

täre Gesellschaften zerstören die traditionellen Sozialgruppen, Gemeinschaften oder sich bewußten Klassen, um sie dann durch neue Einheiten zu ersetzen, die der Staats- und Parteikontrolle unterworfen sind. Das Gegenteil ist in Südafrika der Fall. Die Regierung ist bemüht, die traditionellen Machtgruppen und Ideologien zu erhalten und im Rahmen einer „divide et impera-Politik“ funktionsgerecht zu benutzen. Der für die Herrschaftstechnik entscheidende Unterschied zwischen dem Faschismus hingegen und dem Apartheid-System liegt in der Zielsetzung; jener war von vornherein auf aggressive Expansion gerichtet, dieses dient vor allem der Erhaltung des Status quo. Dieses sehr sachliche 3. Kapitel wird dem anspruchsvollen Titel des Buches mehr als gerecht.

Schließlich läßt Adam nicht unerwähnt die erlaubte weiße Apartheidopposition: die englischsprachige Presse, die Progressive Party, das sog. Institute of Race Relations und einige kirchliche Zirkel. Zwar erfüllt diese Opposition die Funktion, in der öffentlichen Meinung Alternativen zur Apartheid-Politik wachzuhalten. Aber ein zweifacher Nutzen für die Regierung wiegt den Schaden dieser ohnehin nicht sehr wirkungsvollen Kritik auf: das Vorhandensein einer solchen Opposition demonstriert demokratische Spielregeln; die potentiellen Gegner lassen sich in organisierter Form leichter manipulieren und kontrollieren.

Ein in seiner kritischen Beurteilung der südafrikanischen Rassengesellschaft eindeutiges Buch.

Tileman Fischer

BASIL DAVIDSON

Black Star: A View of the Life and Times of Kwame Nkrumah

Allen Lane, London, 1973, Pp. 225.

Kwame Nkrumah, the black star of Africa, was in his lifetime as well as in death a controversial figure. Those who felt that his politics threatened their privileged positions spared no effort in painting him as the devil incarnate. But to millions of oppressed Africans, he was the symbol of hope and a living proof that the African can regain the independence he had lost during the colonial era. He gave many Africans the confidence to take their destiny in their own hands and to re-enter history as subjects and no longer as mere objects, to be manipulated by greedy European powers.

After the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966 all sorts of things were said and written about him. It was understandable that many Ghanaians who felt they had suffered at his hands should rejoice at his downfall. But what is difficult to understand is the concerted activities by many intellectuals to minimise Nkrumah's incontestable achievements and to paint a picture of him which they must have known to be unjust. Some even began to cast doubts on his mental health. One Ghanaian scholar (who needs not be named here) has even suggested that the fact that Nkrumah studied law, politics, sociology, theology, and philosophy shows how unstable he had been all along. It is against this background of calumny that one has to appreciate Davidson's book which is an impressive attempt to achieve a balanced and just view of the man who led Ghana (and indirectly the rest of Africa) to independence.

Davidson starts his story with an account of Nkrumah's humble beginnings. Born in 1909 to the senior wife of a goldsmith, the young Kwame showed great ability in school and became a pupil-teacher in Half-Assini. He would probably have remained there for the rest of his life but in 1926 Fraser, headmaster of Achimota School, visited Nkrumah's school and listened to his lessons. Fraser was impressed by the young teacher and recommended his admission to Achimota School, an elite school near Accra, which had been founded in 1924. After four years at Achimota, Nkrumah returned to teaching but he had already made up his mind to visit the United States of America, where Kwegyir Aggrey of Africa, an outstanding teacher at Achimota, had spent twenty-two years studying and teaching. Zik of Nigeria had also been urging young Africans to visit that country.

Nkrumah went to the United States in 1935 without the benefit of a scholarship and had to earn his living by doing all sorts of menial jobs: waiter on a ship, soap-factory worker, shipbuilding worker (and still did similar jobs after earning an M. A. from the University of Philadelphia). Despite all the financial difficulties, he never gave up his intellectual ambitions: he graduated in economics and sociology, became an assistant lecturer in theology and philosophy at Lincoln and immersed himself in Western philosophy-Kant, Descartes, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and others; he obtained a degree in theology in 1942 (Lincoln) and in the same year was awarded a master's degree in education (Philadelphia). It is important to keep these educational achievements in mind. Later on, Nkrumah's detractors would argue that he was no intellectual, that he could not possibly have written the numerous books which bear his name, and that he had an inferiority complex vis-à-vis his opponents who had studied in England. One of these opponents, Dr. Busia had become so infatuated with conservative Oxford that he once declared: "Oxford has made me what I am (p. 27)". When Busia was overthrown in 1972 he went to live in Oxford whilst on his overthrow in 1966, Nkrumah went to live in Conakry, Guinea.

