult to impose progressive policies from London.⁶⁷ The Duke of Devonshire, Secretary of State for the Colonies, implied as much in his 1923 address to the African Society: “I should have thought it would have been more appropriate if the African Society had devoted the evening to addressing the Secretary of State rather than the Secretary of State attempting to address the African Society.”⁶⁸ Here, the Secretary of State for the Colonies irreverently acknowledges the inversion of the customary socioeconomic-political hierarchy in which settlers were now demanding the attention of politicians. The passage also suggests that colonial authorities struggled to see “African Society” as made up of anything more than European settlers. Because propositions made directly to the British government were not always the most effective way to encourage sociocultural

development, missionaries tried to mediate the development of the State through its subaltern culture (especially through education) as well as by appealing to the British public.

Organizations and individuals were able to influence British policy by petitioning government officials and campaigning for public support. Often, however, it was public support that shaped the colonial system on the ground, rather than advocacy directed towards individuals in government. General Philip Wheatley, a soldier, newspaper correspondent, and Kenyan settler who moved to the Colony in 1919, argued, “after all, in the ultimate result, it will be the simple English voter who will decide [on many of the issues associated with colonialism].”⁶⁹ Indeed, Leys writes that “If O[rmsby]-G[ore],” the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1922-1929 and Colonial Secretary between 1936 and 1938, “thinks he can do anything whatever in E. Africa without the public behind him he must be even more easily deceived than I had feared.”⁷⁰ One article published in the local Huddersfield Examiner newspaper on June 1, 1923 begins, “How Kenya colony shall be governed may not seem a question that touches very intimately the lives of Huddersfield folk, but it is, nevertheless, one for which none of us can shirk responsibility. We are all of us citizens of the British Empire...”⁷¹ Newspapers encouraged British citizens to become politically involved, while also providing an important avenue by which to shape public opinion. Lord Delamere recognized this when he cabled *The Times* [of London]: “...Is British taxpayer, proprietor of East Africa, content that beautiful and valuable country be handed over... Englishmen here appeal public opinion, especially those who know this country, against the arbitrary proceeding and consequent swamping bright future of the country.”⁷² His cable cost £20 in 1904, the equivalent to about £1,150 or \$1,700 today.⁷³ He would later have a pamphlet printed in order to further shape the public position. Both the cost and content of the cable demonstrate the importance of public opinion in shaping colonial policy.

Missionaries were cognizant of the value public support could have on promoting their political positions. They relied on individuals like Bishop Willis, Bishop Peel, Handley Hooper, J. H. Oldham, Norman Leys, the Archbishop of Canterbury, J. W. Arthur, and Randall Davidson among other Church officials and religious leaders to influence public opinion. These people were intimately connected with the activities of missionaries in Kenya and their perspectives on colonial life and the condition of African ethnic groups. A letter from Norman Leys to J. H. describes the structure and agenda of the missionary lobby and its relationship with the British public: “The real work [is] done by thousands [of Church affiliates] who with common conscious aim ripened public opinion. That is what is needed for Kenya... Publish the facts and get people to lay them alongside their consciences and their intelligences and the question what should be done will answer itself.”⁷⁴ Many members of the British public saw missionaries and their political, ideological, and spiritual advocates in Britain as “the ‘conscience of empire,’” providing them with information about, and context for, government policies.⁷⁵ One letter from a missionary in Nairobi to Rev. H. D. Hooper at the Church Missionary Society describes European abuses on mining reserves in Kenya and links those missionaries doing work in the Colony with Church officials in Britain lobbying for policy changes:

We did all we could this end but it is a pretty hopeless fight... The Bill went through the second and third reading on Wednesday, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies having already given his sanction before it went to Legislative Council; it has become law!... Canon Burns has fought this Bill with all his power, and he told them quite plainly that if we had the rush of Europeans in the Kavirondo Reserve it would only end one way, and that would be a fight, and we know who will suffer, not the prospector but the unfortunate native.... [I]t

makes me wild to think the way [the Colonial authorities] are behaving in the Kavirondo reserve. I think that with these papers [attached to the letter] I have given you all the information that I can. I know that you will leave no stone unturned to help us.⁷⁶

Letters like these gave popular Church leaders and influential members of religious institutions like the Church Missionary Society (here, for example, Handley Hooper) the information they used to influence public sentiment. This partnership between missionaries and public figures in London resulted in a number of popular published criticisms of government, seen in innumerable letters to the editor and editorials published in British papers, and affected government policy to such a degree that missionary groups were criticized by colonialists for their support of African ethnic groups and their willingness to press the public to support native interests.⁷⁷ Missionary groups and Church-affiliated institutions proved to be extremely effective at molding public opinion, enabling them to shape the colonial state and circumvent the close personal relationship that colonial settlers and British politicians shared.

