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Identity Politics and Conflicts in Zanzibar

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Abstract
This article analyses the pattern of conflict in Zanzibar. Since the introduction of multiparty politics in 1992 this semi-autonomous territory within the State of Tanzania has remained on the brink of conflict. The article argues that the conflict in Zanzibar should not be seen as merely a political stand-off with post-election rioting. In fact it has most of the characteristics of a deep-seated and protracted conflict. The political divisions are superimposed on deeper racial/ethnic divisions embedded in territorially-defined horizontal inequalities. These in turn have resonances to periods of profound brutality in Zanzibar and African history. The article examines geo-historical roots of the conflict to find explanations for the rather dismal results of the various attempts in conflict resolution in Zanzibar.

Keywords: Zanzibar, identity politics, conflicts, revolution, ethnicity

Introduction

This article traces the geo-historical roots of the conflict in Zanzibar so as to uncover the underlying politics of identity construction and change and how they intermingle to produce complex political dynamics that have complicated the process of conflict transformation. In Zanzibar, as is true of most divided societies, shared memories, perceptions, blame and identities converge with political entrepreneurship to become a source of division. Current political events are interpreted and related to the ancient troubles, including the Arab slave trade, colonialism (both Arab and British) and the struggle to regain independence. Zanzibar's long and troubled history has had enduring effects that haunt the islands, as the past makes strong resonances with the present to produce volatile and complex social relations.

Identity construction in Zanzibar can be seen on two levels: construction of individual identities and politicization of collective identities in the making of state identity. Through this intertwined process, change of state identity coincides with and spurs re-categorization of individual identities. Scholars

generally agree that identity is dynamic and fluid, thus posing difficulties for its isolation as a variable for studying politics not only in Zanzibar but in any other place (Bakari, 2011; Killian, 2008; Sheriff, 2001; Newbury, 1983). In deeply divided societies, group identities are politicized; individuals within the polity collectively identify themselves as "insiders" and label others as "aliens" to justify their exclusion from mainstream politics.

Geo-historical roots of identity

The conflict in Zanzibar traces its origin to the long and troubled history of the Isles. Zanzibar has passed through at least three significant phases that together define, and have had profound impact on, current socio-political relations, including the conflict. The first phase, starting roughly in the 12th century, coincides with the early immigration to Zanzibar of the people of the Persian Gulf, mainly Arabs, who established trade links with east African coastal towns, erected garrisons to defend themselves and introduced Islam (Petterson, 2002; Mbwiliza, 2000; Newbury, 1983). Early immigrants freely intermarried with indigenous Africans to give rise to a distinct coastal community.

The second phase coincided with the arrival of the Portuguese, who on their way to India, set camp in Zanzibar in 1499 (Ingrams, 1931). The Portuguese established relations with local rulers and set up trading stations and Christian missions, both secured from Fort Jesus in Mombasa. The Portuguese became the first European power to gain political control and they retained it for nearly 200 years (Lodhi, 1986; Newbury, 1983). Interestingly, even with the considerable period of colonization, Christianity did not gain firm roots in Zanzibar and other coastal towns, although it definitely left its mark. Its impact is to be seen in the famous churches in Zanzibar, which were instrumental in the abolition of slave trade.

The third phase coincided with Arab control of Zanzibar starting in 1698 after they overran Fort Jesus, ejecting the Portuguese from Zanzibar and from all other coastal regions North of Mozambique (Romero, 1986). The first and second phases were politically less consequential than the third phase, although highly socially significant, as they gave rise to a distinct identity. The second and third phases were characterized by immigration of people from outside Africa. By and large, socio-political relations were to radically change in the third phase of Zanzibar history. The Arab connection with Zanzibar grew such that by 1840 Seyyid Said bin Sultan al-Busaid moved his capital from Muscat to Stone Town in Unguja (Mbwiliza, 2000; Groot, 1953). The Zanzibar Sultans controlled a

substantial portion of the East African coast known as Zanj, and trading routes extending much further across the continent, as far as the present day Democratic Republic of the Congo. Arabs also opened plantations that depended largely on slave labour. When the slave trade was abolished in 1873 many slaves turned into squatters, working mainly with the same slave owners. To pave the way for plantation agriculture, most of the fertile and arable land was taken from Africans, thus creating socio-economic tensions. Unlike the first and second phases, the Arab rule phase led to a massive immigration of Africans from the mainland, especially along the slave routes. Africans, therefore, would immigrate to Zanzibar to take up low social status positions, mainly as slaves to work in Zanzibar plantations.

The presence of diverse groups, superimposed on exploitative economic relations, perpetrated by the colonial political system, has remained a source of political turmoil in Zanzibar. Official population censuses carried out systematically by the British colonialists from the 1920s indicated three principal groups: Arabs, Asians and Africans (from the mainland and indigenous). Comorians, Goans, and Europeans constituted a very small number in Zanzibar. Many Europeans were either in the colonial administration or members of the Diplomatic Corps (Petterson, 2002; Newbury, 1983; Lofchie, 1963; Zanzibar Protectorate, 1961).

Table 1: Ethnic-racial structure of population, Zanzibar, 1924-1948

	1924		1931		1948	
Race	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
African	181,275	83.6	184,032	78.2	199,860	75.7
Arab	18,884	8.7	33,401	14.2	44,560	16.9
Indian	12,903	6.0	14,242	6.1	15,211	5.8
Comorian	2,506	1.2	2,434	1.0	3,267	1.1
Goan	869	0.4	1,004	0.4	681	0.3
European	272	0.1	278	0.1	296	0.1
Other	88	0.0	37	0.0	287	0.1
Total	**216,797**	**100.0**	**235,428**	**100.0**	**264,162**	**100.0**

Source: Population census, Zanzibar National Archives, Ref. AB33/13

Table 1 indicates the trend in population structure of Zanzibar based on the 1924, 1931 and 1948 population censuses. It is notable in Table 1 that the number of Arabs grew while that of Africans slightly declined in proportional terms. While the proportion of Arabs in 1948 had doubled compared to its 1924

share, Africans had declined from 84 percent to 76 percent in the same period. Available records show neither a sudden immigration of Arabs in Zanzibar nor any factor that might have led to a decline in the African population—such as a plague. What explains these demographic shifts? What was the socio-political implication of this statistics?

Table 2: Ethnic-racial structure of population by region, Zanzibar, 1948

Race	Unguja		Pemba	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
African	118,652	79.3	81,208	70.9
Arab	13,977	9.3	30,583	26.7
Indian	13,107	8.8	2,104	1.8
Comorian	2,764	1.8	503	0.4
Goan	598	0.4	83	0
European	256	0.2	40	0
Other	221	0.2	66	0
Total	**149,575**	**100.0**	**114,587**	**100.0**

Source: Population census, Zanzibar National Archives, Ref. AB33/13

The census results in Table 1 and 2 reflect centuries of migration to Zanzibar that was embedded within a hierarchical socio-political system. Africans from the mainland arrived mainly as slaves or porters. Arabs were first and foremost slave traders and aristocrats. Europeans were mainly expatriates and later on colonialists. Indians were largely traders and money lenders, concentrated in the urban centres in Unguja (Sheriff, 2001; Bhagat and Othman, 1978).

