

# Nyerere's Political Reflections on the Individual, the State and Political Parties: A Comparative Analysis

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*Abstract: In this essay an attempt is made to provide some insights to Julius Kambarage Nyerere's political reflections on the Individual, the State, and Political Parties, by considering the statements which he made in some of his early writings. The early writings provided the basis of his latter writings, whereby he was trying to develop what he referred as the 'New Synthesis of Man'. A comparative analysis will be made on the same ideas, with other political philosophers of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was the period when the commoners in Europe were struggling for liberty, democracy and the establishment of political parties from the autocratic feudal Kings. Nyerere's ideas reflect the same struggle for the independence of Tanganyika and the establishment of liberty and democracy by using a political party.*

## INTRODUCTION

*"We in Tanganyika do not believe that mankind has yet discovered ultimate truth – in any field. We do not wish to act as if we did have such a belief. We wish to contribute to Man's development if we can, but we do not claim to have any 'solution'; our only claim is that we intend to grope forward in the dark, towards a goal so distant that even the real understanding of it is beyond us towards in other words, the best that man can become... We shall grope forward and it may be that we shall create a new synthesis of individual liberty and the needs of man in society" (Nyerere, 1967:121)*

The study of political ideas of a state leader in any one country raises questions that cannot be answered with any great confidence. Questions like, is there any coherent thought in the leader's ideas? Has the leader any originality of ideas or is he following the tracks made by other famous men? Does the leader believe what he says? Do the masses believe what the leader says? These and other questions to be answered with a greater degree of confidence require a research: a research of the leaders' writings and secondly a study of the leader's motivations, background and those who surrounds the 'corridors of power.' This essay is an attempt to provide an insight of Julius Kambarage Nyerere political reflections on the Individual, the State and Political Parties, by considering the statements which he had made in his early writings.

A comparative analysis is made from the writings of a few philosophers like Thomas Hobbes, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Karl Marx. Discourses on the struggle and relationships between the individual, rulers and the state go back for many centuries. With the limited space and time available it is not possible to review them all. Thus in this particular essay, the three philosophers were carefully chosen to represent the idealist and the materialist thinkers.

I must make a caution from the very start that this discussion will not attempt to answer the questions posed above, neither will it be exhaustive. My analysis will only try briefly to survey the ideas, as a preliminary step to a more probing analysis and research on Nyerere's political theory and practice. Whether the ideas that I will unveil are true or false, original or imitations or whether the masses understood and believed them, what matters to me is that he has written them and therefore they exist in his collected written works.

### **DIGGING THE PAST**

In the history of human knowledge, there has been a lot of concern among philosophers in determining the nature of man, society and the state: the origin; functions and inter-relationship. Some of these philosophers following along idealist lines explained man and society in terms of external causes or of propulsion and evolutionary development, while others like the Marxists, advocated their study to internal dynamics; (union of opposites) or dialectical and revolutionary development. These two mutually opposed outlooks have influenced the thinking and practice of many written philosophical statement from the past to the present contemporary time. These two opposite views have been used by each side convincingly in explaining the development of man. For example, the development as an increase and decrease or repletion (liberal) or development as unity of opposites (socialist). It is in this view that I have decided to dig into the past writings of prominent political philosophers and examine the different expositions of the concepts central to the discussion, before I look at Nyerere's thoughts. In this approach, I shall compare Nyerere's views with the dug out past views and reflections. But the thoughts of these political philosophers must be viewed with the background of the historical epoch of the socio-economic relations of the society in which the writers were living. In this way, one can get a rational understanding of the values and biases of the writer.

### **NATURE OF MAN AND THE ORIGIN OF THE STATE**

According to **Thomas Hobbes** (1588-1679) in his famous political philosophy treatise "Leviathan", he argued that the nature of man is centrally engaged in an incessant struggle for power over others: "so that in the first place, I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of Power after power, that ceaseth only in Death" (Hobbes,1971:161 ).

This central theme on power competition in the nature of man, Hobbes then talks about man in a state of nature. By the state of nature he meant the condition that exist if there is no common power able to restrain individuals, no laws and no law-enforcement institutions. Given what he has already said about man's behaviour as the search for power, every man would constantly be open to violent invasion of his life and property from another man, thus: "it followeth, that in such a condition, every man had a right to everything; even to one another's body... And the life of man, is solitary, poore, brutish and short" (Hobbes, 1971:186)

If then, men were in their natural state, they would be in constant "Warre" (wars) as they are entitled to use their right of nature to the full; to invade everyone else for survival. But this kind of condition required man to seek better means than this state

of nature for preserving themselves, which Hobbes calls the “Law of Nature” or “General Rule” which is found out by reasons, by which man is forbidden to act in a brutish way:

“That a man be willing, when others are so too, as farre-forth, as for pease, and defense of himself, he shall think it necessary, to lay down his right to all things and be contented with so much liberty against other men, as he would allow other men against himself”. (Hobbes, 1971:190)

This reasoning would clearly require an agreement or a concerted act by which all men would renounce their rights of nature. The mutual transferring of each individual right for a common good is what was referred to as a “contract”. The transfer must be permanent and binding, which means it has to be given to a person or an assembly of men to use the whole combined force of all the contractors to hold them to it: “for covenants, without the sword, are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all”. (Hobbes, 1971:225).

