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Constraints to Democratisation in Tanzania

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Introduction

Liberal democracies are characterised by competition, participation, and civil liberties. However, efforts to create liberal democratic regimes in many developing countries have often heightened ethnic or regional or religious tensions. One of the most pertinent questions in the transition to democracy is how to devise a strategy and create institutions that allow various political and social forces to engage in political competition while maintaining overall societal stability for socio-economic development (Vanhanen, 1992; Diamond, et. al., 1988; Young, 1999). This is a serious problem, especially for African countries, which are faced with a number of constraints inhibiting the creation of viable plural, competitive, and open political orders.

As others have noted, the creation of liberal democratic institutions in most African countries has taken place in a hostile situation of scarcity, poverty, a fast growing population, the heritage of authoritarian colonial rule, and ethnic strife (Vanhanen, 1992: 15). This is hardly a firm foundation on which to build a strong democratic political system. Young (1999) argues that under such conditions, the emergence of ethnic, religious and other cleavages is likely to characterize the transition to democracy. It is especially so when challengers and their political parties have difficulty in defining an alternative system for society, thus facilitating the construction of a vision of society based on ethnic or other identity lines.

In many ways Tanzania fits the above description of an impoverished, fast- growing society with an authoritarian political heritage that also has ethnic and religious pluralism. True to Young's characterization, the change to multiparty politics has seen a decrease in the importance of ideology and party platforms, and a rise in ethnic, regional and religious

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affiliations, as parties compete to mobilize support. However, as Young (1999), Lijphart (1977), and Diamond (1998) argue, this does not mean that Tanzania is incapable of building a viable, open, accountable, and competitive multiparty democracy.

Young (1999) is quick to qualify the notion that democratisation fuels group identity conflicts by noting that not all cases of escalating and repeated communal violence are related to the creation of a democratic process. For example, he notes that in the African context, in the four cases of Rwanda, Burundi, Algeria and Congo-Brazzaville communal violence is not directly related to the process of transition to democracy. Diamond, Juan and Lipset (1988) argue that the basic issue is not that the heterogeneity of African societies leads to ethnic or regional or religious politics; rather it is the question of how group identity divisions articulate with political structures during the transition period. Inspired by the ideas of Lijphart (1977) on the need to structure the political system to mute the problem of group identity tensions when creating multiparty systems in divided societies, Diamond and others (1988) point out that in countries with a balance of ethnic interests political instability does not occur, while the opposite tends to be true where one ethnic group dominates the political system. For Lijphart, Young, and Diamond, the key to building a viable democracy is to strategically devise institutions that allow the inclusion of all societal groups in the political process, while simultaneously countering the constraints inherent in building competitive political systems in ethnically plural and impoverished countries.

This article examines the relationship between efforts to create a liberal democratic political system in Tanzania and the seemingly related trend of growing ethnic, religious, and regional identities. It places a special emphasis on how ethnic, religious, and regional heterogeneity are related to key institutions —party politics and elections - in the emerging plural order. It highlights participation as a consensual attempt to create workable democratic institutions that may stem the tide of ethnic, regional and religious divisions.

Characteristics of the Single Party Regime in Tanzania

Socio-culturally, it is estimated that Tanzania is made up of 125 ethnic groups, none of which wields considerable political dominance over the others. In isolated past cases, such as among the Chagga of Kilimanjaro, there were claims of political autonomy that were enhanced by the British before the abolition of chiefdoms by the independent government in 1962. But even then, these ethnic groups did not promote visions of political dominance

over other ethnic groups. The abolition of chiefdoms, and the subsequent creation of administrative units based on population concentrations, meant that centrally appointed and transferable leaders replaced ethnically based 'chiefs' in districts and regions. This process undermined ethnic identities, and their claims to autonomy began to die out. It is only with reference to Zanzibar, where the vestiges of independence and a separate identity remain long after the merger with Tanganyika, that one can meaningfully talk about regional politics in Tanzania.

In terms of religion, the people of Tanzania are split into the two major religions: Christianity and Islam. Followers of either of the two religions are often estimated at about 40 percent each. The rest, 20 percent, are estimated to subscribe to other belief systems. Up to the present, the leadership of these two major religious groups have fallen under respective national umbrella organisations, whose autonomy is subject to debate. What is significant, however, is that the umbrella organisations and their subdivisions had to be registered by the state to be allowed to operate. Registration by the state, therefore, became one important mechanism of regulating the activities of these potentially divisive institutions.