Missions played a difficult but important role in the colonial empire, specifically in Kenya. Colonial influence, the driving force behind the modernization of Kenya, was not imposed only by the metropole through its agents; rather, it was exerted through the economic pressure of settlers, through religious and humanitarian groups in Britain, and perhaps most significantly, through those European missions which would educate, influence, advocate for, and pacify native Kenyans. Missions were able to assuage the difficulties associated with colonial assimilation: Africans “almost to a man, they used to hate us Europeans (they certainly looked like it) but now God has done something for them that has taken away all that hate and given them the clue to finding the answers that their people need.”⁷⁸ The influence of missions was profound and while the

Government was effectively limited to controlling policy and settlers and to influencing socioeconomic measures, missions were able to mediate policy and shape the lives of Africans. Indeed, the Commissioner for the Protectorate, Sir Charles Eliot, claimed that “[t]he opening of a new mission station has seemed to me to be generally as efficacious for the extension of European influence as the opening of a Government station, and there are districts in East Africa... in which European influence has hitherto been represented almost entirely by missionaries, but which have made as great progress as the regions which have been taken in hand by Government officials.”⁷⁹ However, caught between disparate agendas, the position of missions was a challenging one. They found themselves responsible for advocating for those Africans whose support they managed to co-opt only by defending their interests while at the same time, missionaries’ position as white Europeans in Africa dependent on British government support tied them ineluctably to the settler and colonial coteries. Missionaries saw themselves as responsible for defending a rapidly growing settler population and were reliant on a system of colonial support that provided them with the law, order, and protection they needed to effect change. Missionaries’ ability to encourage change operated on a number of different levels. The political lobby provided an effective means by which the missionaries could reach politicians directly while education in Kenya and public political-ideological campaigns in Britain allowed them to shape policy through the popular support of their agenda. The missionary position was one that had to balance conflicting interests; nonetheless, the inextricable connection between the missions and all of the major socioeconomic groups in Britain and Kenya and their comprehensive approach to creating social, cultural, political, and economic change ensured that the missions played an important role in mediating the development of colonial Kenya.

¹ Winston Churchill, *My African Journey* (1908, Reprint London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1990), 18.

² Sir Charles Eliot, *The East Africa Protectorate* (London: Edward Arnold, 1905), 302.

³ See, for instance, the white paper, *Indians in Kenya: Memorandum* (1923) which, while it was intended to resolve the conflict between Indians and Europeans, did so by giving “paramountcy [sic] of African interests” in the colony. It was “also a response to pressures from the International Missionary Society and the archbishop of Canterbury.” (Irving Kaplan et al., *Area Handbook for Kenya*, 31)

⁴ Missions could “exert a formative influence on [African] social life” (J. H. Oldham) and their “aspiration after a new world-order will be ineffective unless education .. is built on a profoundly Christian basis. Without Christ in our schools we shall fight in vain for Christian civilisation. Therefore let us see to it that our boys and girls, the hope of the future, grow up with a genuine knowledge of Christ which will influence their whole outlook upon life. A general acceptance of the meaning of moral terms, based upon the definite teaching of Christianity, can alone lead the peoples... to a permanent and mutual understanding.” (Cardinal Hinsley, *The Listener* (14 December 1939), in *Kenya Missionary Council, Report of the Committee on Educational Policy* (Nairobi: 21 June, 1940), 2).

⁵ “If missions come to be regarded by the natives as a department of State, their influence in the future will be totally destroyed.” Norman Leys to the Editor of *The Scots Observer* (Glasgow), 25 December 1926, in Norman Leys and J. H. Oldham, *By Kenya Possessed: The Correspondence of Norman Leys and J. H. Oldham, 1918-1926*, ed. John W. Cell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 294.