This was the origin of the sovereign state and state power of coercion, which Hobbes says its authority should be absolute. On its duty, he says, it is to procure the safety of the individuals who are a party to the contract, not only for their lives but also their properties: “...of things held in property, those that are dearest to man are his own life... after them, riches and means of living. The sovereign state should teach them to respect all kinds of property” (Hobbes, 1971:382).

So what emerges in Hobbes theory as he goes on to describe other aspects of the individual and the state, is a picture of a bourgeoisie market society; a society where the rich grow excessively rich by the wisdom of competition for power and by making poor people sell their labour to the power holders. In this way the state becomes an instrument of the “civilized men” (above the state of nature) to keep law and order or to keep away those in the state of nature (poor) from the use of their “right of nature” to the full.

A century later after Hobbes writings provoked Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) a French philosopher to write a treatise called the “Social Contract” which was an antithesis to Hobbes. Rousseau states that the nature of man is one of innocence and purity and therefore he does not accept Hobbes picture of man in the state of nature as an aggressive, brutish and a rapacious being, Rousseau wrote: “Man in the state of nature is a stupid and unimaginative being and it is only by coming into a political society that he becomes an intelligent being and a man.” (Rousseau, 1968: 28)

Also unlike Hobbes, Rousseau does not suggest that it is the crave for power or fear which drives men to quit the state of nature, but man does so because he is weak. The state of nature is defined as that of man living alone and poor. Due to this weakness and poverty, in the early stages men began to work together in hunting and defence against natural disasters, with a bond of sympathy and obligation. But when the idea of individual accumulation of property arose, leading to inequality, then men began to be wicked. Rousseau drew his famous satirical statement that: “The first man who, after fencing off a piece of land took it upon himself to say. ‘This

belongs to me” and found people simple-minded enough to believe him, was the true founder of ‘civil society’” (Rousseau, 1968:21)

So to Rousseau, the rise of the state was a necessary development of this inequality which began to provoke conflict in the nature of man. The rich demanded a system of law to impose order and tranquility not only because they were weak but also because their possessions were threatened by those who were simple minded, he says:

‘Such was, or may have been, the origin of civil society and laws which gave new fetters to the poor, and new powers to the rich which destroyed natural liberty for ever, fixed for all time the law of property and inequality, transformed shrewd usurpations into settled right, and to benefit a few ambitious persons, subjected the whole of the human race thenceforth to labour, servitude and wretchedness’ (Rousseau,1968:21)

It has been argued by some analysts that in the “Social Contract”, Rousseau was more concerned with right than with fact, especially when he explained about the nature of the contract. In this respect, he argues that a genuine and legitimate contract should benefit everyone, since it unites liberty with law and utility with right; and it should not be used to consolidate the advantages of the rich against the poor, he notes:

‘Men can be both ruled and free if they rule themselves. A people can be free if it retains sovereignty over itself, if it enacts the rules and laws which it is obliged to obey. Obligation in such circumstances is wholly distinct from bondage; it is a moral duty which draws its compulsion from the moral will within each man’ (Rousseau, 1968:29)

In this manner, he commends for a peoples’ state in which the citizens control their own destiny, a state where each person has equal rights and obligations towards the maintenance of the society. However, Rousseau agrees like Hobbes that the state sovereignty is an absolute power which cannot be divided. He continued to add that, in its absoluteness the state must develop a ‘civil religion’ and ‘a tutor’ for a leader. The need for a civil religion which teaches men patriotism is necessary because Christianity had not been good as it teaches men about the ‘Kingdom of Heaven’ instead of their own ‘republic on earth’, and it teaches them to ‘suffer but not to fight.’ The civil religion is what is known was latter termed ‘ideology’ in the contemporary politics. For the tutor or the lawgiver whom we now refer as a member of parliament or councilor in a state can perform the role that a tutor or teacher in a learning situation performs for the learners, men must follow him willingly and gladly. He draws a graphic picture: ‘The King is dead; long live the lawgiver... Advice us O Legislateur... We need you more than ever now that we are taking on the duties of self-government’? (Rousseau, 1968:176).