Before examining the way politics were organised under the single party system, it is important to recognise that Tanzania has been, and continues to be, one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita GNP of US$ 254 p.a., or less than one dollar per day. The country is overwhelmingly rural, with 92 percent of its population living in the countryside. The literacy rate, once the second highest in Africa with an estimated 86 percent in the 1970s, has presently lapsed to less than 60 percent. Although there are no concrete figures to support this, a general perception exists that it is from this non-literate population that contenders for political power compete for support.

One-party rule began formally in 1965 when the constitution was amended to abolish competitive politics. In 1977, the constitution further entrenched single-party rule by declaring that the lone party was the supreme organ of state under which all activities were to be organised. On the basis of this provision, major institutions like the armed forces, labour unions, co-operatives, and even religious bodies such as the Church and Mosque became either institutional members of the party, or were affiliated to it. The power and influence that the single party commanded in all institutions and at all levels of society (territorial, workplace, and household) was enhanced by the towering position of its charismatic and respected architect, the late Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere.

It is generally acknowledged that Tanzania did not have the ideal authoritarian or monolithic political regime found elsewhere in Africa and other parts of the world (Tordoff, 1993). For example, there were regular elections every five years for the president and parliamentary officials[1], and a tolerant regime characterised by the absence of a substantial number of political detainees, or assassinations of political opponents. There was also relative freedom of speech.[2] However, like the cases of other authoritarian and monolithic regimes, the system in Tanzania was characterised by limited competitive politics, and a circumscribed ability to question authority. There was little toleration of dissenting views and groups in the political process. All potential and actual dissenters were either co-opted into the one party system or banned. As for regime practice, the system itself was characterised by limited accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. For example, deliberations and decisions of considerable impact to all segments of society were conducted in the national organs of the only political party, the National Executive Committee (NEC). Such deliberations and decisions were often sombrely but briefly announced in the press, and could not be queried.

Tanzania's uniqueness also arises out of its overall record of stability since independence. Unfortunately, the country has not been able to effectively translate its stability into socio-economic development. Although Tanzania has been an island of stability in the East African region—indeed the entire continent of Africa—one can justifiably argue that its stability hinged on a combination of authority and co-optation dependent on a clever development of institutions of integration under a one-party regime, and not through consensus arising out of the citizens' will (Mmuya, 1979). National solidarity was also closely related to the personal qualities of the first President of Tanzania, the late Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere. These qualities were those of toleration, benevolence, charisma, and commitment to the public interest.[3] Definitely, however, the growing complexity of society demanded the replacement of monism and individual personal qualities with democratic structures, institutions, and practices to guarantee a more meaningful and durable political system.

Political Reform in Tanzania and its Challenges

Tanzania opened up the one-party system to political liberalisation in July 1992. The first step in this reform process was the 1992 constitutional amendments that transformed the single-party state to a pluralist political system through the introduction of multiparty competitive politics (URT, 1992), and the encouragement of independent and autonomous civil society

organisations. Due to these reforms, many new political associations were formed. For example, there are now 13 fully registered political parties. There are also numerous religious, scientific, and professional interest groups that serve as pressure organs seeking to influence policy and the actions of the decision makers in society. However, organizations of ethnic nature are formally disallowed.

Secondly, since the inception of multipartism in 1992, several elections have been held. Before the 1995 parliamentary and presidential elections, there were several by-elections to fill vacant parliamentary seats. The first of these by-elections took place in April 1993 at Kwahani Zanzibar. The by-elections were followed by the 1994 pan-territorial local government elections for district (rural), urban, and municipal councils. After the 1995 general elections, there were several other by-elections in various constituencies throughout the country, both in Zanzibar and Mainland Tanzania.

Thirdly, following the opening up to multiparty democracy, Tanzania has embarked on a programme of building institutions and practices of good governance through promoting the ideals of transparency, accountability, and openness. Connected to this is the creation of the National Governance Programme (NGP) under a special ministry in the President's Office, which provides the policy framework and oversight for good governance tasks in various sectors. In addition to this, presently Tanzania has numerous private and independent public media that play a significant role in ensuring transparency, responsiveness, and accountability. These include private television stations; daily, weekly and bi-weekly newspapers; radio stations; and of course the internet and electronic mail services. Other measures have included the transformation to a market based economic system, mainly through divestment of state managed economic system, reform of the civil service, and the promotion of private property rights.