⁶ Kenneth Good, “Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 14.4 (Dec. 1976), 598; “Explorers of Kenya ... as well as IBEAC and later protectorate officials, had not learned of any exploitable mineral deposits that might have offered a solution to the protectorate’s early economic problems. The

lack of any important mineral resources... was confirmed by comprehensive surveys in 1902 and 1903, and experts and the government concluded that agriculture for export was the only way to make the protectorate pay for itself.” (Irving Kaplan et al., *Area Handbook for Kenya* (Washington D.C.: American University, 1976), 27).

⁷ Kenneth Good, “Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation,” 602; M. P. K. Sorrenson, *Origins of European Settlement in Kenya* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968), 48.

⁸ Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa, African No. 1100, CO 879/121/4, 224.

⁹ Irving Kaplan et al., *Area Handbook for Kenya* (Washington D.C.: American University Press, 1976), 20.

¹⁰ Kenya Report on Disturbances, 1949, 2.

¹¹ Sir Charles Eliot, *The East Africa Protectorate*, 239.

¹² Kenneth Good, “Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation,” 599-601; It should be noted that famine as a product of settlers’ agricultural efforts and economic agenda as well as disease contributed to this figure as well.

¹³ Richard Meinertzhagen, *Kenya Diary: 1902-1906* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), 31.

¹⁴ W. McGregor Ross, *Kenya from Within: A Short Political History* (1927: London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1968), 376.

¹⁵ Even British settlers were limited by colonial authority: Lord Delamere, one of the earliest colonial settlers, requested land three times and was denied twice because the colonial authorities had objections to his requested allotment. (Errol Trzebinski, *The Kenya Pioneers* (London: Heinemann, 1985), 82.)

¹⁶ Trzebinski, *The Kenya Pioneers*, 100.

¹⁷ Ukamba Province Land file, Eliot to Landsdowne. From: Michael Thomason, “Little Tin Gods: The District Officer in

British East Africa,” *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Summer, 1975): 153.

¹⁸ Trzebinski, *The Kenya Pioneers*, 102.

¹⁹ “Analysis reveals the simplest fact of unrest, although not probably the most important in the end, to be economic.... These economic grievances arise out of the conditions of land tenure and of labour for Europeans. No detailed description of the varying conditions under which land is held and cultivated is necessary. It is sufficient to mention the fact that nowhere except in the ten mile strip on the coast—and there almost all the land has passed out of native ownership—has any native individual, family or tribe legal title to any land, and the equally important fact that besides thousands of natives who are entirely dependent for food on land held under Europeans, land for which they often have to pay rent either in money or in unpaid labour, there is a much larger number of natives who have merely just enough ground on which to grow their necessary food to whom it is quite impossible to grow crops for sale, wherewith to pay the tax money and to buy trade goods.” Letter from Dr. Norman Leys, Medical Officer, Nyasaland to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Downing Street, 7 February 1918. From: *Leys and Oldham, By Kenya Possessed*, ed. John W. Cell, 91-2.

²⁰ Letter of Dr. Norman Leys, Medical Officer, Nyasaland to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Downing Street, 7 February 1918, *Leys and Oldham, By Kenya Possessed*, 92.

²¹ “To sum up, Europe has hitherto failed, in four-fifths of tropical Africa, to protect native land rights from spoliation. Nothing has been done or is being done to render impossible the alienation of such land as Africans still occupy.” Leys, “Memorandum on the Land Question in Tropical Africa,” for the Mandates committee of the League of Nations Union. 15 February 1922 [Edinburgh House, Box 200], *Leys and Oldham, By Kenya Possessed*, 211, 215.

²² See: Michael Thomason, “Little Tin Gods: The District

Officer in British East Africa,” 153.

²³ Albert Colby Cooke, 138-139.

²⁴ “Dinner of the Society,” *Journal of the Royal African Society* 22.88 (Jul. 1923), 321.

²⁵ See, for example, the suggestions of John Ainsworth, a provincial colonial administrator in Kenya, to more senior colonial and governmental authorities. Ainsworth petitioned colonial authorities to change the political and economic practices structuring African-White relations. He advocated “raising the status of these [African] citizens of the Empire” and suggested that the colonial government adopt a more “beneficent [sic] policy for their future”, directed towards creating a “contented, industrious, and progressive... population.” Disappointed with the position of Africans as the “hewers of wood and drawers of water” for white immigrants, Ainsworth advocated social, political, and economic reform. However, it took months of petitioning before he was even acknowledged by the Colonial Office in London who had “heard nothing of [his petitions] before now”, that is, months after he initially submitted them. “The Colonial Office did not get a direct answer; Nairobi [the Kenyan seat of colonial authority] simply promised to examine the problem and nothing further transpired.” From: Michael Thomason, “Little Tin Gods: The District Officer in British East Africa,” 146, 159.