It will be seen that, up to now Rousseau took a radical position of the nature of the individual and the state. He believed that men or individuals are born free and equal and saw the establishment of private property as the cause of inequality which leads

to wickedness. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels whom we are about to see, highly appraised the historical role of Rousseau, although it must be noted that Rousseau was an idealist and had bourgeoisie limitations.

Karl Marx (1818-83) and Frederick Engels (1820-95) describe man as a social being who cannot exist in isolation from other people; he is molded in definite social conditions. "...the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations". (Marx and Engels, Vol. 11 1969:404)

Marx explained for the first time that the real objective motives determining man's activity are ultimately rooted in the material conditions of his life. He also rejected the nature of man as held by Hobbes and Rousseau in general by saying that man's concrete nature, is determined by a definite historical system of the society. At the same time, at any stage of the development of the society, man is a product of that development; he acquires the knowledge that is accumulated throughout history. The forms of acquiring this accumulated knowledge and the specific way in which he is influenced by the historically given social conditions, are ultimately determined by the nature of production or the mode of production.

Regarding the rise of the state, Marx and Engels, like Rousseau, agree that it is the acquisition of property, which led to unequal exchange which emerged and new social contradictory elements began to emerge in the society. 'The old society, built on groups based on ties of sex, busts asunder in the collision of the newly-developed social class; in its place a new society appears, constituted in a state' (Marx and Engels, Vol.3,1969:192)

Thus with the development of private property and social class, contradictions began to emerge, the state as a special instrument of power emerged, not as a reconciling instrument of opposing class interests – property owners and the non-owners – but to impose by force interests of the property owners. Marx and Engels warn that, the state is not a power forced on society from without:

'Rather, it (state) is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has become entangled in an insoluble contradiction with itself, that it has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. But in order that these antagonisms, class interests, might not consume themselves... in fruitless struggle, it becomes necessary to have a power seemingly standing above society that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within.' (Marx and Engels, Vol 3,1969:327)

This analysis of the State as an instrument of coercion by Marx and Engels has come to be accepted as an undeniable fact by many political scientists and statesmen alike. The state's purpose has been and still is to safeguard the existing order – status quo – and suppress the resistance of the opposite class. In a bourgeoisie class society, this monopoly of power is held by the few exploiting class to suppress the working class and the rights of the citizens are apportioned according to their wealth. In a

socialist state where vestiges of capitalism still exist, the state is an instrument of the majority workers and peasants to suppress the yet remaining exploiting class. The coercive nature of the state is necessary during this transitional period to communism, but when the classless stage is reached- the communist state – this function of the state will wither away and:

‘the state will inevitably fall. Society, which will organize production on the basis of a free and equal association of the producers, will put the whole machinery of the state where it will belong: into the museum of antiquities, by the side of the spinning – wheel and the bronze axe’. (Marx and Engels, Vol 3,1969:330)

### **POLITICAL PARTIES**

Every individual since the emergence of the state is more or less affected by the activities of the state. Plato noted that ‘man is a political animal’, as he is affected either as one of the ruling class who control political behaviour of the state or as the ruled who obeys or struggle to control the state power. These effects leads to political activities either as an individual or group activities, organized or unorganized. But organized political activities (save for rebellions) developed with the rise of the liberal state where economic competition was reflected in political competitions through political parties.

Before the 16<sup>th</sup> century, political parties could not exist. Masses of people who form membership and supporters of political parties today did not have the right to vote or political rights. It was only the rich feudalists and Churchmen who had the right to choose leaders and later on to vote. Therefore all political groupings were mainly the followers of outstanding personalities like kings, feudal lords, bishops, knights or rebel leaders based on temporary groupings, without permanent organization, elaborated programmes or ideologies. It was only after the masses of people made their entrance in the political life by being granted political rights, did political parties emerge.

The liberal state replacing the feudal nobles state, introduced representative democracy whereby all citizens could compete for parliamentary sits through the ballot box. Further, general franchise was gradually introduced, requiring the members of parliament to seek the support of the voters (the masses) in order to get into the parliament. Groupings in the parliament wishing to come in touch with the voters were formed and so are organizations outside of parliament with a purpose of organizing mass participation and support in elections. In this way political parties developed as an inseparable part of bourgeoisie democracy. They became competitive forces inherent in economic competitions either horizontally – between bourgeoisie class itself as in the United States Democrats and Republicans – or vertically between the bourgeoisie class versus the working Class – Britain’s Conservatives versus Labour Party (of course the Britain’s’ Labour Party was originally supposed to be a workers’ party but has ever since been hi-jacked by the bourgeoisie class). Thus many different kinds of parties emerged each putting a stress on a different function, that it is a worthwhile exercise to look at these functions and ideologies as identified by different scholars.