Unlike elsewhere in Africa, Tanzania has had a relatively orderly and stable transition towards a multiparty democratic system since the re-introduction of multiparty competitive politics in 1992. This has allowed the country to proceed with its development endeavours, and have achieved a number of consecutive years of positive economic growth. To date, the pillars of Tanzania's stability are relatively intact. These include law and order based on the existing constitution and laws; a high degree of national consensus; a general citizen confidence and trust of state institutions such as the courts,

the legislature and the state administrative bodies at both national and sub-regional levels; elections; and a shared culture such as a common language, inter-ethnic marriages, cross-ethnic food habits and dress patterns. The leadership also is distinguishable by cohesiveness and resolve.

However, the process of democratisation has also created problems. For example, the problems noted below by Young are not absent from Tanzania's emerging new political culture:

> ... Few today would dispute the premise that electoral competition readily falls along societal fault lines defined by ethnicity, religion or race both in the world at large and in Africa ... Competitive political parties and open elections necessarily mobilise and politicise regional, ethnic, religious and social solidarities and therefore intensify disintegration pressures on fragile states without notably contributing to either stability or legitimacy ... (Young, 1999: 29).

The opening up of the country to plural politics through competitive political parties and open elections has had the tendency of resurrecting and politicising the previously suppressed regional, ethnic, religious and social solidarities, thereby raising the potential of national disintegration and erosion of the legitimacy of the political system. Moreover, it has to be acknowledged that the transition to democracy in Tanzania is one where Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the incumbent party—and previously the only political party—is determined to rule with the explicit objective of maintaining its control over the state. Because of this, and owing to the constraints related to the resurfacing of divisive elements in the society that were at one time suppressed through co-optation or denial, the democratisation process in Tanzania is generating a number of challenges which raise fears about the country remaining an island of peace and tranquillity; and being capable of proceeding with its general development efforts.

Introduction of Liberal Democratic Principles

Liberal democracy can be associated with specific practices and attributes outlined in Robert Dahl's model of polyarchy, which has been recently revisited by Diamond and others (1988: xvi). In that model, democracy is associated with three major practices: (a) political participation, (b) competition, and (c) civil and political liberties (freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organisations). The process of transition to a liberal democracy assumes that at some point in time the society will be characterized by political competition, political participation, civil liberties, and the associated attributes of good governance.

Since the formal introduction of multiparty competitive politics in Tanzania, the society has begun to internalise at least some of these practices. But as indicated earlier, the reintroduction of these practices and institutions has to some extent been filtered through existing societal fault lines, which raises the problem of realising the envisaged democracy while at the same time maintaining the stability of the society for socio-economic development. For a parsimonious analysis, three broad democratic practices—pluralism, competition, and good governance, which are in the process of being introduced in Tanzania—have been isolated for examination with regard to the previously suppressed potentially destabilising forces of ethnicity, religion, and regionalism.

Pluralism

The introduction of democracy in Tanzania has meant recognizing the presence in society of a multiplicity of ideologies, cultures, and societal organisations representing a multitude of interests. In the political and social spheres of pluralism, this meant a shift from the monolithic political and social systems to multipartism and social diversity. This dispensation from the very start raised the question of how to promote pluralism without at the same time reverting to previously suppressed identities that characterise the Tanzanian social fabric, and which have the potential of splitting the otherwise stable society.

The institutionalisation of political and social pluralism means, of course, the reinstatement of multiparty politics, and permitting the evolution of independent and autonomous civil society organisations. Considering political parties and civil organizations, the question here is how does the ethnic, religious, and regional heterogeneity articulate with party politics in the emerging political pluralism in Tanzania? Clearly, Tanzania's political leaders were aware of a potential problem: that competing political parties in a multicultural society might become identified with ethnic, regional, or religious groups, thus undermining the stability of the country. As a safeguard, the state discouraged the evolution of political parties and civil society groups on purely ethnic, religious, or regional lines. The state demanded that political parties be registered with the government, and as a precondition for registration the applicants must clearly show that the party is open to all members of the society irrespective of their religion, race, region, and ethnic origin.[4] But even under these legal and other administrative restrictions, a close look at the new political parties—as well as the emerging civil society organisations—suggests that the underlying

foundation on which their membership and leadership are built is exactly what the law and administrative regulations prohibit: ethnicity, localism, and religion.

