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Tanzania's Controlled Social Pluralism in National Politics: Challenges and Implications for Democratic Growth

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Abstract

After independence, the Tanzanian state tightly controlled the expression of social pluralism in the political realm. After providing an overview of controlled social pluralism during single-party rule, this article examines the extent to which efforts to control social pluralism have survived into the era of a liberal ideology and multipartyism. The main argument advanced is that some aspects of controlled social pluralism served a useful purpose in facilitating peace and democratic growth in Tanzania. However, the article points out that political parties need to link up with civil society organizations to make them better able to aggregate societal interests or political and administrative systems will be overwhelmed by the demands from diverse groups. In line with this finding, the state must endeavour to build a strong demand response capacity to address the increasing demands associated with the democratic transition as some social control measures whither.

Introduction

Social pluralism refers to diverse groups with identifiable labels in a given country or society. These groups may identify themselves in terms of language, tribal origin or culture, religion, race, status, or class position in the society; and may use their identities when making demands on public authorities and in influencing public policies. They may also use their identities to organize formal civil society organizations, or even political parties. Some African countries have been more prone to this tendency than others.[1]

In the First Phase Government of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere (1961 to 1985), Tanzania made a deliberate effort to dampen sub-national identities so as to reduce the effects of social pluralism on national politics. This was the nation-building (or state–building) agenda, which preoccupied the leaders during the first two decades of independence. This effort played a part in the peace and national unity that Tanzania has enjoyed for nearly half a century. The nation-building effort was undertaken within a framework of a one-party system and the *ujamaa* ideology.

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This article examines the extent to which controlled social pluralism has survived into the era of multipartyism and liberal ideology, and also the extent to which it continues to serve a useful purpose in facilitating peace and democratic growth. The next section provides a quick review of how controlled social pluralism came about under the one-party system. Then the article reviews the controls that have been loosened, as well as those carried forward into the liberal multiparty phase. The effects of the liberal ideology, which includes sociopolitical polarization, will be analyzed before conclusion.

Controlled Social Pluralism under the One-Party System

Tanzania was under a one-party system for twenty seven years, from 1965 to 1992. A large component of party and government policies, until the mid-1980s, focused on nation-building work with a view to creating a central political arena concerned with pan-territorial agendas. Achievement of this goal required the First Phase Government of Mwalimu Nyerere to take a number of measures. We shall discuss the three leading ones, namely:

1. Correcting colonial imbalances
2. Creating a sense of national unity
3. Controlling the development of classes

Correcting Colonial Imbalances

The first divisive factor to be addressed by the post-colonial government was the imbalances that existed in the country among racial groups, religious groups, regions, and between men and women in regard to service provision and development programmes. The British colonial rulers used a tripartite system in which they allocated differential budgets for segregated services and development projects for three racial groups, namely Africans, Asians and Europeans. These groups had separate schools, health facilities, residential areas, and so on, with the lowest budgets and quality of services going to Africans, followed by Asians, with Europeans at the top. There was a land bank, but African farmers and businessmen did not qualify for credit. Employment in the civil service also followed the same pattern: Africans at the bottom, Asians in the middle, and Europeans at the top. The nationalist leaders realized that no national unity could be built among the three racial groups on this basis, and therefore the tripartite system was officially disbanded in 1964.[2]

Other development imbalances addressed during this period related to different areas of the country, gender, and the two major religions - Islam and Christianity. In regard to development differentials among different areas of the county, colonial policies concentrated on areas which produced cash crops, namely sisal, coffee, cotton, tobacco, and the like. The remaining areas were left as labour reserves. So development was uneven at the time of independence, also in part due to differences in climatic conditions and education. Areas with a concentration of missionaries had more educated people than those without them.

Gender imbalances had their origins in traditional systems but were made worse by colonial policies, which conformed to the traditional practices. For example, under colonial rule no married women could be employed without the written permission of their husbands.

The Muslim-Christian imbalance was pronounced in education because, unlike Christians, Muslims shunned secular education. This educational imbalance led to imbalances in other vital areas such as employment (Mukandala et al., 2006).

After independence affirmative action in the education field was taken to deal with the three imbalances. Female primary school graduates were admitted to secondary schools with lower examination passes than boys, and, in a 'quota system' for different areas, pupils (both boys and girls) from different areas had different pass levels for admission to secondary schools. For the Muslim-Christian education differential, a more radical method was used. All primary and secondary schools belonging to churches (except seminaries) were nationalized in 1969 to make it possible for Muslim pupils to be admitted, for Muslims did not have secular schools of their own. Muslim students competed for spaces in government schools with Christian pupils, often facing difficulties because their early training was in qu'ranic or madrasat classes.