Geographical/spatial factors were also to shape identity and politics in Zanzibar. The 1948 population census was the last systematic enumeration to carry group identities in Zanzibar. It is demonstrated in Table 1 that the Arabs made up 17 percent of the population. Significantly for the conflict dynamics, there were twice as many Arabs in Pemba as in Unguja, and the number of Africans in Unguja was one and a half times that of Africans in Pemba. It should be noted that while this might be numerically insignificant, Arabs controlled the economy and constituted a majority of power holders. Indeed, there have been numerous instances where people have instrumentalized identities subject to material benefits in different occasions. This could be shown, for example, in the demographic trends in Table 1. It is clear that although Africans had constituted a majority, they have tended to decline in proportional terms from 84, 78, and 76 percent in 1924, 1931 and 1948, respectively. Simultaneously, the proportion

of Arabs had risen steadily from nine, then 14 to 17 percent in the same period. In Zanzibar the ruling elite was considered alien, yet owing to their longevity of stay in the Isles they considered Zanzibar their home—many actually maintaining only symbolic ties with their motherland. This situation of a colonial population that also has a settler element is in many ways similar to the Afrikaners or Whites in South Africa—the only country said to constitute a larger proportion of "aliens"—with 20 percent of the population considered outsiders. As Ryan (1996) has correctly pointed out, in Zanzibar as in South Africa and other similar cases, individuals of different cultural groups came into contact in a superior/inferior relationship in a state which is ethnocratic, colonial, apartheid or theocratic.

Slave trade and slavery left indelible marks in Zanzibar and yet they are repugnant legacies. In a mid-1980s study of the legacy of slavery, it was found that today very few people associate themselves with slavery, despite the fact that at the height of the slave trade, the slave population outnumbered all free people combined (Killian, 2008; Romero, 1986). As was evident in Zanzibar, the slave trade broke up the African group, the largest group in the Isles. Africans invented other identities such as "Shirazi" in order to distance themselves from the disgrace of slavery. As Tambila (2000) observed, slavery formed part of the production relations and resulting class and relations, which while changing over time, nonetheless, informed ideological positions. In the "sons of soil" understanding, the Shirazi gave rise to three distinct groups in Zanzibar: waTumbatu, waHadimu, and Pemba Shirazi. It is the way each of these groups allied with the minority, but dominant, Arab power holders and/or the relatively powerless African majority in the struggle to alter power relations that determined political outcomes in the run-up to independence in 1963.

All this changed in the post-1964 Revolution period when Africans took over power from Arabs. The Revolution ensured a changing political landscape commensurate with noticeable identity shifts, deriving from the Africans' acquisition of power (Bayart, 1998). Killian (2008) has shown that in the early 1970s the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar issued a circular and created mechanism to enable people to change their identity. Many who had identified themselves as Shirazi took the opportunity to re-classify themselves as Africans. "While in 1948 about 56 percent of Zanzibaris identified themselves as Shirazi, only 42 percent said so in early 1960s and this number had declined to 20 percent by the early 1980s" (Killian, 2008: 106). Clearly, in the post-Revolution period, African identity became safe and advantageous, even for those who

previously despised it. But, interestingly, as freedom of expression increased with the advent of liberal democracy, expressions of Arab and Shirazi identity resurfaced. For example, in a 1999 survey, Killian found out that 51.3 percent of respondents identified themselves as "Africans", 27.5 as "Shirazi" and 12.7 percent as "Arabs".

It is important to point out that the Unguja-Pemba regional divide coincided simultaneously with colonial penetration and the class relations that arose from it. By the 1830s the economy of Zanzibar was firmly in the hands of Arabs who had established large coconut and clove plantations, especially in Unguja (Killian, 2008; Sheriff, 2001). Pemba started to attract investments only when world market prices plummeted in the 1870s and extreme weather wiped out many cloves in Unguja (Sheriff, 2001). These events are significant in a number of ways. First, the number of African immigrants from the mainland was much larger in Unguja compared to Pemba. Second, the scale of land alienation was noticeably higher in Unguja as a result of increased immigration (Ferguson, 1991). Third, following this, the level of Arab-African antagonism was of a more intense nature in Unguja compared to Pemba. According to Sheriff (2001), Pemba attracted relatively few mainland immigrants, and Arab-Africans/Shirazi socio-economic relations were in turn more harmonious. Since the shifting economic attention to Pemba coincided with the abolition of the slave trade and a global decline in the price of cloves, by the time Arabs started clove farming in Pemba in the 1870s, they had to rely mainly on paid non-slave labour. Moreover, since they were relatively impoverished, they could not establish large plantations, relying therefore on small plots, maintained on a feudal basis. According to Sheriff (2001), Arabs were forced to enter into agreements with Africans whereby Africans would help in the clearing of the fields with the understanding that they would gain half the land after a predetermined period.

Politically, therefore, Africans in Unguja were struggling against Arab hegemony and wanted to restore their expropriated land and local autonomy. In contrast, in Pemba the Shirazi regarded the mainlanders as enemies and foreigners, accusing them of taking their jobs and promoting Christianity in a predominantly Muslim state (Killian, 2008: 105). Groups were strongly heterogeneous and belonging to one group did not stop one from re-categorizing depending on the circumstances. Of course, there were poor Arabs, much the same as there were rich Africans—although this rarely affected the political alliances that were formed.

Revolution and the Unguja-Pemba estrangement

The Revolution in Zanzibar waged on 12 January 1964, barely four weeks after independence, was a symptom of sharp identity-based differentiation. Pre-independence political organization in Zanzibar, including formation of civil society organizations and political parties, fell along racial lines. The determination of the party that would rule the post-independence government, therefore, was between the largely Arab-supported Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP) and the Zanzibar and Pemba Peoples' Party (ZPPP) on the one hand, and the African-supported Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), on the other.

In the largely contested 1963 election, ZNP and ZPPP formed the first post-independence coalition government. ASP criticised the election results and declared the 10 December 1963 as "Arab Independence day" and believed that Arabs had conspired with the British colonial rulers to deny Africans electoral victory. ASP, thus, felt compelled to wage a revolution. The Revolution, said to have been carried by not more than 600 insurgents, targeted the ruling aristocracy, including Arabs and Indians (Brown, 2010; Hunter, 2010; Daly, 2009). There was little resistance as the Revolutionary forces, using traditional weapons, overpowered the police, capturing arms and reinforcing their ranks.