In the U.S.A. Nkrumah suffered the same racial intolerance and Caucasian arrogance which most Africans and Afro-Americans still suffer daily in the "land of liberty". More important, he gained more familiarity with the writings of the leaders of the Afro-American liberation movement, such as Marcus Garvey and DuBois. Nkrumah's commitment to Pan-Africanism was born here. He would throughout the rest of his life remain faithful to this ideal. He would also never forget that colonialism and racialism were the two great evils he would have to fight. Racialism and the resultant poverty and misery of the Afro-Americans turned Nkrumah's attention to revolutionary writings, especially those of Engels, Marx and Lenin, though at this stage his knowledge of marxism was superficial (p. 30).

After ten years in the United States, Nkrumah left for Africa via England, "determined to throw the Europeans out of Africa" (p. 39) and to create a Union of African States. He would later on repeat often that the independence of Ghana would be meaningless unless linked with the total liberation of Africa. Nkrumah was met in London by George Padmore, a West Indian radical whose influence on him was to be of lasting effect. In London too, Nkrumah found out that Africans were not particularly wanted. A search for a room gave him a taste of English racialism.

The two years Nkrumah spent in London seem to have been quite hectic. He enrolled for a law course at the Inns of Court, was admitted as candidate for a doctorate in philosophy at London University, took part in several political activities, met British politicians and was vicepresident of the West African Students' Union. Above all, he helped, with Padmore, T. R. Makonnen (West Indian) and Peter Abrahams (South African), to organise the famous Sixth Pan African Congress in Manchester.

Whilst in London, Nkrumah received a letter from Ako Adjei whom he had known in England and in the U.S.A., offering him the post of general-secretary of the United Gold Coast Convention (U.G.C.C.). After some hesitation and a second letter from J. B. Danquah, Nkrumah accepted the offer and left England in November 1947, "with many doubts about the people who were to employ him" (p. 53).

Nkrumah found in Ghana a country ready for change but held in check by the British and the national bourgeoisie who did not want the masses to meddle in their political negotiations. The U.G.C.C. set up office in Saltpond and the general-secretary started organizing the party. His ideas about mass mobilization and the need to extend political activities into Ashanti and the Northern Territories were not agreeable to the gentlemen of the U.G.C.C. (p. 61). The famous boycott of European goods, the lootings and shootings of 1948 hastened events in the country. The frightened colonial administration saw in all these events a communist conspiracy and arrested the six leaders of the U.G.C.C., including Nkrumah. They were all later released after a commission of inquiry but they had spent eight weeks in prison.

Hurt by accusations of communism and also worried by the agitation of the masses, the leaders of the party turned on to their general secretary whom they now considered a danger. They suspended him from his post. Meanwhile, he had done enough to displease the party bosses: he had founded the Ghana College, the Accra Evening News and the Committee on Youth Organization (CYO). Nkrumah finally broke away from the conservative party and founded his own party, the Convention People's Party (C.P.P.) on June 12, 1949. He was soon calling for immediate selfgovernment and launched his non-violent Positive Action. Tradesmen called for a general strike and police repression followed. Arrest became the order of the day. Nkrumah and the leaders of the C.P.P. were arrested in January 1950. Elections were to be held while the C.P.P. leaders were in prison. The leaders of the U.G.C.C. hoped that this would give them the chance to regain the leadership they were rapidly losing (p. 77). Through the able organization of Gbedemah, then out of prison, the C.P.P. won a resounding victory. Nkrumah himself received 22,780 of the total votes of 23,122 while in jail. The governor had no choice but to release him and to negotiate with him. Nkrumah accepted to form a government within the colonial framework. The educated classes and men of substance were amazed and bitter that Nkrumah and his "verandah boys" had taken over power and were working with the British, leaving them, "the natural heirs to the British", out of the game. This anger would from then on be spent on obstructing the construction of the new state (p. 88).

The price Nkrumah had to pay for agreeing to play the game according to British rules was that ". . . the new government had to accept the political and economic structure of the country as it was, and merely try to improve that structure. There

could be no question of any major changes in the structure, of any far-going fresh start, of any kind of great renewal” (p. 92).

It was essentially a colonial structure that Ghana had when it regained its independence in 1957. Amongst the legacies of the colonial regime was an authoritarian system of government. The governor and his district officers had enjoyed practically unlimited powers. As Davidson points out, “the whole system rested on the notion that only a few privileged men knew how to govern, while the ‘dumb masses’ must obediently follow” (p. 100). The C.P.P. had at least tried to bring in the masses. In any case, if the C.P.P. became dictatorial, the opposition had helped this tendency by its irresponsible behaviour (p. 100).