²⁶ Kenneth Good, “Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation,” 605; For further discussion see E. A. Brett, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa: The Politics of Economic Change* (New York: NOK Publishers, 1973).

²⁷ “Englishman”, “Settler’s Role?”, *Kenya Weekly News*, July 12, 1946.

²⁸ Kenneth Good, “Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation,” 611.

²⁹ C. J. Duder, “‘Men of the Officer Class:’ The Participants in

the 1919 Soldier Settlement Scheme in Kenya, *African Affairs*, 92.366 (Jan. 1993), 75-6.

³⁰ Kenyan settlers, those “representatives of power and privilege in the British Empire” all had to have “sufficient capital resources” before coming to Kenya. Many also were products of the elite institutions of the establishment (for instance, the military officer corps) and British private school system. Kenya was often referred to as “‘the Public Schoolboy Colony’ or ‘par excellence the retired officer’s colony’”. (C. J. Duder, “‘Men of the Officer Class:’ The Participants in the 1919 Soldier Settlement Scheme in Kenya, *African Affairs*, 92.366 (Jan., 1993), 69-71). Their common background, economic and social pursuits, concerns, and goals meant that they were often, though not always, able to advocate politically in a unified way. It is worth noting that missionaries often came from a very different background and maintained very different interests and agendas and so were often not able to interact with settlers in productive ways, though they did have missionaries who worked in that milieu; “Lord Delamere and Lord Francis Scott in Kenya maintained excellent contacts in London, and in a key figure like Sir Edward Grigg (later Lord Altrincham), Governor of Kenya, 1925-30, the settlers had a most sympathetic and influential person on the spot.” Kenneth Good, “Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation,” 613.

³¹ Diana Wylie, “Confrontation over Kenya: The Colonial Office and Its Critics 1918-1940,” *The Journal of African History* 18.3 (1977), 428.

³² *Idem*, 429.

³³ Letter from Oldham to Leys, 30 September, 1925, Leys and Oldham, *By Kenya Possessed*, 275.

³⁴ Letter from Leys to Oldham, 26 March 1925, Leys and Oldham, *By Kenya Possessed*, 254.

³⁵ “Undoubtedly much alleviation of severe conditions for natives has been effected by clergy and missionaries, by the

process of confidential interviews with Governors, or by reporting to Mission headquarter offices in Great Britain, which in turn make representations to the Colonial Office. When remedy is not obtained by this routine, it is generally left to the Archbishop of Canterbury to focus public attention upon malpractices by exposure in the House of Lords. He is not as popular in Kenya as he might be.” Ross, *Kenya from Within*, 115.

³⁶ J. H. Oldham, in letters to the Archbishop of Canterbury, describes meetings with Sir Edward Grigg (a member of Parliament and governor of Kenya) and Leo Amery (member of Parliament, First Lord of the Admiralty, and Colonial Secretary) (Letter from Oldham to Archbishop of Canterbury, 10 June 1925. From: *Leys and Oldham, By Kenya Possessed*, ed. John W. Cell, 265). He also requests that the Archbishop of Canterbury try “to convert Geoffrey Dawson [editor of *The Times*] and Lord Astor [Owner and publisher of *The Observer*]” while saying that he “probably, can get into touch, after the debate in the Lords, with H. A. L. Fisher [member of Parliament, president of the Board of Education]... or if necessary with J. H. Thomas or Ramsay MacDonald. There are other people like the Prime Minister [Stanley Baldwin] and Lord Salisbury, who might be influenced as well as, of course, Amery himself.” (Letter from Oldham to Archbishop of Canterbury, 13 May 1925, [IMC (Geneva), Box 93]. From: *Leys and Oldham, By Kenya Possessed*, ed. John W. Cell, 258). The letters detail the network of relationships that influential missionaries maintained the depth of relationships they had in political circles however, it also highlights the importance of public opinion in shaping policy (“If the earmarking of part of the loan is the best way of going forward, we may have to make a strong effort to convince public opinion.”)

³⁷ Letter from Oldham to Leys, 9 March 1925, *Leys and Oldham, By Kenya Possessed*, 251-2.

³⁸ Renison Muchiri Githige, “The Mission State Relationship in

Colonial Kenya: A Summary,” 120.