The Sultan and members of his government fled the country (Davidson, 1994). Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume , the leader of ASP, was named President of the newly created People's Republic of Zanzibar and Pemba. Between 5,000 and 12,000 Arabs and Indians were killed, thousands more detained or expelled, their property either confiscated or destroyed (Petterson, 2002; Myers, 2000). Large landholdings were nationalized and distributed to the landless squatters in three-acre plots. Trade was made a state monopoly (Sheriff, 2001; Davidson, 1994). In addition, 611 homes were confiscated, many in Stone Town, which was a residential area for Arabs and Indians (Burgess, 2009; Killian, 2008).

After the Revolution the ASP government immediately nullified the constitution and banned all political parties except for the ASP. Civil society organizations were either banned or—for a few that survived—severely emasculated and transformed into mere propaganda extensions of the ruling party. The Revolution effectively marked the end of liberal democracy, paved the way for rule by decree of the Revolutionary Council and a civilian dictatorship. The Revolution was poised to affect Pemba negatively, given the kinds of political and economic policies that the government adopted. As Sheriff argued "by declaring Zanzibar a one-party state and banning the overthrown political

parties (ZNP and ZPPP), the Revolution essentially disenfranchised nearly half the population" (Sheriff, 2001: 315). According to Burgess (2009: 2):

> How Zanzibaris remember the Revolution—as either the original sin or the triumph of their independence era—often determines whom they call their friends, with whom they share a cup of coffee, or whom they welcome to their homes as in-laws. Many Zanzibaris continue to trace their present fortunes to the Revolution; it assumes centre stage in discussions of how present conditions came to be. Defenders of the Revolution claim it was good for Africans and describe the violence in 1964 and afterwards as minimal and justified in order to right a century of wrongs.

Table 3: Major divergences between Unguja and Pemba

	CCM	**CUF**
Territorial basis of support	Unguja	Pemba
Ethnic basis	"African"	"Arab"
Link to state	Strong	Weak
Attitude to Revolution	Positive	Negative
Attitude to Union	Positive	Negative
Attitude to Government of National Unity	Negative	Positive
Islamic orientation	Moderate	Fundamentalist

Source: Author's formation, 2012

Table 3 represents a summary of divergent views on major national values. The factors above have acted as forces of disunity in Zanzibar. As in many other conflicts, none of these cultural factors alone could be said to bring conflict and violence. Over time they may grow and acquire new salience, interlock and produce a complex social relationship. It is this interlocking, combined with the structural factors (economic inequality) discussed in the next section, that has kept the conflict going.

Economic inequality and socio-political exclusion

Economic inequality is equated here with what Stewart (2009: 316) defines as horizontal inequalities as "inequalities among culturally determined groups, groups that have salience for their members and/or others in society; for example among races, ethnic groups, religions, religious sects, regions" (see also Østby, 2007: 5). Østby (2007: 2) found out that "presence of both regional inequalities and political exclusion of minority groups seems to make countries

particularly at risk of conflict". Stewart (2002) adds that there are greater consequences when such inequalities in resource access coincide with cultural differences. In this case culture becomes a powerful mobilizing agent that can lead to a range of political disturbances: sporadic riots, civil wars, massacres and local and international terrorism. Sometimes, where a position of a relative privilege is geographically centred, the privileged area may demand independence to protect their resource position. But in some cases, such as Zanzibar, the underprivileged group that is geographically concentrated has articulated a sustained irredentist claim. The core of this claim is that Pemba generates more revenue but the resources are disproportionately benefitting Unguja.

However, the role of economic inequality in economic growth and in the political economy of violent conflict has remained elusive (Cramer, 2003: 397). Problems of how to measure inequality and the weak empirical foundations remain. Cramer's analysis is important as it at once understands the complexities and the infallibilities of a one sided approach. The alternative that Cramer suggests is to start "not from some superficial outward signs of inequality,… but from the historically conditioned social relations that, given their infinitely open set of specificities, nonetheless sometimes produce similar outward signs" (Cramer, 2003: 397). Sriskandarajah (2003) articulates this argument when he argues that many diverse societies are plagued by rivalries between groups whose primary attachment is not based on economic interest. He gives an example of inter-ethnic conflicts which often take place despite the existence of wide disparities in socio-economic wealth and states within the groups in question. Another argument he makes in support is that some of the most unequal societies have managed to be peaceful, while societies with relatively low levels of inequality have been conflict-prone. An addition to this analysis is a recognition of the diversity and complexity of human needs and the equally difficulty to satisfy them. We suggest that economic inequality is important to explaining conflict in Zanzibar, but the links are much more complex than a simplified empirical model could capture.

Economic considerations are among the factors reinforcing shared cultural identity, hence fanning the conflict in Zanzibar. Manifestations of horizontal inequalities between Unguja and Pemba, coupled with socio-political exclusion, are among the strong forces of disunity in Zanzibar. In Zanzibar regional inequalities and political exclusion should be related to the failure of the post-colonial state. After fifty years of state intervention in the economy, it is not

clear whether inequality has increased, decreased or remained the same. It is also not clear whether the state has played its intended role of providing common public goods to the largest number of masses (Tandon, 1991).

In Zanzibar, perceptions of exclusion based on individual identity are not new. For instance, people of Pemban origin claim that they are discriminated against in employment and enjoyment of other government benefits. In his study, Mwadin (2010: 42) argues that "there have been repeated claims of discrimination against Zanzibaris of Pemba (and Arab) origin in the civil service and political appointments, in government sponsored higher education, in government development initiatives and by maltreatment of a section of the community by state organs". There is a long standing claim that Pemba is politically excluded. All but one of the seven presidents in Zanzibar hail from Unguja.Seif Sharif Hamad, the only Chief Minister from Pemba, who was ascending the ladder into the presidency, was suddenly dropped from the cabinet in 1988, expelled from CCM and detained for 30 months based upon accusations of tampering with the Union (Killian, 2008). In a country that is regionally divided, this created a powerful sense of alienation, in turn permitting collective action (Østby, 2007). It provided a ready-made political platform, and a perfect strategy for agitation for political change.

The Household Budget Survey (HBS) of 2004 confirms poverty levels in Zanzibar. The HBS focused mainly on poverty monitoring indicators and studied income, expenditure, consumption patterns and other socio-economic characteristics of private households (RGZ, 2004). It also provided disaggregated data that has been useful for comparison between regions in Unguja and Pemba on these indicators. According to the estimates of the Central Register of Establishments (CRE), of the 94 industrial establishments in Zanzibar in 2004, only 15 were located in Pemba. Many industrial establishments in Pemba (60 percent) were small scale (employing less than 10 people). Only three of them (20 percent) were considered large scale employing between 50-99 people. In contrast, the rest of the industrial establishments were located in Unguja, with three alone employing up to 500 people.