Ethnicity, localism, and religion are social realities that cannot be ignored in the political process; and can serve as assets for mobilisation. However, in the case of Tanzania—as with other transitional societies with fragile political structures—pluralism often creates associational imperatives that have centrifugal tendencies, with the very possible adverse effects of undermining the national consensus that is the basis of stability. Rather than promoting innovation and economic development through freeing up individual initiative, pluralism could have the opposite effect; and actually limit societal capacity to promote socio-economic development. This is more likely if identities become the basis for resource allocation, e.g., political office, social services, etc. In Tanzania, for example, it is no exaggeration that today religious tolerance may be undergoing an erosion as different religious leaders to criticise and cajole their counterparts, particularly during elections, under the banner of promoting one's group interests, which is provided for by the emerging pluralism.[5]

Competition

Like pluralism, competition has its own adverse tendencies. Ideally, as Diamond (1988) would probably have it, the condition of competition as an attribute of polyarchy should not be qualified to deny or inhibit other members of the polyarchy to participate in the quest for office or leadership, especially on the basis of ethnic origin, religion, or locality. However, a close look at what transpired in Tanzania after the gates were opened for plural politics shows the tendencies of competition for political office being built on the primordial institutions of ethnicity, localism, and religion, among other key elements. Besides the problem raised by politics based on primordial institutions, competition has often been adversarial, not only because of the personal agony of losing in a competition, but essentially because of the bad feeling that the victory has gone to an opponent who belongs to a rival ethnic, religious, or regional group. Like any adversarial contest, hate, lack of trust, and revenge come to the fore. These acts often lead into the breach of peace, civil disorder and, therefore, instability.

Competitive elections, particularly those conducted on a regular basis, are among the measures of the extent to which society is moving towards democracy. But elections, even if they are held regularly, have to be seen as

genuine vehicles for competition for political office. For elections to be judged as genuine, they need to be conducted in a manner that is fair to all actors. This includes ensuring that the institutions that manage elections, and those that arbitrate electoral disputes, are impartial. In addition to having unbiased institutions, the behaviour of actors in the electoral process—be they opposition political parties, candidates and their supporters, election observers, etc.—must demonstrate a high degree of honesty and integrity. This entails strict observation of the principles of competition, consensus, and commitment to abide by agreed procedures.

For transitional societies like Tanzania, all the conditions set out above are still in their infancy. When competitive elections were reinstated, the supporting practices had not yet been institutionalised. This generated a lot of anxiety, and heightened tension among the players, resulting into a lack of consensus and trust. Competitive tensions have also been manifested in calls from the opposition for a level playing field. This is one of the most important issues in electoral politics, with the potential for wrecking the democratic transition. The thirteen political parties in Tanzania contrast significantly in terms of the number of supporters and resources they command. The incumbent party, CCM, claims to have a membership of about 3,000,000 people. It is difficult to determine the number of membership for the rest of the parties. But if the 1995 parliamentary election results are anything to go by, CCM secured 3,814,206 votes or 59.22 percent, suggesting in turn that the combined twelve new parties secured only 40.78 percent of the votes. The closest party to CCM in terms of popular support was the NCCR-Mageuzi, which won an impressive 21.83 percent of the votes. This was a notable accomplishment considering the resources under the incumbent party's control, and that NCCR-Mageuzi was entering the field for the first time. Only two of the other new parties got over 5 percent of the votes (Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA) (6.16 percent), and Civic United Front (CUF) (5.02 percent)). CCM's popular strength is complimented by its command of huge resources that range from its position as an incumbent, thereby suggesting that it has state power at its disposal, in addition to financial and other material resources such as a nationwide network of offices.

The relative strength of the incumbent party vis-à-vis the new parties has always been a source of squabbles, leading to an uneasy relationship. The new parties have used this lack of trust as part of their agenda to gain political support. The new parties accuse CCM of manipulating institutions such as the election commission, police, and the state media for partisan

political purposes. Party politics in Tanzania has often been locked in endless controversies over the need to level the playing field. Such demands, genuine as they are, have in a number of cases led to boycotts of elections, occasionally of national importance, thereby contributing to the de-legitimation of the political system.

The 1995 general elections in Tanzania, for example, is a case in point. While the results fairly represented the verdict of the population and found a fair acceptance from the larger public, in the islands of Zanzibar the declared results were not accepted by the two major political parties: the ruling CCM and the opposition CUF. The impasse that ensued almost led to a standstill of socio-economic development initiatives in the isles. Besides the Zanzibar case, there are numerous examples of nominations of contesting candidates being determined on ethnic or regional considerations. Voting patterns in the elections often followed regional and ethnic fault lines. Worse still, in the subsequent by-elections there emerged a lack of understanding of the true spirit of competitive politics as supporters and opponents of competing parties went to campaign rallies with knives and machetes hidden under their jackets.[6] The increase of such incidences signals danger to stability and the entire democratic process.