There are those who hold the view that political parties are ideological organizations. Benjamin Constance says a political party is 'a group of men professing the same political doctrine' (Vukovick, 1968:5) or a group of men of 'the same political convictions'. This definition points to the very important function of the party, that is formulating an ideology, but the ideology is not an end to itself, it is only an instrument to achieve another end that is to capture state political power. Therefore a political party cannot be defined as an ideological organization.

Another school of thought put a political party as a representative of national interests. For example Edmund Burke says a party is 'a body of men united for promoting, by their joint endeavours, national interests on some particular principles' (*ibid* :6) It is true that most parties claim that they represent national interests, but this cannot be true in a class society where each political party represent the interest of a certain class. A political party can only represent national interest only if it is really fighting for the interests of the great majority of the people, the workers and peasants. In the contemporary world, no capitalist political party can represent the interests of a nation because the concept of national interest will always reflect the interest of the small and privileged group. Only socialist political parties which are really fighting for the majority interests can claim to represent interest of a nation as a whole.

Yet another group of theorists take parties as organizations of voters. They hold that parties only seek to control 'the personnel and policies of a government and define general objectives and candidates for elections'(*ibid* :7). This is the view held by Laswell and Kaplan in '*Power and Society*' and is a typical practice in the United States of America. Although it is true that political parties in the United States of America are mainly active during elections but both political parties represent capitalists and only use elections to obtain legitimacy for their rule. They are therefore class oriented parties.

On the other view, the Marxist thinkers agree that most political parties have an ideology and that the aim of each political party is to control the political power the state, they further hold the view that, political parties have more functions than that alone, like organization and mobilization, and after winning political power to guide the state power to implement development policies. Both Marx and Engels busied themselves with the organization of the proletariat into a class and consequently into a political party' and wrote the "*Manifesto of the Communist Party.*' (Marx and Engels: vol I:98-136) This manifesto detailed the theoretical and practical programme which could apply everywhere and all the times' for the working class to capture the state political power. They also attempted to make recommendations of an International Working Men Association with a paid up general secretary, fees and an organizational structure. (Marx and Engels vol. II : 98) But the greatest credit of organizational work of a workers revolutionary political party goes to Vladimir I. Lenin who insisted among other things that: 'The organization must consist of first and foremost people who make revolutionary activity their profession'. (Lenin,vol 1,1970:217). Thus he advocated for a vanguard party and a cadre system, which are essential features of all socialist political parties.

At this juncture we find that in all the above reviewed definitions and functions of political parties, have something in common although each take one function or element and neglect the others. With the exception of the socialist political parties, all other parties try to hide the class based content of their parties and that they represent interests of a certain social group.

It follows therefore that the definition of a political party should be elastic, to embrace all of its most important functions. Thus we can say that, 'political parties are voluntary political organizations in their content which represent interests of the classes, their parts, or other social groups in the political struggle, which formulate and disseminate their ideology and programmes, aimed to get public support in order to win political power and direct development of the society according to the interests of the social group they represent'.

They may take in forms of whole class, race, ethnic, religious or in cases of colonies as nationalist movements formed on a basis of a wide co-operation of all the people. Some are loose organizations with only central leadership, little discipline and no conditions of enrolment, others have a strong organization with central decision making body, a developed hierarchical structure with obligations and discipline on the members. In whatever structure a political party might take, it must have members, administrative structure, organs and a legal personality. An individual join voluntarily a political party after accepting its programme based on a certain ideology which the individual thinks represent how the society should be developed and be managed.

Thus from the above argument of the individual, state and the party it will be seen that they are interlinked. While the individual with his expressed qualities of intellect, emotional and vocation cannot exist in isolation, but in relation to other influences, the state and the party are the necessary development of this association with others influences especially property relations. However while the idealists advocated that the mind (spiritual) is the determinant of man's activities and therefore above the state, the materialists put man at the centre of the society – he is part of the society and the whole society is useless without its parts. The state, it is agreed has the monopoly of power to control individuals voluntarily given in the contract of equals or by force as in the case of protection of life and property. Political parties developed as organizations for the control of the state power and the individual has continued to associate himself in order to achieve his interests.

In this way the individual derives some benefit from living in a state of equal contractors and also from his membership in a political party, it is reasonable for him, in return to regard the continuation of these institutions as of paramount importance. If and when these institutions do not serve his interests, he can change them freely or by force, if it deem necessary.