³⁹ For further discussion of the power of lobbies in Britain see Renison Muchiri Githige, “The Mission State Relationship in Colonial Kenya: A Summary,” and E. A. Brett, *Colonialism and Underdevelopment in East Africa: The Politics of Economic Change*, 145.

⁴⁰ W. McGregor Ross, *Kenya from Within*, 37.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² In his diary, Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen describes just how difficult it was to control the state militarily, administratively, or economically from the top down, especially early in the twentieth century: “Here we are, three white men in the heart of Africa, with 20 nigger soldiers and 50 nigger police, 68 miles from doctors or reinforcements, administering and policing a district inhabited by half a million well-armed savages who have only quite recently come into touch with the white man, and we are responsible for the security in an area the size of Yorkshire. The position is most humorous to my mind...” From: Richard Meinertzhagen, *Kenya Diary: 1902-1906*, 32.

⁴³ Report by the Headmaster on the Kikuyu Alliance High School, Airgraph from E. Carey Francis to Rev. H. M. Grace, 25 April, 1944; Githige, “The Mission State Relationship in Colonial Kenya: A Summary”, 113.

⁴⁴ L. S. B. Leakey argued in 1936 that “So long as the interests of the African do not threaten those of the settler community, the settlers are prepared to help the native. But, and this is quite natural, if there is any conflict of interests the settler puts his own interests first. The natives of Kenya know this only too well, and that is why they are so apprehensive that the demand of the Kenya settler for self-government will one day be granted.” (L. S. B. Leakey, *Kenya Contrasts and Problems* (London: Methuen and Company Limited), 109.)

⁴⁵ John Lonsdale and Bruce Berman, “Coping with the Contradictions: The Development of the Colonial State in Kenya, 1895-1914,” *The Journal of African History* 20.4, White

Presence and Power in Africa (1979), 490.

⁴⁶ The efforts of the missions and their educational and socio-spiritual proselytization “have a most vital bearing upon contact and adaption. They incorporate an enormous attack upon the native’s mind, habits, beliefs, upon his views of world and transhuman powers, upon his customs, his social and mental arrangement, and his psychic equilibrium. This attack... [has served] as an instrument for animating European expansion.” Richard C. Thurnwald, *Black and White in East Africa: The Fabric of a New Civilization* (London: George Routledge and Sons, Limited, 1935), 212.

⁴⁷ Robert Strayer, “Mission History in Africa: New Perspectives on an Encounter,” 8.

⁴⁸ “What is seen and done on [Mission stations] is giving many, perhaps already most Africans in Kenya, a new moral standard.” (Leys, Kenya, 247).

⁴⁹ Norman Leys, “Missions and Governments: Objects of Christian Education” *The Scots Observer* (Glasgow), 27 November 1926, Leys and Oldham, *By Kenya Possessed*, ed. John W. Cell, 287-290; Kenya Missionary Council, *Report of the Committee on Educational Policy*, (Nairobi, Kenya: 21st June, 1940), 7.

⁵⁰ Leys, Kenya, 259-261.

⁵¹ Minutes from the Conference on Christian Education in East Africa, 16-17 June 1930, 1-3.

⁵² *The Church Missionary Outlook* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1926), 53:186.

⁵³ Leys, Kenya, 258.

⁵⁴ Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa, African No. 1100, CO 879/121/4, 224.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Report by the Headmaster on the Kikuyu Alliance High School, Airgraph from E. Carey Francis to Rev. H. M. Grace, 25 April, 1944.

⁵⁷ Minutes from the Conference on Christian Education in East

Africa, 16-17 June 1930, 1-3.

⁵⁸ Norman Leys, Letter to the Editor: "The Education of the African", *Manchester Guardian*, October 16, 1926, Leys and Oldham, *By Kenya Possessed*, 277.

⁵⁹ Dane Kennedy, *Islands of White*, 163.

⁶⁰ "We, members of the Local Native Council of Central Kavirondo, have heard this statement [claiming they did not want to be educated by missionaries] which we find in the Report of the Education Department. It grieves us very much indeed. ... Never have we said bad things about mission schools. It is because we thoroughly approve of them that we vote them large sums of money every year. The other day we asked to increase these votes. We wish them to grow in strength and size..." (Members of the Local Native Council's response to the Director of Education and the Education Department of Kenya, W. Arthur Pitt-Pitts, *The Educational Report of 1929 and the Attitude of the Mission in 1931*, 1931)

⁶¹ "[M]issionary societies are making a serious endeavour to give to the peoples of Africa, who have been suddenly swept into the fierce currents of western civilisation, an education which will enable them to meet these new conditions." Oldham to the Editor, *Manchester Guardian*, 29 October 1926, Leys and Oldham, *By Kenya Possessed*, 280.