Good Governance

Good governance is closely associated with democracy in that the concept embodies rules that reinforce democratic practice: namely accountability, responsiveness, transparency, rule of law, etc. With political liberalisation, Tanzania introduced the above attributes in governmental practices, economic management, and generally in the overall management of public affairs. The emerging organisations, such as political parties and civil society organisations, were not only expected to promote good governance, and therefore democracy, but were also expected to practice good governance within their own organisations.

The historical character of the Tanzanian polity was essentially based on a form of authority that was not always accountable for its actions. During the single-party era, only a few in the party and affiliated civil society leadership knew what was happening within the government. Therefore, the introduction of good governance in the country was traumatic for political leaders who came from the previous regime, and were not used to being questioned or second-guessed. This was not only for state institutions: it also applied to other organisations, public and private, whose practices were based on hierarchal

authority. In this regard, the development of independent, private media organs and civil society organisations that now boldly serve as watchdogs of public interest have created shockwaves in such leadership.

However, there are clear examples that the practices of pluralism and competition have exacerbated the fault lines of primordial identities such as race, ethnicity, region, and religion. But this is still only a potential problem to stability. As general examples, while the new parties and the independent media institutions keep the government on guard, sometimes provoking undemocratic state responses, both the new political parties and the media are themselves far from practising good governance.

Another component of good governance is the creation of viable alternative policies and potential successor governments. However, as seen earlier, Young argues that one of the reasons for the rise of ethnic and religious politics within the democracy project is the difficulty that political parties experience in devising and promoting new and more inspiring policies for society. Where there is such a difficulty, according to Young, the respective political parties often resort to exclusionary constructs of ethnic, religious, and regional ties to build a constituency.

In the Tanzanian case, both the incumbent and new political parties are hard pressed to evolve viable alternative political platforms that can attract voters or committed members. The conclusion of an earlier study of the development of political parties is that in terms of general policy orientation, all of the political parties, including CCM, cherish the ideals of social democracy (Mmuya, 1998). This is the case because, invariably, each calls for a private (non-public) and social individualist (non-collective) initiatives in the economy but with some state regulation, leading some observers to ask if any of the parties have something fundamentally different to offer. For the incumbent party, its long cherished policy of *ujamaa* (socialism) has been shelved due to the realisation of its practical non-viability arising from the demands of the Western donors and their liberal international ideological institutions, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. The incumbent party has therefore joined the new parties to preach a form of social democracy that incorporates some of the values of *ujamaa* within the confines of a market based economy and liberal democracy. Because of an apparent similarity in party platforms, potential voters are accustomed to hearing charges that major campaign issues have been 'stolen' by an

opposing party. Such charges have driven a few political parties to the bizarre extreme of keeping their policies secret lest they be 'stolen' by their political opponents, which makes a mockery of their function to develop and promote alternative policies.

A more serious problem in Tanzania arises when some of the political parties resort to exclusionary regional or religious appeals, not only to recruit members and leaders, but also to construct their image of society. For example, the Union for Multiparty Democracy (UMD) has propagated a policy of *majimboism* (regionalism) that prompted accusations from the incumbent CCM and some other parties that it was attempting to recreate the former Unyanyembe chiefdom in Tabora region. Opponents accused the CUF of being a regional political party (the Party of Pemba Island and of the Pemba people; or a party for Zanzibar and the *Wanzanzibari*), or even an Islamic party. The most explicit example of exclusionary politics was the position taken by the unregistered Democratic Party (DP) of the controversial Rev. Christopher Mtikila. Without mincing words, the DP stand against Zanzibar and the people of Zanzibar, and all other non-African peoples in Mainland Tanzania (Europeans, Asians, and Somalis whom Rev. Mtikila broadly calls Gabacholis—a term supposedly derived from an Indian expression for foreigners). When it comes to playing out party politics in a newly liberalized Tanzania, there is evidence of the inability of parties to present alternative, viable, and universal policy programmes.

The lack of well-articulated and alternative political platforms makes party politics centre on personalities. Party policies have become personalised, often associated with the leader of the party. The personalisation of policy is not only injurious to the life of political parties and democracy generally, but also at the personal level it has resulted in excessive character assassination that undermines the orderliness of the entire electoral process. Competition can lead to enmity between candidates, as has been the case discussed in various elections petitions lodged after the 1995 general elections that sought to reverse some election results. Some of these petitions were successful,[7] leading to a general lack of confidence and trust in the election results, the institutions that administer the electoral process, and even the mechanisms for the arbitration of disputes.