With this background, we should now be in a position to examine Julius K. Nyerere's thoughts on the individual, the party and state. The last section attempts to compare his thoughts and those elaborated above.



## **NYERERE'S THOUGHTS ON MAN AND SOCIETY**

In an essay which Nyerere wrote while a student of Edinburgh University, Scotland in 1952 entitled 'The Race Problems in East Africa' he argued that there was too much hypocrisy and wishful thinking in the minds and actions of the East African people because the colonial political and administrative policy of 'divide and rule' had been introduced since the late 1920s. In the whole of East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar) which was under British colonial rule, there was segregation between Europeans rulers or settlers, Asian traders and in the lower group the majority indigenous Africans. This kind of hypocrisy, he argued that it cannot be the basis on which the future of the East African society is to be built, because it breeds contempt and hatred. Nyerere wrote:

“Yet there is too much hypocrisy in East Africa today. The European official and settler, rule and maintain their prestige mainly by hypocrisy, their inner motives would hardly stand examination; the Indian trader makes his living by downright dishonesty or at best by sheer cunning which is hypocrisy; the African clerk or labourer often disregards fulfilling his part of a contract...Or his heart nearly bursting with envy and hatred...” (Nyerere, 1967:23)

In the same essay he continued to propose that as long as one community, which is a minority continue to monopolize political power, and uses that power to prevent the African community which is the majority, from participating in social and economic activities on equal basis, such power cannot be tolerated for long. The majority cannot 'bear insults for ever', for one day someone may come to incite them and uproot such an oppressive doctrine with all the vulgarity of a bloody revolution. Nyerere in the same essay, appealed to all conscious thinking Europeans and Indians to prevent this catastrophic end and to regard themselves as 'ordinary sort of fellows' or equals so as to build up a society in which all the people will be equal. This caution which Nyerere makes here is to avoid Hobbes' ideas of 'the man's nature of seeking power after power. The colonialists had and were continuing to monopolize all the powers against the indigenous people which can lead to 'everyone to have the right to even another's body' or a 'bloody revolution'.

Indeed, this essay on inherent racial problems in East Africa was written during the studentship period before even Nyerere knew that he would enter into active politics, become the president of free Tanganyika and later Tanzania and have opportunities to put into practice his convictions. As we shall see below, when Nyerere entered into active politics, the central theme of his theory and practice was geared towards the building of a democratic society of equal citizens irrespective of colour, wealth, ethnicity, gender or creed in Tanzania.

## **A NEW SYNTHESIS OF MAN AND SOCIETY**

In the preceding arguments we have seen that the views on the nature of man and society or state differ. While some say that the individual can live without the society, and in such a situation society emerged as a contract, others advocate that the individual as a unique part of the society, and when left alone he would not realize his natural uniqueness. Nyerere in the introduction to his book 'Freedom and

Unity' where he wrote about 'Man and Society', he argued that every individual has two basic wants: freedom to realize his own interests and secondly freedom from fear. Both these wants cannot be realized when he is alone, but by the help of others. This according to Nyerere could be the origin of the society. Thus, the purpose of society and the reason for its existence must enable man to pursue his individual interests and his own inclinations and the freedoms which can be obtained through life in the society (Nyerere, 1967:7).

These are the ideas which could have been borrowed from Hobbes in the 'General Rule,' also Rousseau's 'The Social Contract' and Karl Marx in the observation that the human essence is in reality the assemble of 'social relations' at a certain stage of development.

Yet as soon as an individual becomes member of society, he must sacrifice in the interests of the society, certain of the private freedoms which he possesses. This he refers to as a 'conflict' which is inevitable and inescapable in man's existence. In this situation of conflict of desires, the ideal society should be based on human equality and on the combination of the freedom and the unity of its members:

"There must be equality, because only on that basis will men work co-operatively. There must be freedom, because the individual is not served by society unless it is his. And there must be unity. Because only when the society is united can its members live and work in peace security, and well being...." (Nyerere, 1967:11)

This observation by Nyerere was likened Rousseau's statement that 'a people can be free if it retains sovereignty over itself' and that obligations to each other are not bondage but a moral duty. Karl Marx adds that the society becomes entangled in insoluble contradictions that it becomes necessary to have a power above the society that will control the situation.

Again according to Nyerere in order that this purpose of an ideal society might be realized, two things are required: "It must have institutions which safeguard and promote both unity and freedom, and it must be permeated by an attitude, a social ethic – which ensures that these institutions remain true to their purpose and are adapted as need arises" (Nyerere, 1967:9).

The institutions which are referred here are necessarily a good government, political parties and a national ethic as the national ideology.