The effect of these governmental policy interventions was to reduce imbalances, not eliminate them. Imbalances were not eliminated by the time Mwalimu Nyerere's administration ended in 1985. Indeed, they have not been eliminated completely even up to now. However, it would not have been possible to successfully deal with the other aspects of nation-building without addressing these glaring imbalances.[3]

Creating a Sense of National Unity and Peace

The other cluster of policy measures is related to the creation of a sense of nationhood among Tanzania Mainland's over 120 tribes. The first measure

was to abolish chiefdoms in 1962, only a year after independence. The purpose of this was to transfer the allegiance of the local (tribal) people to the central government authorities.[4] The chief's place was taken by divisional secretaries, usually posted in areas other than their own, so as to dampen sub-national or tribal allegiances in favour of national ones.

The second measure was the creation of the one-party system. On the one hand, the formation of the one-party system in 1965 can be considered a result of intra-elite contests for power, as was the case for most other African countries that legislated this system. On the other hand, however, the one-party context made Nyerere's nation-building plan easier by eliminating opposition from the nascent national political arena. In particular, Nyerere feared that an opposition party at that stage might take a regional, ethnic or religious form. Already a Muslim party had been created following independence.[5] Thus, electoral rules under the one-party system banned the use of religion, ethnicity and the sub-national identities in campaigns.

The third policy measure involved the unification of the three-tier judicial system into single-tier system, which took place in 1963. During the colonial era some aspects of religious law (Hindu and Muslim) were recognized, with Muslims having *Kadhi* courts to handle religious matters in which regular courts lacked competence. Customary law was also recognized. Unification of the judicial system subjected customary law to state law and abolished *Kadhi* courts.

The fourth set of policy measures targeted the civil society, including farmers' cooperatives, workers' organizations, parents' organizations, women's organizations, and youth organizations, which were brought under state and party control. These organizations could not, therefore, provide alternative sources of ideologies and political programmes. This made for *political monism per excellence!*

The fifth government initiative was the creation of the National Service in 1966. The National Service scheme sought to mould the youth using a new national ethic, which was nationally oriented rather than ethnically, or tribally, centred. The placing of students in secondary schools outside of their home areas and the posting and frequent transfer of public servants to different areas of the country were calculated to achieve the same nation-building effect.

Controlling Development of Classes

Under the *ujamaa* policies outlined in the 1967 Arusha Declaration (TANU, 1967), all major ways of accumulating wealth were controlled. We shall discuss three major ways.

First, the state could not be used to create a wealthy class for several reasons. Corruption was closely monitored and penalties were severe.[6] Government salaries were relatively low compared to other countries in the region, and salary differentials among state and parastatal employees were small. The establishment of workers' participation programmes in ministries and public corporations created a sense of equality between rank and file workers and management.[7] The presence of party offices in all public work places, including the armed forces,[8] teaching the *ujamaa* ideology, was calculated to create a sense of purpose and expectancy beyond material rewards among public servants and members of the security services. The leadership code of the Arusha Declaration, which stipulated stringent conditions on public and party officials, further discouraged using the state for personal capital accumulation. All people holding middle to high positions in the party, state, public corporations, and independent departments of the government were defined as 'leaders' along with their spouses. Leaders could not earn more than one salary, or engage in capitalist activities such as investing in private companies, starting their own business, building houses for rent or even serving as directors on boards of private companies. The primary goal of 'cleansing' the state so that it did not become a major source of social stratification was achieved to a large extent. However, there were also negative outcomes in the area of performance of the public services, which we have no room to discuss in this article.[9]

Second, land could not be used to create a wealthy or *kulak* class because all land was parcelled out as *ujamaa* villages,[10] state farms,[11] state ranges, state forests, state game reserves, or as small-holder farms where people were already in traditional village settlements in land–scarce areas.[12] The state-created settlements of the 1960s were converted into *ujamaa* villages. Here, too, the primary goal of preventing the emergence of a *kulak* class in the rural areas was achieved, but there were also many negative outcomes in terms of agricultural performance and other costs.[13]

Third, investment opportunities by private entrepreneurs (not bound by the leadership code) were limited by the Arusha Declaration. The state

nationalized all the major means of production, distribution and exchange. In this arrangement, the areas left for private investment were peripheral and designed to support state undertakings. In these limited opportunities, there was intense competition between black or indigenous Tanzanians and Tanzanians of Asian origin who had business skills, experience and capital, which colonial policies had permitted them to accumulate. This Asian business class shrewdly established corrupt relations with the managers of state corporations, which helped them to establish a thriving 'second economy' beneath the state corporations. Thus, by the end of the *ujamaa* period (mid-1980s) a merchant class feeding parasitically on state corporations existed. It had two wings, a strong Asian Tanzanian wing and a small, weak indigenous Tanzanian wing.