Apart from the general problems it raises with regard to the stability of societal institutions, the personalization of politics also intensifies ethnic, regional, and religious competition. Under such conditions, the protagonists

in electoral contests usually seek support for themselves not from a cross-section of the society, but from a segment based on ethnicity, region, or religion. Indeed, pluralism coupled with competitive elections facilitates the creation of factions of identity groups. This is not only apparent in politics, but also in civil society organizations.

This is not to suggest that personalities do not matter in a democracy. The problem being considered here is that of a complete disregard for a party platform, thereby creating a situation that could lapse into a politics of hate around the individual and his ethnic/religious/regional supporters where individual traits are decisive. Many observers of the Tanzania political scene would probably first cite the Zanzibar 1995 elections stand-off as having been marred, in addition to other reasons, by personality conflict. In another case, one can cite that among the factors that led to the loss of esteem of the well organised NCCR-Mageuzi was the showdown between its former Chairman, Agustino Mrema, and its Secretary General, Mabere Marando. In these two examples it is well documented that the leading personalities had their own constituency within the individual organisation and the larger society based either on regionalism, religion, or ethnicity. In the case of Zanzibar, the impasse led to an almost complete standstill in socio-economic development uncertainty prevailed in the islands from the elections in 1995 until when a pact was brokered by the Commonwealth in June 1999. The almost complete collapse of the NCCR-Mageuzi was a matter of concern not only to their numerous members and sympathisers, but also to the state as unrest in the party undermined national peace and order.

Figure 1 offers a detailed illustration of the balkanisation resulting from personality politics coupled with ethnic, regional, or religious support bases. The political parties' tree in Figure 1 simply shows that political parties and reform groups are far from stable. They emerged in 1991 as a group under the banner of a cohesive institution, the National Committee for Constitutional Reform (NCCR-Mageuzi). But in that very year and month key individuals shelved the main agenda of constitutional reform and established five proto-political parties: UMD, NCCR-Mageuzi, Chama cha Wananchi (CCW), Zanzibar United Front (ZUF), and DP. These five proto-political parties received provisional registration from the registrar of political parties. Later, six other political parties emerged outside the tradition of the 1991 NCCR-Mageuzi. These were CHADEMA, TADEA, PONA, TLP, NRA, and NLD. The situation in most of the parties stabilised thereafter, save in NCCR-Mageuzi, which again split in 1995 only to reunite in the same year just before the elections.