On property, Nyerere argues that it should be owned by the whole society, particularly basic property like land. This is where Rousseau cautioned about the first man who 'fenced a piece land and declared as 'his own property' which made him richer and more power than others, thereby creating new antagonistic economic and social relations. Nyerere agrees that private property should be accepted, but laments that as soon as hoarding of wealth, encouraging the acquisitive instinct and by basing social status on material wealth, the very basis of equality is violated and so is freedom and unity: 'The common interest is at least partially replaced by two interests, those of the 'haves' and those of the 'have-nots'. The unity of society

becomes weakened because the equality of its members has been broken” (Nyerere,1967:11).

Karl Marx had earlier, stated that it is at this stage where the theory of contradictions arises and the society is split into ‘irreconcilable contradictions’

In the conclusion of this synthesis of man and society, Nyerere like others asserts that Tanganyika as a society must work towards the attainment of this ideal society: “We have to work towards a position where each person, realizes that his rights in society – above the needs of every human being – must come second to the overriding need of human dignity for all...” (Nyerere, 1967:17)

### **ON POLITICAL PARTIES**

The founding of a political party – Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) in 1954 was basically an attempt to organize the masses of Tanganyika to struggle against colonial rule and consequently take ‘political power’ and direct the development of the Tanganyika society according to the interest of the majority-Africans. This action must be seen as the taking of action of his (Nyerere) ideas cited in his essay of “Race Problems in East Africa” to ‘uproot such an oppressive doctrine’- colonialism. On the international level, it took the form of class struggle (alien oppressing rule vis-à-vis the oppressed colonized indigenous majority). Nationally it took a wide base of both strata of society in Tanganyika. That is at the bottom, the majority Africans, few Asians vis a vis the few European settlers, Asian and a few African businessmen. In its creed the first TANU constitution included that “all men are equal” and also included in its objectives, to fight against racialism, tribalism and to build unity of all the people of Tanganyika. Throughout the pre-independence struggle, TANU geared its efforts on equality and gained more popularity than other political parties which had emerged, like UTP (United Tanganyika Party) and ANC (African National Congress).

TANU realized its first objective of capturing political power in Tanganyika in December, 9<sup>th</sup>, 1961 and Nyerere as the first Prime Minister. He then immediately began to organize the society according to his ideas. Six weeks after the independence, Nyerere resigned as Prime Minister. He explained to the people of newly independent Tanganyika, that he had decided to devote himself to the rebuilding of the political party-TANU, because he believed that this was the best way to achieve: ‘our new objective of the creation of a country in which people take a full and active part in the fight against poverty, ignorance and disease.’(Smith, 1974:78)

Thus the prime concern was to make the TANU party: ‘a strong political organization, active in every village, which acts like a two way all weather road along which the purposes, plans and problems of the government can travel to the people, at the same time as the ideas, desires and misunderstandings of the people can travel direct to the government. This is the job of TANU’ (ibid: 78).

In the subsequent years Nyerere wrote more about his ideas of his political party TANU on the concept of ‘two way traffic’. Amongst the major ones to my

considered opinion are: *Tujisahihishe* (Let's Correct Ourselves) published in 1962, *TANU na Raia* (TANU and the Citizens) 1962 and *Democracy and the Party System* written in 1963.

In *Tujisahihishe* briefly Nyerere argues that, both the leaders and the citizens must endeavor to correct bad habits and behaviours which had been acquired during the colonial period. Among the vices which he pointed out, which have a bearing to our topic is, firstly, individualism, which makes people hide the truth, engage in derogatory or scandalous practices against each other. The second vice, is the tendency to divide people into two hostile groups of "us" and "them". "Us" as TANU members, the educated, and the rich (the haves) against "them" as non-TANU members, poor, the uneducated and the "wretched of the earth". He contends that, this kind of attitude can lead us to condemn those who do not belong to our party, although they may be correct and praise those who belong to our group even though they may be wrong over an issue. He therefore urges for the people to rid themselves of these vices, not in order to judge others, but to say the truth always and to examine each situation and actions objectively, irrespective of the doers position in the society.

In *TANU na Raia* (TANU and the Citizen) published in 1962 Nyerere clearly spells out the role of TANU and argued firstly that: "TANU is a people's Party, therefore there is no problem of the people, which we can claim does not concern us. TANU is the only group in this country which has to concern itself with the problems of every individual," (Nyerere, 1962:3)

This view is strong in the whole text of *TANU na Raia* because as Nyerere argues, TANU as a political party derived its existence from the people and therefore it is the duty of the leaders to serve those who gave them the mandate to rule. He continue to warn TANU members that they ought to choose leaders carefully during elections either within the political party, in the local government councils or in the Parliament, because if they choose the wrong leaders through negligence or corruption, these leaders can usurp their power and also their rights to create dictatorship, nepotism or outright anarchy. Indeed he concludes by saying 'the guardians of people's rights, are the people themselves' (ibid:8).