The patterns set in the colonial period in many ways explain subsequent Ghanaian politics and also the causes of Nkrumah’s downfall which Davidson locates in the area of economics. The economic system of Ghana had in no way changed with the change in political leadership. The country still derived its main revenue from the sale of cocoa within a system controlled by Western imperialist countries. There is no question of Ghanaians not working hard as some would have us believe. In 1965 when the production of cocoa was at its highest, the price fell to its lowest point (p. 107). The reserves earned from the sale of cocoa had been kept in London where the British Government used them. Later on Nkrumah gained control over the cocoa reserve and used it to build roads, harbours, dams, schools and universities. His critics accused him of wasting the country’s reserves! Apart from robbing Ghana of her cocoa profits, the British derived immense profits from the Ghanaian mines which were operated exclusively for the benefit of private shareholders in Europe. The C.P.P. government was unable to do anything about such a situation for it felt unable to break away from the world capitalist system.

From being a genuine mass party, the C.P.P. ended up as an organization with no real connection to the populace and seemed to exist only for the benefit of the party officials. The inner corruption of the party explains partly the ease with which the soldiers took power in 1966. The petty-bourgeois leadership of the C.P.P. was prepared to indulge in verbal radicalism but only so long as this was necessary to gain access to positions and privileges.

But the general moral corruption and degeneration manifested by the leadership of the C.P.P. was not confined to that class. Its roots lay partly in the colonial system with its cynical disrespect of African customs and traditions. The laws of the colonialists were designed to benefit Europeans and therefore could be avoided by Africans without their having any guilty feelings. Another cause for this corruption is the general moral disorder in a situation of rapid change. But the compromise with the British colonial regime favoured this degeneration in so far as it presupposed a middle class rich enough to be able and willing to maintain the status quo. As Davidson states, “all such budding middle classes have just as invariably done their growing by a process of fraud and corruption. Britain’s own middle class, back in the eighteenth century, had helped to lead the way” (p. 134).

But Nkrumah cannot entirely escape blame for the increased corruption in the party. When it became clear that party officials were indulging in corrupt practices, all the leader could do was to ask parliamentarians to choose between doing business and being members of parliament. Nkrumah must have thought he was taking energetic measures when he decreed that party members should

own no more than two houses (limited value of £ 20,000), no more than two cars and plots of land (not worth more than £ 500 (p. 176). All this was said at a time when workers and farmers were being required to make sacrifices in the name of socialism. The trade unions, absorbed into the party, could offer the workers no help; they merely supported government positions. When the workers in Sekondi-Takoradi went on strike, Nkrumah condemned them and sent police to arrest them.

In a period of increasing dissatisfaction, attempts were made on Nkrumah's life, even by members of his own party. This led to further isolation of the president not only from the masses but also from his own party. Nkrumah did not seem to have been very much worried by his isolation. Quite the contrary: "For the man himself, isolation seemed to strengthen his sense of purpose. He worked harder than ever, spread his activities ever more broadly across the scene, constantly took up new ideas and pressed them forward. Though the writing now almost shouted from its walls, he gave it little thought or preferred not to see it. Convinced of his own better judgement, he continued to wage his political struggles, whether at home or on the continental scene" (p. 187). When the military coup took place, there seemed to have been very little support in the country for the C.P.P. or for Nkrumah.

After Nkrumah's overthrow, some alleged that he had stored lots of money in foreign banks. If this is so, then his behaviour in exile still remains to be explained. Instead of retiring to Switzerland or some such place to enjoy his fortunes, Nkrumah went to Guinea and from there continued the struggle for African liberation. His many books and pamphlets are sufficient evidence of his dedication to the African cause.

Kwame Nkrumah has left his mark on politics. The idea of African Unity and the Organization of African Unity are inexplicable without reference to Nkrumah. His sense of dedication and single-mindedness have contributed in putting the enemies of Pan-Africanism on the defensive. His theoretical works form part of the basic library of the new generation of Africans who are determined to fight neo-colonialism in all its forms. Even those who have a good reason to bear him grudge will agree that ". . . history will consider his failure less important than his success, his weaknesses less significant than his strengths, and all the weary flim-flam of his cult as counting little against the solid substance of his influence upon events, Nkrumah will be seen, to repeat Cabral's words, as "the strategist of genius in the struggle against classical colonialism" (p. 217).

Many books will undoubtedly be written about Nkrumah but I doubt if any of them would be as fascinating and objective as Davidson's. Kwame Opoku

JULIO A. FERNANDEZ

The Political Elite in Argentina.

New York University Press, New York 1970, 133 S.

Das Ziel des Autors dieses Buches ist, die Rekrutierungsmuster der politischen Elite Argentiniens und ihr politisches Verhalten zu untersuchen. Seine Untersuchungsobjekte sind unter Verwendung eines positionellen Ansatzes die führenden Politiker der nationalen Exekutive, die Gouverneure sowie Parlamentarier der