Table 4: Size of businesses by region, Zanzibar, 2001-2004

No. of employees	CRE (2004)				Business Census (2001)			
	1-4	**5-9**	**10+**	**Total**	**1-4**	**5-9**	**10+**	**Total**
Unguja	7,062 69%	743 75%	612 73.3 %	8,417 69.7%	9,929 76%	881 82%	768 78.2 %	11,578 76.2%
Pemba	3,180 31%	252 25%	223 26.7 %	3,655 30.3%	3,202 24%	198 18%	214 21.8 %	3,614 23.8%
Total	**10,242 100%**	**995 100%**	**835 100%**	**2,072 100%**	**3,131 100%**	**1,079 100%**	**982 100%**	**15,192 100%**

Source: Computed from Chief Government Statistician, 2004

Table 4 shows the share of business establishments and number of workers by region. The overall picture is that regions in Pemba (North Pemba and South Pemba) have a smaller share of the national total of business establishments. For instance, in 2001, regions in Pemba constituted only 31 percent of business establishments—notwithstanding, a seven percent overall economic growth. The Zanzibar business census conducted in 2001 indicates that Pemba had only 24 percent of businesses. Realizing this asymmetrical pattern, the conductors of the census cautioned of the dangers of economic stagnation in Pemba, and called for more government efforts to attract especially large businesses (size 10+).

Table 5: Poverty levels by district, Zanzibar, 2004

	Type of poverty			
District	**Food**	**Gap**	**Basic Needs**	**Gap**
Unguja				
North "A"	12.18	2.01	53.3	13.28
North "B"	12.06	2.15	48.28	11.99
Central	8.35	1.17	45.66	10.65
South	9.73	1.45	53.79	12.91
West	9.54	1.73	38.57	9.79
Urban	7.75	1.48	37.62	9.28
Pemba				
Wete	23.83	4.73	70.79	21.27
Micheweni	33.35	6.88	74.23	25.25

Chakechake	15.87	2.53	56.83	15.24
Mkoani	7.26	0.93	42.08	9.38
Total	**13.18**	**2.4**	**49.07**	**13.09**

Source: Zanzibar Household Budget Survey, 2004

Table 5 shows poverty levels in Zanzibar. The results indicate that 13 percent of people in Zanzibar live below the food poverty line, with a further 49 percent unable to meet their basic needs. Although generally the HBS reveals appalling levels of poverty in Zanzibar, as true of many African countries as well, poverty is more pronounced in Pemba. It is interesting to note that the three poorest districts are found in Pemba (Micheweni and Wete in North Pemba; and Chakechake in South Pemba). In Unguja 46 percent of the population cannot meet basic needs, compared to 61 percent in Pemba. The HBS also uncovered the rural/urban dichotomy, indicating higher incidences of poverty in rural areas. Since the majority of the population of Pemba lives in rural areas, this has implications for the incidence of poverty as compared to the relatively urban Unguja. The HBS found that while the total percentage of the population of Unguja considered poor amounted to 10 percent, in Pemba the figure approached to upwards of 20 percent.

Mamdani (1996) and Ake (1993) see authoritarianism in Africa as associated with personal rule and a reliance on ethnic political base with an opposition that tended to be organized in ethnic formations. In the case of Zanzibar, this is reflecting the Pemba-Unguja divide. Ake's opinion is that the colonial government was responsible for ethnicization of politics or even politicization of ethnic identity, since it used force to entrench its rule in Africa; subjects had to resort to traditional solidarity groups, especially ethnic groups to counter the colonial imposition. Post-Revolution government policy in Zanzibar necessarily pushed Pemba to develop strong in-group positive identities, often leading to strong out-group animosities with Unguja (Gibson and Gouws, 2000: 2).

Actors in Zanzibar conflict: attitudes, behaviour and contexts

This article proves that the conflict in Zanzibar is more than just ethno-political disagreements over the electoral process. Instead, conflict dynamics can be understood by isolating the sources responsible for identity construction in Zanzibar. For analytical purpose, these forces are divided into domestic and international influences. Again, while some of these forces are overt, others may operate indirectly. The context changes the way these influences impact. Either way, perceptions and attitudes may aggravate what otherwise would be a

normal action in another context. In line with what Dijk (2009) argued, perceptions and attitudes are about how people behave. In a conflict situation based on divisions, perceptions of distrust and feelings of superiority inform social relations. In addition, circumstances in which people live determine their relations as well. Domestic influences and actors include the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, the Union Government, Chama cha Mapinduzi and Civic United Front. International influences include the United States Agency for International Development, the donor community and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar

There is something of reverence in the way in which the word "Revolutionary" is used to refer to the government of Zanzibar. At the best of times, and especially when political violence threatens to go out of hand, it is common to hear top government officials cautioning "troublemakers" that the weapons that were used during the 1964 Revolution are still "intact", ready for deployment, if need be (Nabwa, 2005). The importance of the Revolution is, therefore, more than just symbolic—it is an identity, a reminder and a rallying instrument. A considerable number of people in Zanzibar have a very strong affinity to it to the extent that they cannot even contemplate its reversion. They are ready to do anything to protect it. Many of them either participated physically or had immediate members of family who were involved in the Revolution. Indeed, many Africans still recall that the Revolution brought true independence and restored their humanity.

The bottom line, therefore, has been the apparent fear of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar of losing power. Anonymous messages circulated during the 1995 elections are typical of this fear: "this government came about through struggle and blood; it will not be given away through a piece of paper". Similarly, a female respondent in Konde (Pemba) succinctly expressed the views of many pro-Revolutionaries in an interview with Tambila after the 2000 election: "The Revolution came by the machete and blood. It will be taken from us only by the machete and blood!" (Tambila, 2001: 83). As Cameron put it, CCM leaders and many people in Unguja think that CUF would return the Omani Sultanate, associating CUF with the pre-Revolution ZNP, which was overthrown by ASP. A speech by Anna Mkapa (wife of then Tanzanian President, Benjamin Mkapa) at a CCM campaign meeting in Pemba epitomized CCM's position: "before the 1964 Revolution the people of the Isles were slaves in their own country... I call upon you to be more analytical before you support parties with

hidden agendas aiming at humiliating your dignity as independent people" (Cameron, 2002: 316).

Given these considerations, the government is sometimes caught in a precarious position, between agreeing on the free play of democracy and accepting the humiliation of losing an election to the ones who were overthrown in the first place, or burying their head in the sand, and manipulating election results regardless of the consequences, provided it guarantees a longer stay in power.