⁶² On May 15th, 1923 at a Dinner for the African Society, the Earl Buxton, its president, claimed: "I think it was a very satisfactory feature of our public life of late years, that Colonial questions and Dominion questions have got out of the rut of Party politics—and will never get back to them. What is that policy? It is a very simple one. So far as the Dominions... are concerned, Downing Street not many years ago used to be a name synonymous with a fussy and timid old grandmother who interfered and thwarted them in matters they thought they knew better how to deal with. The Colonial Office now is more of the nature of the benevolent Uncle. Neither the Secretary of State, nor Parliament, nor this Country desires to

interfere with their affairs in any way whatever. We have given them the full opportunity and power to deal with their own affairs, and we desire that they should have complete control over them. IN fact [emphasis his], as someone said, we were quite prepared to let them go to the Devil in their own way; or, alternatively to work out their own Salvation. As regards the Crown Colonies, the Colonial Office assists them as far as it can in improvement and development. Their development is no doubt an advantage to this Country..." (From: "Dinner of the Society," *Journal of the Royal African Society*, Vol. 22, No. 88 (Jul., 1923), 320. The passage demonstrates the connections settlers have with colonial authorities, as the speaker whom the Earl Buxton is introducing at the dinner was the Duke of Devonshire, the Secretary of State for the Colonies. More importantly, however, the passage suggests the positive sentiments settlers hold for small government, preferring the presumably disengaged, detached, distant, uniformed, but well-meaning and generous "benevolent Uncle" to the antithetically positioned government-paralleling "fussy ... grandmother who interfered and thwarted" behavior she could not understand, but believed "knew better how to deal with."

⁶³ Kenneth Good, "Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation," 611.

⁶⁴ Nicholas Best, *Happy Valley: The Story of the English in Kenya* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1979), 67.

⁶⁵ Kenneth Good, "Settler Colonialism: Economic Development and Class Formation," 611.

⁶⁶ Nicholas Best, *Happy Valley*, 68.

⁶⁷ A. J. P. Taylor argues that "Englishmen escaped democracy and high taxation by establishing themselves in Kenya as territorial aristocrats on the old model." (From: C. J. Duder, "Men of the Officer Class?: The Participants in the 1919 Soldier Settlement Scheme in Kenya, *African Affairs* 92.366 (Jan. 1993), 70.

⁶⁸ "Dinner of the Society," *Journal of the Royal African Society*,

22.88 (Jul. 1923), 321.

⁶⁹ Michael Gordon Redley, "The Politics of a Predicament: The White Community in Kenya 1918-32," (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 1976), 107.

⁷⁰ Letter from Leys to Oldham, 26 February 1925, Leys and Oldham, *By Kenya Possessed*, 242.

⁷¹ Huddersfield Examiner, June 1, 1923; Michael Gordon Redley, "The Politics of a Predicament: The White Community in Kenya 1918-32," (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 1976), 108.

⁷² Cable from Lord Delamere to The Times, August 28, 1903, Nairobi; Elspeth Huxley, *White Man's Country: Lord Delamere and the Making of Kenya, Volume 1: 1870-1914* (1935; London: Chatto and Windus, 1980), 120.

⁷³ The National Archives' Currency Converter, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/default0.asp#mid>.

⁷⁴ Letter from Leys to Oldham, 10 March 1925, Leys and Oldham, *By Kenya Possessed*, 253.

⁷⁵ Githige, "The Mission State Relationship in Colonial Kenya: A Summary," 117.

⁷⁶ Letter from a Nairobi missionary to Rev. H. D. Hooper, Church Missionary Society, 23rd December, 1932 on mining in native reserves.

⁷⁷ Githige, "The Mission State Relationship in Colonial Kenya: A Summary," 112.

⁷⁸ Kenya Report on Disturbances, 1949, 2-3.

⁷⁹ Sir Charles Eliot, *The East Africa Protectorate*, 241.

Photo Sources:

Page 8: Wilfred Thesiger, *Portrait of a Man*, 1961, photograph, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford

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