The second role of TANU was to bring economic development, but the development must be for all the people on equal basis, that is working towards a socialist development: "If TANU wants to build a true socialist society, then we hope TANU to continue with its struggle of reducing the existing inequalities between people who 'have' and those who 'have-nothing' (ibid: 12)

In the booklet titled 'Democracy and the Party Systems', published in 1963, Nyerere defends the one party system, as the only appropriate system in Tanganyika at that current historical period and also proves to be more democratic. He argues that, where the:

"One party is identified with the nation as a whole, the foundation of democracy can be firmer and the people can have more opportunity to

exercise a real choice, than where you have two or more parties – each representing only a section of the community... then, as long as TANU membership is open to every citizen, we can conduct our elections in a way which is genuinely free and democratic’ (Nyerere, 1967:195).

He continues to argue that two or more political party systems arose historically in the social and economic divisions of society in the beginning of the bourgeoisie mode of production in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the societies of multi-party system, the voters do not elect a candidate, but the political party that put him/her up. And since the votes are shared between many parties, whoever wins either especially in simple majority rule represent the choice of very few voters – sometimes less than the losing candidates votes put together. In such a case the winner cannot claim to represent the choice of the majority. Secondly, in a two or multi-party system, there is some limitation of freedom- both at election time and in the parliamentary debates, so as to enforce party discipline and unity. In such a situation politics cannot become national politics but of groups and often of the ruling minority group.

On the relationships between the ruling party and the government, Nyerere claims that they must be one and the same thing. Any party-government must be necessarily be governed by its political party for: ‘Any government which tries to separate itself from its own party; finds there is a perpetual fights between those of its members who are in the legislature and those outside it’ (ibid:23).

But this kind of relationship is only possible where there is One Political Party system which is identified with the whole nation. In a Multi-Party system however those who are in parliament are in an uncertain position because they know that their party may not be in power in the coming elections. This means, whatever programs they might have in their constituencies, might also not be in the interests of the party to come. Likewise the voters too, are put in a doubting position in promises made by their members of parliament. As such a one Party System is the only fit system for any developing country where the interests of the people will be the same and no competing groups with opposite interests. Further, it reflects traditional African societies where people governed themselves through free discussions of equal members of the same group. There were no known opposition groups whose function in the society was to oppose the regime in power, the chief, king or sultan.

Nyerere retired from all political positions i.e. presidential and political party chairmanship in 1985 and 1987 respectively. However in 1991 Tanzania adopted a multi-party system. In 1995 he vigorously campaigned for his party’s (CCM) presidential and parliamentary candidates. This alone cannot be said that he campaigned for a multi-party system and therefore he had turned to be a “stone”. This remark he had made before his retirement that he cannot change his ideals because by doing so he would turn into a stone. Definitely, one party state was one of those ideals.

## **THE STATE**

Nyerere unlike his precedes does not deal much with the origin of the state but goes directly to deal with the powers of the state. The type of state power which Nyerere

desires is one which is controlled by the people through TANU – what he calls a TANU government. As quoted above, it is through a political party, TANU that the people can and must express their desires and their worries to their government. Through it, the government can and must explain to the people what it is doing and why. He warns that the people must not ‘sit and wait’ to see what the elected government will do, this would be disastrous, and would make all efforts to establish it to be a waste of time and energy. Giving a guide to the “One Party State Commission” early in 1964 which was given the task to make recommendations on the type of Government to be established either a one party or multi-party system, Nyerere pointed out among other things that the desired state must allow for complete equality of all citizens and maximum political freedom. The freedoms were specifically aimed at two ends.

“...the maximum possible participation by the people in their own government and ultimate control by them over all the organs of the state on a basis of universal suffrage....complete freedom for the people to choose their won representatives on all representative and legislative bodies within the context of the law. (ibid:262)

This then is the kind of government which citizens of Tanzania should aim at in the state, a state where all the people participate fully in choosing their leaders and in shaping their own destiny. Even Rousseau had suggested the idea of having a representative government when he rejoiced to the death of monarchy rule and said ‘advice us O Legislateur’ to take the duties of ‘self government’. The spreading of such attitudes of maximum political freedom and equality should be the purpose of the government of Tanzania.