The accumulation of capital via the state by party and state officials was effectively discouraged under *ujamaa*. This not only slowed the rate of growth of an indigenous capitalist class, but also, as a negative by-product, forced leaders to hide their investments behind Tanzanians of Asian origin, thereby opening up avenues for corrupt relations between the merchant class, the state, and the ruling party. This relationship continued to grow after mid-1980s when the *ujamaa* era ended and Mwalimu Nyerere vacated the presidency.

Loosening of Controls under Liberal Multiparty Politics

When the country adopted multipartyism and a liberal ideology, some of the controls against the expression of social pluralism in national politics were either expressly removed or just ignored. The first to go at the beginning of President Ali Hassan Mwinyi's second term was the Arusha Declarations' leadership code, which prevented party and state leaders from using their positions to amass wealth. Leaders could now invest their money without accounting for the sources of that money.[14] This opened the way for the creation of a wealthy ruling class.

Other developments made for political pluralism. They include the growth of the media, the civil society and private sector organizations capable of holding public authorities accountable. We shall briefly examine these institutional political actors below.

The media constitute an important political actor, and must be counted in political pluralism. The media help to loosen other actors' control over information through the daily reporting of issues of national interest.

Counting state and private media, by 2008 Tanzania had a total of 63 active newspapers and magazines on the register of newspapers. Of these, 16 were daily newspapers, 4 bi-weeklies, 33 weeklies and 10 monthlies. Electronic media also expanded tremendously since the early 1990s. There are now 45 radio stations in Tanzania, 5 national, 8 regional, 30 district-based, and 2 community radio stations. Likewise, there are now 27 television stations, out of which 6 are national, 2 are regional, and 19 are district television stations.

Civil society is another institutional actor, which had been controlled under the one-party system but has now sprung up as an effective political actor at both the local and national level. The number of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) has grown tremendously during the past two decades. CSOs are involved in various areas of development, democracy and advocacy work. Some of the leading women's CSOs have the capacity to lobby the government and parliament to influence policies, budgets and legislation. Farmers' cooperatives do not seem to have made similar strides under the liberal policies that have ushered back the middlemen, while cooperative unions struggle. They have not been able to tame the middlemen partly because of corruption, which has tainted most of their leaders. Trade unions, on the other hand, have recently come up as a credible political actor advancing the interests of their members through negotiations, as well as threatened and actual strikes.[15]

Private sector institutions have also sprung up as important political actors catering for the interests of those involved in commerce and industry. These institutions have now constituted themselves as powerful pressure groups. The leading private sector organizations include the Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA), Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI), Tanzania National Business Council (TNBC), Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF), and several associations of small traders.[16]

Control Measures in the Era of Multipartyism

Some of the measures used to control the expression of social pluralism in national politics were carried over to the multiparty system that was introduced in July 1992. The four leading control measures carried over into multiparty era are briefly mentioned below. The aim of maintaining these controls was to continue to preserve national unity in an environment of plural politics and liberal ideology, which places personal interests above collective interests.

The first control measure relates to the formation of political parties. All political parties are required to be "national" in character. They cannot be based on religion, tribe or region. They must be based in both parts of the United Republic, getting support from Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar as a condition for registration (URT, 1992).

The second control relates to candidature for election to the presidency, parliament and local councils. All candidates must belong to a political party, and must be sponsored by their party. This has been challenged in court twice on the argument that it is unconstitutional for violating the personal right to be elected. In the first case in 1995, the High Court upheld the right to private candidacy, but the government rushed a constitutional amendment through parliament to make the court verdict inoperative. In the second case (2007/2008) the High Court gave the same verdict, declaring mandatory party-endorsement of candidates unconstitutional, but the government expressed its intention to appeal.[17] It is not clear how the prohibition against individual candidates relates to national unity. Whereas it is conceivable that a tribal hero or a religious fanatic in a constituency dominated by that particular identity group could win a parliamentary seat, it is inconceivable that s/he could win the presidency. It is, therefore, more likely that the Government wants the prohibition to stay to ensure that the political giants in the ruling party do not stand on their own—which could lead to a disintegration of the party.