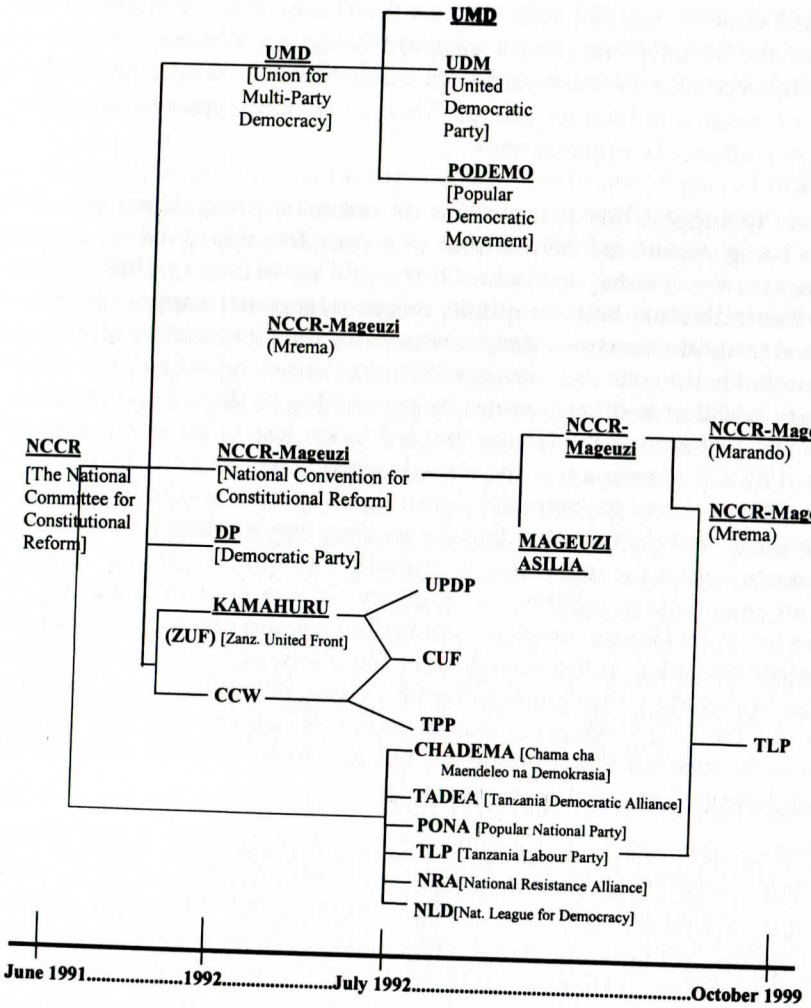

Figure 1: ***The Tree of Political Parties in Tanzania***

This union was short-lived, and NCCR-Mageuzi split again at the turn of the century with Mrema's faction merging with TLP. I have sufficiently demonstrated elsewhere (Mmuya, 1998: 4) that, by and large, the split of the parties was driven by personalities around which factions were built on mainly ethnic-cum-regional lines: Chaggas against Luos, the north-east against the north-west, etc.

In the study I argued that the parties that remained stable did so because they were already individual or familial parties, and as such had little room for further splits. In conclusion, the personality and fractional problem nourishes separatist tendencies whose consequences are to undermine the party system, democracy, and threaten the stability of the polity.

Strategies for Promoting Stable Democratic Transitions

Lijphart's (1977) model of consociational democracy was an early and influential attempt to design a democratic system for societies with deep identity divisions. The model has the following four characteristics:

(a) The establishment of a government of a grand coalition of the political leaders of all the significant segments of the plural society.
(b) The provision of a mutual veto that would serve as protection of vital minority interests.
(c) An electoral system based on proportionality as the principal standard of political representation.
(d) The granting of a high degree of autonomy that allows each segment to run its own internal affairs.

Presumably inspired by the above model, Young (1999) suggests that the solution to the problem of crafting democracies in culturally heterogeneous societies can be found in:

> ... Thoughtful state craft that seeks constitutional formulas that facilitate accommodation of ethnic religious or racial differences ... and through arrangements such as inclusionary politics and incentives for inter-communal co-operation (Young, 1999: 32).

On a more practical level, Vanhanen suggests that although the social constraints to building democracy are considerable, they leave room for conscious political strategies to further democratisation. Vanhanen outlines these strategies as including:

> 1) Changing social conditions affecting the distribution of power resources and 2) adapting political institutions to their social environment in such a way that it becomes easier for competing groups to share power and institutionalise the sharing of power (Vanhanen, 1992: 7)

Drawing from the discussion of the Tanzania case, there are salient issues that need to be recognised as constraints to the democratic transition. First, as a heterogeneous society, Tanzania has the potential for identity politics to prevail in political institutions such as in the newly introduced political parties, in elections, etc. Second, in so far as the transition to democracy means

electoral competition between political parties and their respective supporting interests, it is increasingly becoming a victim of societal fault lines defined by ethnicity, religion, or regionalism - thereby intensifying disintegration pressures on a fragile state. Third, and emerging from the above, as a strategy to promote democracy in multi-cultural societies like Tanzania, conscious efforts should be made to involve all players in the process.

Young (1999) emphasises the need for what he calls statecraft in seeking constitutional formulas that facilitate accommodation of ethnic, religious, regional, or racial differences through arrangements that include inclusionary politics and incentives for inter-communal co-operation. Vanhanen (1992) equally recognises the need for conscious political strategies aimed at changing both the social conditions affecting the distribution of power resources, and adapting political institutions to their social environment in such a way that it becomes easier for competing groups to share power and institutionalise the sharing of power. This broad strategy needs to involve a conscious effort (implied in the notion of state crafting) at involving the different players in multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies, like Tanzania, in the process of transition to democracy. Thus, suppressing the different identities to ostensibly maintain stability, as was done under the monolithic system, may not promote stability and democracy. The rule is perhaps to let the identities blossom and then include them in the political process.

This, as Young (1999) proposes, can be affected through constitutional formulas. While I concur with him about the efficacy of this strategy, however, there are numerous questions that need to be answered for it to be effective. Why has it, for example, been possible in some societies in transition to arrive at constitutional formulas to govern the transition to democracy, while in others it has not? By extension, to what extent can one expect to extract a constitutional provision that will include the participation of different key players in the democratisation process considering that it has not always been possible to have a meeting of key players to develop consensual rules of the game? The difficulty in answering these questions probably suggests that there may be factors or conditions that permit the drawing of constitutional dispensations about consensual rules that should guide the democratisation process. It is probably the same conditions that determine the possibility for the development of a constitutional provision that will include the different players to participate in the democratic process. Vanhanen's proposal recognises that there are social conditions that affect the distribution of power resources that permit or inhibit the development of a constitutional provision

that will permit different players to participate in the democratic process. But as Young (1999), Vanhanen (1992) and Joseph (1999:12) suggest, these conditions can be altered through human action. This is undoubtedly a project that civil society groups can pursue.