It will be realized that in all other writings and actions of Nyerere he followed the same basic principles which I have outlined in the above exposition. The climax of his thoughts was The Arusha Declaration of 1967. The declaration combines his thoughts on the individual, the party and the state to build a socialist society. It calls for the political party and the state with the aim of building a socialist society. It also calls for the political party to direct policy matters, the state to implement the policies whose central aim ought to be for the individuals’ happiness or to borrow the words of Jeremy Bentham for the ‘greatest happiness for the greatest number’

This means hard work for every individual, the absence of exploitation and cooperation of all the people. What follows from this is the organization of the political party TANU and the state government, the creation of new institutions, a deliberate attempt to give back power to the people to decide their own destiny through the TANU Guidelines, Decentralization, Education for Self Reliance and Rural Development policies.

In general comparison we find that Nyerere’s thoughts and those of Hobbes, Rousseau and Marx as exposed on the individual and society, Nyerere belongs to those who agree that man cannot live in isolation but is always living with others. Thus an individual is useful only as a member of society and his personality is what he is through others. Moreover, since the whole is greater than its parts, so the society must take precedence over the individual who is an essential part of it. The

freedom of the individual is not denied but must come second to the societal needs and interest. This scenario, both philosophers agree that it can create an innate conflict in man's existence if the society's scarce resources are not shared according to each one's contribution. And since the purpose of the society is for man's development and dignity, man must contribute equally to its maintenance and sustainability.

However Nyerere differs from other socialist philosophers like Marx in contributing that in man's nature there is an internal conflict, between his personal freedom and those which he surrendered to the common good. The Marxists believe that any conflict in man is determined by the production relations, while Rousseau lists too, talk of man in the state of nature as social and only through living with others that society makes him wicked.

On the state, Nyerere correctly admits like the others, that it arose out of society's needs to regulate state affairs properly. It is a product of the development of the society, so the state must have power and authority which will enable it to keep the peace, freedom, equality and unity in balance. Like Marx, where the society organize production on the basis of a free and equal association of producers the individual who gave the state its power and authority must be able to control it through sets of contractual agreed rules and laws which must be made manifest in the legislative decisions, in party meetings and in all institutions.

Like Rousseau, Nyerere points out that there is a danger for the representatives and the bureaucracy to develop corruptive interests which defeats the very purpose of their creation, that is, the service to the people. This tendency arises when property relations in the society exhibit inequalities. In this situation, democracy becomes a mockery and the state power becomes an instrument of oppression- those who 'have' in order to protect their properties and power against those who 'have nothing'. This is where Marx calls the state an instrument of coercion and the managing of affairs of the rich and 'their running dogs', the intellectual elites.

On political parties, while Nyerere accepts that the party's aim and purpose is to capture political power, he differs from both the Marxists and bourgeoisie party models. He also rejects the socialist idea of transforming a political party into a vanguard party because such parties have tendencies of creating an elite group which has a tendency of amassing a lot of powers and privileges, and therefore become almost 'untouchables' in the society

In Tanzania, TANU political party gained power through the mobilization of the masses membership during the independence struggle. Thus the masses have already identified the TANU party as theirs in the struggle. Thus such a party should not be denied of them at anyone moment. Nyerere also denies the existence of classes and class struggle in Tanzania society and therefore the party membership had always been open to every citizen. However, in the Arusha Declaration, quality leadership was introduced with a 'Leadership Code'. Stress on quality rather than quantity was also emphasized which was a sign that TANU could easily move towards being a vanguard party.

On a two or multi-party system, Nyerere argues as we have already seen, that it leads to sham democracy, as none of the parties can claim to be identified with the nation as a whole. Further, many party system is a sign of classes in the society and as Tanzania is not aiming at such a society, there was no need to create institutions which will not serve any purpose.

## CONCLUSION

It will be clear from the above discussion that Nyerere views on the individual, political parties and the state focus on the future society and therefore developmental. In all his other writings and policy documents of his reign, these three concepts have always been used as integral parts of the whole society. For example, The Arusha Declaration (1971), Education for Self Reliance, Decentralization policy (1972) Agriculture is Politics (1971) the Mwongozo (Party Guidelines) and others published and speeches in subsequent years, should not be seen as exercises for their own sake, but as means of realizing the ideal society whereby the purpose is Man, his individual happiness and dignity. Many of Nyerere's documents came to terms with the conditions of Tanzania in the past, present and point the direction of his desired future society.

The next questions which we should ask ourselves are those which I posed in the introduction of this paper especially the one on theory and practice. On the same vein, further research could attempt to find out the validity of the conclusion made by one political writer Henry Bienen who worked in Tanzania during Nyerere's reign, that:.

“Tanzanian's leader has recognized that Africa must change and that change must be directed rather than merely reacted to. To control change rather than be carried away by it is more than a noble idea; it is a practical necessity for those who rule”

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