Union Government

The Zanzibar Revolution and the subsequent union with Tanganyika, both happening in 1964, are highly valued especially among the ruling elite in Tanzania, and are paraded as national treasures. On the other hand, CUF has strong reservations about both the Union and the Revolution. Such divided opinion on key national symbols has posed threats to efforts at resolution and transformation of the conflict. CUF has strongly held that the 1964 Zanzibar Revolution was not legal, and it even amounted to murder. To complicate the matter further, the Revolution, like the Union, has assumed a character of a sacred cow—jealously guarded by power holders, holding back any candid debates on them.

There are several accounts of how the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar came about. Some ascribe an imperialist motive propelled by cold war super power rivalries. Within the imperialist thinking some think it was the West led by the US, whereas others think it was the East led by China, Cuba and the eastern bloc (Petterson, 2002; Davidson, 1994). Yet another view sees the Union as an in-house arrangement, purely arising out of the long standing relationship between Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. This view draws evidence from Nyerere's influence in the establishment of the ASP in 1957. In the 1920s, way before the advent of political parties, the Tanganyika African Association and the African Association in Unguja had close links. What is certain, though, is that the Union is unique in that there are very few such examples elsewhere in Africa and even beyond and the context in which it was negotiated. As Othman (1995) observes, discussions on the Union were conducted very secretly and very few people including top members of the cabinet both in Tanganyika and Zanzibar knew what was happening.

Furthermore, in the immediate post-colonial period, African unity was part and parcel of the new-found pan-Africanism. As one of the proponents of this ideal, Nyerere must have seized the opportunity afforded by the Zanzibar Revolution, citing the proximity of the Islands to the Mainland, a common language, friendship between TANU and ASP, and common cultural traditions (Othman, 1995: 174). Karume also is said to have quickly realized the volatility of the Revolution, and he wanted to consolidate his power. There were fears of retaliation from the overthrown forces that could easily regroup. Pemba, for instance, remained lukewarm to the Revolution. Being geographically isolated from Unguja, with the largest Arab population in the Island, it posed a genuine political threat. There were also within the ASP intragroup squabbles and radical elements that needed to be neutralized. This could plausibly explain the mysterious disappearance of John Okello and other left wing elements within the ASP (Hunter, 2010; Petterson, 2002).

But in the post-Revolution multiparty era politics in Zanzibar, the Union government is seen to work in favour of one actor in the conflict to the detriment of the other. Zanzibar is at times treated as a separate country with an entirely separate history. This conception is sustained by the fact that, although they are still one country, Zanzibar and Mainland Tanzania have operated relatively autonomously of each other. According to the 1977 Constitution of Tanzania, the Union Government is only responsible for the 22 "Union Matters" in Zanzibar. The rest of government functions in Zanzibar are vested in the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. High politics and sovereignty are vested in the Union government. For instance, defence and security, police, emergence powers, citizenship, immigrations, external borrowing and mineral oil resources, are among the Union matters.

The Union raises concerns of clashing values, since for the ruling elites in Zanzibar, the Union is highly valued, while for the opposition CUF it poses an obstacle to the achievement of their interests, citing, for instance, the monopoly of the police force by the Union government. The second view questions the legality of the Union, citing lack of full consultation with key stakeholders in the process of its formation. At the same time, anti-Union forces within Mainland Tanzania contend that Zanzibar is much more privileged within the Union, having its own government, while there is no corresponding government to cater explicitly for "Tanganyika" affairs. Zanzibaris, like people in Northern Ireland in the UK, for instance enjoy double benefit; they serve both in the Zanzibar and Union government and they are represented in the House of

Representative and the Union parliament. While this is the case, "Tanganyikans" can neither serve in the Zanzibar government nor do they enjoy exclusive representation.

The CUF, specifically, is bitter about the Union government and sees it as responsible for backing up the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. According to them, had it not been for the Union, power would have been fairly balanced, and the Zanzibar government would be less arrogant and oppressive of Pembans. A desire of Pemba to secede is part of the expression of this disenchantment (Mbunda, 2010). CUF also strongly disagrees on the structure, power and form of the Union. In fact it is one of its campaign platforms to review the Union structure, upon coming to power. CUF's position is that problems and challenges facing the Union now can effectively be resolved, if there was a three government structure. On several occasions, Hamad reiterated that if given the mandate, CUF would institute a three government federal structure, including the government of Zanzibar, the government of Tanganyika and an overall union government. It is interesting that CCM Zanzibar has of late embraced similar views with regard to natural resources and the domineering influence of the Union government.

The Union, thus, provided new dimensions to identity politics in Zanzibar. Zanzibaris, at once, acquired new identity, becoming Tanzanians. They simultaneously maintained Zanzibari identity. Tanganyikans became Tanzanians and lost their Tanganyika identity. Meanwhile, the historical link between Africans from the mainland and those in Unguja complicated the Pemba-Unguja relationship and increased mistrust of Pembans over the Mainland Tanzania's role in Zanzibar.

The Union government could be considered one of the key actors in the conflict although its feet are tied such that it has limited leeway. Zanzibar is legally not a state. Interestingly, under the "Articles of the Union" of 1964 Zanzibar was allowed a considerable degree of autonomy within the Union structure. For instance, while the Tanganyika government was dissolved and all efforts were done to erase it from memory, the Zanzibar government was retained and to date it is the "Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar." Failure to acknowledge the "Revolution" in addressing the government of Zanzibar could be an abominable oversight in protocol. The Union government provides, simultaneously, protection for the Zanzibar government against both internal

and international intervention in Zanzibar affairs. Technically, any international intervention in Zanzibar needs the Union government's blessing.

Because of this position, the Union government is an interested actor in the conflict. It can, however, play limited mediatory roles, owing to its biased position, according to one of the main contenders. There are also certain constitutional complexities that need to be ironed out. For instance, there are no provisions for the nature of the relationship between CCM and CUF in the event CUF wins in Zanzibar while CCM wins the Union elections. This has remained a source of tensions within the ruling circles. How, for instance, could the two parties co-exist in the Union, while having different positions on the form and structure of the Union?

One of the overwhelming nagging fears on the part of the Union government might be what Rawlence (2005: 522) suggests as "a sign of their vulnerability (that) would provide CUF with the perfect platform to demonstrate an alternative programme of government with a view to winning on the mainland in five years". The 1977 Tanzanian constitution, criticized by its detractors as a single-party hangover, does not seem to provide for an eventuality of co-existence where two different political parties win elections in the two sides of the Union. Article 54 (1), for instance, provides that the Cabinet shall be composed of the Vice President, the Prime Minister and the President of Zanzibar. Except for the Vice President and the Zanzibar President, all other members of the Cabinet are presidential appointees. By virtue of the responsibilities of the Cabinet as the principal advisory and executive body, it is not envisaged that a Zanzibar president, from CUF, for example, can be admitted into the cabinet, made up entirely of CCM members, without necessitating considerable constitutional changes.