The third control relates to party and national leaders. These have to represent both parts of the Union. Usually parties have two deputy chairpersons and two deputy secretary–generals, one each for the Mainland and Zanzibar. For presidential candidates, the law requires that if the presidential candidate for a party comes from one part of the Union, the vice-presidential running mate must come from the other part of the Union (URT, 1992). Zanzibar's preference has remained for the old model whereby the Zanzibar President automatically became the Vice-President (or one of the Vice–Presidents) of the United Republic. This has proved difficult to operationalise under the multiparty system.

The fourth control has taken the form of a voluntary code of ethics, signed by political parties at the beginning of each general election. Among other things, the code taboos unbecoming electoral practices such as canvassing on the basis of tribe, place of birth or residence, religion, gender, race, and

other discriminatory bases. However, being voluntary, it has not been possible to ensure that all parties sign and, having signed, comply with the contents of the code.

Effects of Liberalism: Social Pluralisation and Polarization

The social diversity that was kept under control by the one-party system and the ideology of *ujamaa* began to claim independent political platforms under the multiparty system and liberal ideology, leading to competition and conflicts between and among different social groups that had previously coexisted peacefully. Whereas both the one-party system and *ujamaa* ideology were consciously conceived by the leadership as essential elements of a social transformation plan for nation building at that particular time and circumstances, no such plan existed when the country adopted the multiparty system and a liberal ideology. Change came as a result of a 'global wind of change' originating from the crisis faced by the socialist block, followed by the demise of the cold war and Western impositions via aid conditionalities. This unplanned externally driven change interrupted the nation-building project, producing two outcomes: *social pluralisation* on the one hand, and *social polarization* on the other.

From a purely democratic perspective, social pluralism in national politics may be considered a positive development. However, the challenge is how to control social polarization when competing diverse social groups - tribal, religious, regional or class – release their unprocessed and unaggregated demands into the national political arena. This is the challenge facing Tanzania at present.

The demands from various social groups reach the central authorities *raw* for two main reasons. First, political parties have not developed the capacity or inclination for interest aggregation and articulation. They have not created strong links to civil society. Even the older ruling CCM has not developed links with civil society groups based on interest aggregation and representation. This is because CCM has depended on its control of state resources and coercive power (carrot and stick) to build relations with societal groups since the one-party system days. Like the opposition parties, CCM is also inexperienced in competitive politics because it has not been out of power. Second, as we have seen, aggrieved tribal, religious or regional groups cannot form political parties of their own based on those identities. That is why their demands have tended to take such violent or irritating forms as demonstrations (e.g., Muslim demands on the state), comparative public preaching against other religions, and addressing demands directly to the President.[18]

The state seems to have been caught unaware by the release of social forces previously under its control, and finds it difficult to respond to the erratic demands of plural social groups or to regulate their conflicts and contestations to control the state and other resources. The following paragraphs briefly describe a few of the simmering inter–group conflicts that the state has not demonstrated adequate competence in resolving.

The first type of conflict started in early the 1990s in the private sector, which was set free by liberal policies. The contest was between indigenous Tanzanians (or Africans) and Tanzanians of Indian and Pakistani origins, collectively known as Asians. Conflict between the two groups was intensified by the fact that Asians have enough money and willingness to extract favours from policy makers through corruption. The competition was for government contracts for all sorts of activities and for the purchase of state corporations, which were being privatized. At a later stage, lasting up to the present, foreign investors entered the contest, further intensifying rivalries in the private sector. The main bone of contention is that the investment code has in practice been more generous to foreign rather than to domestic investors. Moreover, in the absence of state protection for domestic investors, the unpalatable outcome has been the squeezing out of small domestic investors, especially in the mining sector where conflicts have continued without the state providing an equitable resolution.