In the Tanzanian case, it is abundantly clear that democracy and its benefits do not reach many people, especially in the rural areas where institutions of separatism remain in their primordial forms. Knowledge about the attributes of democracy, its benefits, and the implications embodied in the process of transition to it, is a resource that political power holders often control in order to retain authoritarian institutions. Following Vanhanen's (1992) strategy, it is possible for real pro-democracy movements to consciously engage in a project of changing the lack of awareness about democracy as a means of changing the distribution of power in the society. One can hope, as Vanhanen probably does, that the introduction of the attributes of democracy, or the institutionalisation of competitive politics, will not follow identity societal fault lines and cause instability; thereby halting the democracy project and the overall socio-economic development. Translated in more concrete terms, projects like voter education, civic education, trust and confidence building between opposed groups can go a long way towards changing the social conditions that affect the distribution of power and influence in societies such as Tanzania.

Following the impasse in Zanzibar, the operative framework in Tanzanian politics has been *mwafaka*, literally meaning 'consensus'. For democracy to take root in Tanzania, probably one of the requirements is to exploit the existing euphoria of consensus or *mwafaka* to resolve the problems of factionalism and localisation while there is still peace. Realising the role of such programmes in the democratic transition, and capturing the sprit of *mwafaka*, a group of social engineers for democracy have come up with a project entitled 'Agenda: Participation 2000', which has two components:

(a) Building a national consensus on principles of free and fair elections
(b) Mounting a civic education programme.

The building of a national consensus aims at striking an accord among all actors and stakeholders on how to conduct themselves during the upcoming 2000 elections. The civic education programme is intended to raise the competence of the electorate so that it can make informed judgements about candidates and the elections generally. 'Agenda: Participation 2000' in Tanzania may not be a panacea for all the problems arising from the

challenges of democratisation, but it is a conscious strategy that is likely to create awareness and contribute to the changing of the distribution of power in the transition to democracy. Efforts like the 'Agenda: Participation 2000' initiative may go a long way towards the resolution of problems of democratic transitions in multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies such as Tanzania.

Conclusion

Creating an inclusive, competitive and accountable government in Tanzania depends largely on the ability to craft political institutions that channel centrifugal forces into strengthening, rather than countering, liberal democracy. Although there are signs that personalized politics based on regional, ethnic, and religious identities is becoming a more prominent feature of Tanzanian politics, the 'Agenda: Participation 2000' initiative is a serious attempt to make sure that a consensus exists regarding appropriate roles of key democratic institutions. While the task of building liberal democracy in poor heterogeneous societies is often difficult and unsuccessful, as Lijphart, Young and Diamond argue, there are no preordained outcomes, and seemingly insurmountable problems can be overcome through the development of proper institutions.

Notes

1. There had been regular elections under the single party system every five years between 1965 and the first multiparty elections in 1995.
2. The above characteristics of the Tanzanian single party system are used to explain in part Tanzania's weak opposition. It is argued that since political repression was relatively mild (due to regular elections and a somewhat tolerant state behaviour), committed opposition groups could not emerge. Elsewhere such opposition was born out of blatant oppression and exclusion.
3. Beck (1997) more or less characterises, in the same breath, the predominant role played by Leopold Sedar Senghor in Senegalese politics.
4. The Political Parties Act, Act No. 5, 1992:9- (1) (c)
5. Recognising the emerging assertiveness of religious organisations in the political process in Tanzania, and the potential they have in making an impact in the process, the University of Dar es Salaam is embarking on a project of studying

how religion is articulated in political institution. This has been necessitated by the gradual erosion of the fraternal relationship between Christians and Muslims that has now degenerated into hostile sermons during religious assemblies.

6. A more recent example was the by-election in Ubungo, Dar es Salaam, in July 1999 when supporters of the Civic United Front exchanged abusive language and blows with three CCM opponents.
7. Vide the petition by one Premji, a candidate for the Kigoma Urban constituency (CCM) vs. Kaborou (CHADEMA).

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