Some Zanzibaris, for instance, are upset with the role of the Zanzibar President in the cabinet after the re-introduction of multiparty political system. During the single-party era the Zanzibar President served as the Union government's First Vice President while the Union Prime Minister served as Second Vice President. In this capacity he automatically participated in the Union cabinet with a befitting role. But the multiparty setting seems to relegate the Zanzibar President to a lower status at par with Union level ministers. This is supported by Article 54 of the constitution which stipulates that the Union Vice President or the Prime Minister should chair cabinet meetings in the absence of the Union President, and not the Zanzibar President. All these factors cast doubts over the

keenness of the Union government to see another party securing election in Zanzibar.

An interesting demonstration of the complications of the Union was provided by the case where Nyerere agreed to facilitate peace talks in Burundi and not in Zanzibar. In 1996 he accepted an Organization of African Unity (African Union since 1999) invitation to mediate in the peace process in Burundi—a role he played quite successfully until his death in 1999. Nelson Mandela took over and in 2000 a peace agreement was signed (Ramadhani, 2002). At this same time the conflict in Zanzibar was simmering. Nyerere acknowledged the existence of conflict in Zanzibar as Anglin quoted him in 1998: "There is a problem in Zanzibar which needs to be addressed urgently. Yet whenever you ask Salmin [Amour], he will say there is no problem. If something goes wrong, the Union will be severely affected" (Anglin, 2000: 47). The point underlined here is that the Union is a complicated matter to the extent that it was easier for Nyerere to mediate a conflict involving another country, and not his own.

The Union complicated Unguja-Pemba relations in several ways. To begin with, it re-affirmed the long held hypothesis, particularly in Pemba, that ASP was formed by "aliens" rather than indigenes. The legitimacy of the Union was questioned, including claims of inadequate consultation prior to the Union, structural defects, difficulties of sharing costs and benefits and increased demand for autonomy (Killian, 2008). Indeed, the Union was perpetuated through even more repression. Public debates over the form or legality of the Union were regarded as treasonous and some politicians got victimized for questioning the Union. AboudJumbe, the Second Zanzibar President who took over after Karume's assassination in 1972, was forced to resign in 1984, "because of his intention to call for a Special Constitutional Court to determine the fate of Zanzibar" (Killian, 2008: 112). Four years later Seif Sharif Hamad, then Chief Minister, was also expelled from CCM and forced to resign partly because of his pursuit of autonomy for Zanzibar. Killian (2008) sees this as complicating ethno-political relations in Zanzibar since after the Union, another struggle has emerged—that of restoring the identity of the Zanzibar state. Demands for Zanzibar autonomy act as unifying forces for Zanzibaris, although there are also fears that the CUF preference for a three-government structure, as opposed to the CCM two-government structure, will make it easy for constituencies to break away.

Chama cha Mapinduzi

Chama cha Mapinduzi, the ruling party since the Revolution, is a core player in the Zanzibar conflict. It is an offspring of the ASP, formed in 1957 by majority black Africans to fight for independence in Zanzibar. ASP eventually organized the Revolution in 1964. In 1977 ASP united with TANU, the party that fought for independence in Tanganyika, to form CCM. For all intents and purposes, CCM inherited the ASP identity in Zanzibar. Actually it takes pride in being associated with the founding fathers of the nation (Karume who led the Revolution in Zanzibar and Nyerere who fought for independence of Tanganyika). The Revolution and Union stand as some of its treasured achievements. It is seen as a party of Mainlanders, especially by the CUF, owing to its large following from Ungujans who are said to constitute majority of immigrants during pre-colonial and colonial days. Mbunda (2010: 61) captures the essence of confrontation between CCM and its main rival CUF, noting that CCM Zanzibar identifies itself as the custodian of the 1964 Revolution that overthrew an Arab oligarchy and placed the African majority in power, bringing true independence to Zanzibaris. They further identify the Revolution as not only an emblem for citizen freedom in Zanzibar but also as a foundational basis for the Union. CCM Zanzibar, therefore, guards jealously the "achievements" that have been brought by the Revolution, particularly in the land sector, service provision and in social welfare like education and health services. However, these achievements are strongly contested by CUF.

As a ruling party, CCM is responsible for the formation and implementation of government policies. Having ruled uninterrupted for over 30 years, CCM seems to regard itself as "the rightful party". It therefore, right at the beginning of multipartyism, adopted a tendency of branding and labelling the emerging political parties as puppet parties, opportunists, power mongers, hypocrites, agents of colonialism (or of Arabs in Zanzibar) and many other humiliating names. Rawlence, (2005: 515) wrote a useful background note about this labelling:

> According to President Amani Karume and Union President Benjamin Mkapa, the opposition is fuelled by troublemakers who are intent on power at any cost. In recent speeches they have both called the opposition "people of violence". They have suggested that CUF is motivated variously by Islamic Fundamentalism, Zanzibar nationalist secession and foreign intervention from Gulf states as well as Britain.

In Tanzania there was fear that political parties would bring back the evils that divided the society: tribalism, ethnicity and regionalism. Emerging political parties, aware of the distortions, retaliated usually by branding the ruling party as dictatorial, old fashioned, conservative and generally responsible for the socio-political and economic predicament starting in the 1990s. Consequently, within political parties, identities have been created, shaped, coalesced and consolidated. Thus, in Tanzania, for instance, political parties cannot be registered unless they espouse national values; shy away from regional and sectarian politics (even where they would have a more comparative advantage if they created a small base); and importantly, uphold the Union, by drawing members from Zanzibar and Mainland Tanzania. Article 20 (2) of the Constitution of the United Republic, for instance clearly states as follows:

> it shall not be lawful for any political party to be registered which according to its constitution or policy:
> (a) aims at promoting or furthering the interest of (i) any faith or religious group (ii) any tribal group, place of origin, race or gender (iii) only a particular area within any part of the United Republic;
> (b) advocates for break-up of the United Republic;
> (c) accepts or advocates for the use of the force or violent confrontations as a means of attaining its political goals;
> (d) advocates or intends to carry on its political activities only in one part of the United Republic. (URT, 1977)

This particular article is replicated in Section 10 (1) of the Political Parties Act of 1992 with regards to fulfilment of conditions for registration of political parties in Tanzania.

Although there are 18 fully registered political parties in Tanzania, five elections held in Zanzibar since 1995 have proven that Zanzibar is developing a very strong two-party system. An interesting pattern that has developed is a regional disparity in terms of electoral support. This, in turn, reflects certain elements within the Zanzibari society that are related to how people between the two regions (Unguja and Pemba) have related to each other and to the ruling regime. While CCM dominates constituencies in Unguja, CUF dominates the constituencies in Pemba. This pattern of political support goes a long way back to a historical disjuncture that has left a gap between the two islands.