The second area of conflict has a tribal/regional dimension. This is still at a low ebb on the Mainland, but has recently manifested itself openly in Zanzibar. Apart from the general political crisis in Zanzibar resulting from CUF's dissatisfaction with electoral outcomes since the first multiparty elections in 1995, there has been a simmering conflict between Unguja and Pemba, the two main Islands of Zanzibar. Failure to reach an agreement between CCM and CUF on a power-sharing formula in March 2008, after fourteen months of negotiations, led to a 'sudden' eruption of Pemba nationalism. In June 2008, twelve Pemba elders wrote a letter to the UN Secretary General demanding a Pemba Government separate from the Zanzibar Government. The Union Government seems to have been taken by surprise. A few Pemba elders were arrested and then released; and as of November 2008 no plans for resolving the Pemba grievances had been announced by the Union or Zanzibar Governments. The 2005 general elections showed clearly that Zanzibar has undergone a major schism, with CUF being the sole party for Pemba, and CCM being the sole party for Unguja (TEMCO,

2006). An equitable distribution of resources, including political power, is the solution to the Pemba-Unguja schism, but neither the Zanzibar nor the Union Government seems to be addressing this issue squarely.

The third contestation relates to Muslims and Christians. Apart from the comparative public preaching against each other, the two religions have been actively engaged in competition for control of the state. Despite the voluntary electoral code of ethics signed by political parties, mosques and churches have been used to launch campaigns in the past three general elections. However, no violent episodes have been recorded from this practice, for such campaigns avoid the media. Current public debates are dominated by two demands from the Islamic community in Tanzania. The first is the demand for the restoration of *Kadhi* courts, which were disbanded by the Mwalimu Nyerere Administration in 1963. The second is for the country to join the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC). Both demands are being 'studied' by the Government, but have both been rejected resolutely by leaders of all Christian denominations, fearing an Islamization ploy in the two moves. The Government faces a major dilemma in resolving this issue given the popularity of the two religions in the country.

The fourth line of conflict relates to the rise of classes under the liberal ideology. This has several dimensions. Liberalism has led to an influx of all sorts of goods from different corners of the world, and a migration of youths from the rural areas into the urban areas to perform the peddler or *machinga* work of distributing goods. This 'machingaization' of the youths has created an urban class of peddlers in constant conflict with state and municipal authorities. This class is a potential pool for recruiting petty thieves, bandits and even terrorists.

On the other hand, the state is now being used as a vehicle for private capital accumulation. In this connection, politics is now a growing industry in Tanzania, coveted by people of all backgrounds: businessmen, professionals, artisans, farmers, and others. Politics pays in two main ways. First, a political office such as MP or minister gives easy access to many coveted resources like building plots, credit from financial institutions, and the opportunity to purchase state property on concessionary terms. Second, for those inclined to foul practices, a political office as a minister can make one a billionaire in a shorter time than any other business or industry could. This is now a common experience in Tanzania.[19] There now exists a wealthy ruling elite capable of perpetuating itself in power through electoral corruption, and this does not augur well for democratic growth.

Conclusion

In concluding, it is important to reiterate several points. First, the nation-building social controls made during the era of one-party system and *ujamaa* ideology have been useful in conducting multiparty politics with only a minimal resort to the political mobilization of sub-national identities. Second, it was wise to have maintained some of the controls into the multiparty era. These have ensured that Tanzania's political parties have a national base. Third, however, these parties have to be encouraged to link up with civil society organizations to make them better able to aggregate societal interests and demands. Unless this happens, the political and administrative systems will be choked with raw demands from diverse groups. Fourth, the state must endeavour to build a strong demand response capacity. Experience has shown that demands addressed to the state at various levels increase as the democratic transition progresses.

Notes

1. Nigeria is a good example. At independence in 1963, the three major parties belonged to the three major tribal groupings -- the Igbo on the coast, the Yoruba in the West and the Fulani in the North. Within East Africa, Kenyan parties have also shown ethnic tendencies, and so do Ugandan parties, which additionally show religious tendencies.

2. A Programme of 'Africanization' of the Civil Service was also launched in the same year to give the government a national look.

3. During the 'Africanization' exercise, it was found that very few Muslims had the educational qualifications needed to occupy middle and top posts in the civil service. Muslim activists complained to the Government but nothing could be done until the educational imbalance was successfully addressed. This is the background to the nationalization of mission schools in 1969.

4. Superannuated chiefs were retired, and the rest were redeployed in the civil service in accordance with their education and demonstrated abilities.

5. This was the All Muslim National Union of Tanganyika (AMNUT). If this party had been allowed to continue, a Christian party would most likely have been formed to compete with it.

6. Corruption was among very few offences that included corporal punishment in terms of strokes.

7. The Workers Participation programme was launched by the Presidential Circular No. 1 of 1997.

8. The party organization and its *ujamaa* ideology were extended to all the armed forces (prisons, police and army), which collectively constituted a 'Party Region' with the same status as the geographical regions of the party. Political Commissars were also posted in the army. President Jakaya Kikwete and current CCM Secretary General, Yusufu Makamba were among the party commissars in the army.