Civic United Front

Fully registered in 1992 immediately after the re-institution of multipartyism, CUF is one of the earliest parties to appear on the political scene in Tanzania. Seif Sharif Hamad is one of the founders and the secretary general. CUF offers stiff competition to the ruling CCM in Zanzibar. The average share of the presidential votes is 10 percent in Pemba for CCM while it is 30 percent for CUF in Unguja. In terms of identity, since it has a traditional stronghold in Pemba, it has been referred to as a Pemban party. This may have more to do with perceptions than reality, since unlike CCM, CUF has been able to win all 18 seats in Pemba and an additional one seat in Unguja in the 2005 elections, while it maintained its seats in Pemba and gained an additional four in Unguja during the 2010 elections. Curiously, CCM has never been referred to as a party of *waUnguja,* despite the fact that all the seats it won in the 2005 and 2010 elections, for instance, were from Unguja. Another widespread distortion is that CUF is an "Arab" party that was formed by those who were overthrown in the 1964 Revolution. It does not help matters even if Seif Sharif Hamad was until 1988 a stalwart CCM member, and from 1984-88 Chief Minister in the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. Hamad is said to have been irked after he was bypassed for the Zanzibar presidency in 1985. For sure he was the only Zanzibari of Pemba origin to have been Chief Minister, and bypassing him could have proved the suspicion Pembans have had all along that there were underground schemes to deny Pemba of the presidency. Things seemed to have boiled over since in 1988 Seif Sharif Hamad together with six other CCM members were expelled from the party and later detained due to allegations of plotting a coup (Anglin, 2000). In 1992, Hamad, together with the other expelled members, founded the CUF.

CUF, on the other hand, does not openly agree to be associated with ZNP/ZPPP or even the overthrown Arab oligarchy. They have maintained, instead, that they are reformers with a liberal inclination, "representing those who were either oppressed or dissatisfied with the way the Revolutionary regime conducted the political business in Zanzibar" (Mbunda, 2010: 62). In terms of their views on the Revolution and the Union, CUF takes strong and extreme positions as we have seen. First, they do not recognize the Revolution. On many occasions they do not refer to the Zanzibar government as "Revolutionary", to the chagrin of many of its die hard supporters. The CUF also sees CCM as responsible for the socio-political woes affecting Pemba, as Rawlence (2005: 516) notes:

> According to the CUF presidential candidate, Seif Sharif Hamad, CCM is guilty of corruption and economic mismanagement; discrimination against people of Arab or Pemba ethnicity; ceding too much sovereignty to the Union government over energy, customs duties and security; politicization of the security forces and civil service as well as abuse of human rights.

Second, the CUF has even threatened to break the Union, if certain items on the Articles of the Union are not re-negotiated, including the structure of the Union. They want a three-government structure: the Union, Tanganyika and Zanzibar governments, rather than the two-government structure (Union and Zanzibar) in place. Rawlence's observation could explain why Pemba is bitter:

> Pembans in particular feel hard done by. They claim that throughout CCM's rule, the island has been starved of funds and development projects because of Pemba's perceived anti-revolutionary stance… [and] in particular its record of voting for ZNP/ZPPP candidates before the Revolution. The economic decline that started with AbeidKarume's administration (1964-72) has yet to be reversed. As a result Pemba has witnessed large scale migration to the Mainland, abroad and to Unguja. (Rawlence, 2005: 517).

CUF has another prejudicial label attached to it. It is said to be a party of "Islamic fundamentalists." Although Zanzibar is more than 98 percent Muslim, it is said that in the "eyes of CUF" CCM is seen to be not Muslim enough. Obviously, it is disadvantageous to be associated with Islamic fundamentalism, as this could stifle relations with strategic international allies.

United States Agency for International Development

We need to factor in some of the international dimensions within the conflict in Zanzibar. Some of these factors trace their roots back in history. It is speculated that in 1964 USA facilitated the Union so as to avoid another "Cuba" in Africa. Wilson's (2007: 12) arguments shed some light on this matter:

> US strategy through the 50s and 60s had involved the maintenance of a belt of US control across Central Africa which would protect Southern Africa (with its western investments) from the radical and socialist influences of countries like Algeria and Ghana. The US was now horrified at the possibility of a socialist Zanzibar which would not only wreck their

> belt of control strategy but might even spread socialism to the rest of Central and East Africa. Within three days of the Revolution, State Department was already working at fever pitch. Not only was the CIA put on emergency alert but "sources" and resources available to the US in Tanganyika, Kenya and Uganda were sought out and pulled into action in a more systematic crusade against the "spectre of communism". What made matters worse, however, in the eyes of State Department, was that a week after the revolution there was a mutiny in the Colito Barracks in Dar es Salaam in Tanganyika. Essentially about low pay and the retention of European officers in top army posts, the mutiny reflected the people's anger over the continuation of colonial structures in independent Tanganyika.

In the days when the theatre of Cold War was Africa, developments such as the Zanzibar Revolution were likely to attract the attention of the super powers. Mwakikagile's (2008) book title *the Union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar: A Product of Cold War?* is suggestive. Petterson (2002), an American diplomat in Zanzibar at the time of the Revolution, wrote a book entitled *Revolution in Zanzibar: An American's Cold War Tale.* He also highlights some of the high level communications between the United States and the United Kingdom. Already the Revolution was seen as communist orchestration, and must have sent chills in the United States and the western bloc. Earlier involvement of independence fighters with the communist world provided impetus for this thinking. In the 1960s the Chinese government succeeded in persuading the ZNP government to stop the Americans from constructing a satellite tracking station together with a military base. The United States, with the permission of the British government, went ahead with the satellite station known as "Project Mercury", but withdrew "Project Courier", the military base, to Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe (Petterson, 2002; Campbell, 1962). The Project Courier was forced to close after the 1964 Revolution, following growing mistrust with the west (Petterson, 2002).

The American interests in the post-1990 period should also be understood in the context of the "war on terror", especially in the wake of simultaneous terrorist attacks on its embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi in August 1998. But it was the 11 September 2001 attacks on the twin towers in New York that completely changed American foreign policy, especially with the Middle East and the Muslim World. It is interesting that three suspected bombers are Zanzibaris: Ahmed Khalfan Ghailan and Khalfan Khamis Mohamed were formally

indicted in the US courts and Ghailani received a life sentence (Brents and Mshigeni, 2004; UN, 1999 as modified). Rashid SalehHemed was charged by a Tanzanian court with conspiracy to commit murder in his alleged role (Brents and Mshigeni, 2004). Ghailani is said to have received military training by Al Qaeda in Pakistan and was on the FBI's most wanted terrorists list. Strategically also, Zanzibar is important to check the sprawling effects of the Somalia crisis—an additional security risk since fears of advancement of Somali pirates off the Somali Coast have always been imminent. Again the near anarchy situation in Somalia for almost two decades now is feared to provide conducive breeding ground for terrorism and Islamic Fundamentalism.

On a different but related scale, the US, through USAID, has been funding activities of civil society organizations, including the Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee (TEMCO) and Research for Education and Democracy in Tanzania (REDET). During the 2010 election, for instance, USAID provided close to a billion Tanzanian Shillings (approximately 666,000 US Dollars) to TEMCO for election observation. This is consistent with USAID's mission and programmes. One of primary goals of the USAID is "helping develop politically active civil society for developing and consolidating democracy and governance" (Foy, 2002: 12). Foy (2002) notes that the US government devoted more than 500 million US Dollars annually to activities related to civil society. Likewise, USAID spending on civic education had reached roughly 30 million US Dollars a year, with the total for the 1990 decade reaching 232 million US Dollars. As President Obama noted during his 2009 visit to Ghana, "USAID resources assist African states in fighting corruption, supporting civil society organizations to advocate for reforms, strengthening rule of law, helping citizens to hold their government accountable" (see also www.usaid.gov/locations/subsaharan_africa accessed on 24/9/11). By meeting the American ambassador on 5 April 2008, elders who were calling for Pemba secession from the Union wanted to call on the backing of the strongest global power that also had interests in Africa and Zanzibar in particular (Mbunda, 2010).

Donor Community

The donor community brings together all those who fund the Union government or the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar. In the emerging bilateral and diplomatic languages, they prefer to be called development partners, although it is not clear whether the nature of this partnership has departed from the client-patron or parent-child relationship of the past few years. The donor community is quite substantial and encompasses international

financial institutions (World Bank and the International Monetary Fund), government funds and private foundations. In Africa the influence of donors is enormous, since, for a country like Tanzania, they fund over 40 percent of its development budget. However, donor funds are used strategically to advance interests of donor countries in recipient states, and conflict transformation may not necessarily be part of this interest. Interests also differ from one donor country to another and as Brown (2007: 302) points out multiple donors may pursue contradictory agendas, describing them as "having one foot on the accelerator and another on the brakes". In Zanzibar most western countries suspended the assistance to the Salmin Amour's regime to force it to institute talks with the opposition CUF, after the 1995 elections (Pottie, 2002; Bakari, 2001). Again, the Union complications are likely to shield Zanzibar, as already noted in the preceding sections. In many cases the general atmosphere of peace in the larger Republic would cloud what happens in Zanzibar. Foreign aid is directed to the Union government; therefore, sanctions that were instituted on Zanzibar included a fraction of the projects that were directed to Zanzibar.

Yet, the donor community has great potential to influence politics in Tanzania and in Zanzibar in particular, if certain conditions are met. As Rawlence (2005) aptly pointed out, Tanzania's stock with the donors is high. "It is considered a model for International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank-led Reforms" (Rawlence, 2005: 522), and:

> It receives the most UK and Scandinavian aid. It is a strategic partner in the "war on terror" for the USA, receiving US $ 100 million a year in security assistance. It has made significant steps towards the millennium development goals and has remained a regional island of peace and stability; a haven for refugees and a power broker in the Great Lakes. More than that, Tony Blair chose to invite Mkapa to serve on the UK Commission for Africa. A hitch in relations with Tanzania is undesirable for all concerned. (Rawlence, 2005: 522)

China is also a major donor. It has contributed enormously in terms of foreign aid, trade links and investment (Moshi, 2008). Combined with the earlier ties that China has established with both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, it could be very influential in shaping Tanzanian politics.

Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth seriously attempted to deal with the Zanzibar conflict, although the resultant peace agreement (*Muafaka* I) was largely unimplemented. The Commonwealth's approach to conflict is engagement and not interference. As a voluntary association of 54 countries, the Commonwealth maintains a set of customs that its member ought to follow and support each other and work together towards shared goals in democracy and development. In 1998, and perhaps with plans to initiate a peace plan, Kofi Annan, then Secretary General of the UN, visited Zanzibar and discovered the Commonwealth was already involved and backed down "to avoid proliferation of mediation efforts" (Anglin, 2000: 49). Instead he offered fully UN support to the Commonwealth initiative. However, the UN support in Zanzibar has not been explicit—there is neither a General Assembly Declaration nor Security Council Resolution on Zanzibar.

Conclusion

This article has analysed influences on identity construction and change in Zanzibar conflict. While some of them are explicit and relatively easy to deal with, others operate underground and are fed on feelings arising from the attitudes and behaviour of certain actors. These are very difficult to observe and pose sharp threats to conflict transformation. In many conflicts, political identity provides the focal point that facilitates mobilizations. For instance, collective alienation or protection of preferential premiums can reinforce these perceptions of difference and the motivation to seek political change or re-negotiate boundaries. It can also veer into de-legitimizing other excluded groups, as argued in Mbunda (2010), "as a group defines itself, it also labels the other group. In an adversarial relationship, the parties are defined in terms of "us" and "them" and in most cases the disputants do not recognize the values held by the other group as valid". This keeps conflict running until such a point when these perceptions are significantly reversed.

Although the conflict in Zanzibar manifests itself mainly through the impasse that followed the reintroduction of multiparty politics and the 1995 and subsequent elections, it has long roots. As Heilman (2004: 39) notes, "large scale evictions from farms of people thought to belong to the ASP by landlords who supported the ZNP; boycotts of businesses by supporters of ASP because their owners were presumed to support ZNP; deadly riots; extensive political mobilization along ethnic/racial lines; and the inability of the losing party to accept results", characterized the later part of the colonial era. Most of these

dynamics are still relevant, 30 years after the Revolution, which was intended to erase racial, ethnic and all forms of segregation and oppression in Zanzibar.

As is the case in some other countries in Africa, political competition is zero-sum in Zanzibar, as political elites have increasingly relied upon identity as a tool for political mobilization (Killian, 2008). Whereas the post-1995 election conflict was latent, that of post-2000 election erupted into bloody violence (Mpangala, 2006). The conflict embodies aspects of the geo-historical developments in Zanzibar (Bakari, 2001) and new dimensions of multi-party dynamics.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, it is possible to explain the post-Revolution multiparty conflict in Zanzibar as having a strong identity undercurrent. The post-1964 Zanzibar Revolution period, while claiming to lay down an infrastructure for equality, was in a real sense responsible for the gestation of the conflict in Zanzibar. Up to 1985, for instance, no elections were organized, the constitution was abolished and the country was ruled by decrees of the Revolutionary Council. Any form of organized politics was to be undertaken through the single party (ASP and later CCM) umbrella. Civil society was squeezed so that it was almost suffocated and of little use in the ensuing political climate. On top of all this, the Revolutionary Government behaved in a way that conveyed an attitude of suppression for one part of the island, ostensibly punishing it for the role it played in the Revolution. The horizontal inequalities cemented this feeling and provided a rallying tool for Pemba.

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