9. An example of a negative outcome was the loss of disciplinary power by management as a result of the workers participation programme and the presence of party branches in work places. Junior leaders of party branches at work places used 'party supremacy' to contend with their work bosses. The result was reduced outputs of goods and services.

10. Village powers to allocate its registered land are given in Village and Ujamaa Villages Act, 1975.

11. Estates previously owned by foreigners and a few by Tanzanians were nationalized and converted to state farms. Additional farms were also started by the state in new areas.

12. For example, the Wachagga in Kilimanjaro Region lived in traditional villages which did not need re-planning, and with land being so scarce, 'kulakization' could not take place.

13. The costs of the villagization exercise included the loss of human life, property and a decline in agricultural performance during the early years due to people being settled far from their farms. The 'village land,' was not given proper care. It became 'no man's land,' in the words of one opposition politician.

14. This was provided in an unpublished 'Zanzibar Declaration' of CCM's National Executive Committee (NEC), which met in Zanzibar in January 1991 to, among other things, review the Arusha Declaration and its effects on development.

15. Leading unions include the umbrella Confederation of Tanzania Workers (CTW) and sectoral unions like the Trade Union of Government and Health Employees (TUGHE), Tanzania Teachers' Association (CWT), Tanzania Local Government Workers' Union (TALGWU), and Researchers, Academics and Allied Workers Union (RAAWU). These unions have had significant influence on legislation related to workers' interests. Examples include the Employment and Labour Relations Act N0. 6 of 2004 and the Labour Institutions Act No. 7 of 2004 which came into operation in 2007.

16. A famous one operates at the Kariakoo Market in Dar es Salaam and is known by its Swahili acronym, UWABINDOSOKA.

17. On both occasions the matter was sent to the court by the national chairman of the Democratic Party, Rev. Christopher Mtikila.

18. Muslims in Tanzania have created their own committee to deal with what they have termed 'rights of Muslims'. These grievances have now and then been addressed to the President, published in newspapers, or been the basis for demonstrations. Public preaching against other religions was started by Muslims in early 1990s, attracting a response from some Christian fundamentalists of the newer churches.

19. Government deals condemned by the public as entailing corrupt practices or serving personal interests of powerful officials include the:

- External Payments Arrears Account (EPA) whose funds totalling 133 billion Tanzania Shillings were siphoned by real and ghost companies.
- IPTL contract to supply very expensive electrical power.
- Other power contracts include Songas, Richamond, and Dowans, the latter two led to the resignation of Prime Minister Edward Lowassa.
- Buzwagi and many other mining contracts.
- Purchase of a presidential jet at an exorbitant price.
- Purchase British BAE System Limited radar at an exorbitant price.
- Extension of the contract with the Tanzania International Container Terminal Services Limited (TICTS) before its time.
- Privatization of the Tanzania Railways and the privatization of over 400 other public corporations, including banks, at give-away prices.
- Privatization of the Kiwira Coal Mine to former President Benjamin Mkapa.
- Privatization of government houses to government leaders and officials at give-away prices. Some of the houses were sold to non-state people as well, such as functionaries of the ruling party.

Most of these contracts and purchases were done during the Third Phase Government of President Benjamin William Mkapa.

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Beyond Movementocracy: The Challenges of Constructing Multipartyism amidst Ethnic and Religious Cleavages

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Abstract

This article argues that constructing a truly functioning multiparty system in Uganda is complicated by a limited understanding of multipartyism, the attitudinal disposition of key political actors towards multiparty politics, the manner in which interest and pressure groups get involved in the political process, sectarianism (ethnicity and religion) as a basis of political identity, the lack of clear ideology, and 'political engineering'. The article concludes if these challenges are not addressed, the creation of a viable multiparty political system will be elusive.

Introduction

When President Yoweri Museveni's National Resistance Army/National Resistance Movement (NRA/NRM) captured state power on 26th January 1986, he introduced a 'no-party' political system known as the 'movement'. This system was meant to heal the political wounds of the past, and to serve as the new governance mode. It is this style of politics which is herein being referred to as 'movementocracy'. Movementocracy lasted for two decades until the referendum of November 2005 when Ugandans chose to be governed under a multiparty political system. Hence, in February-March 2006, presidential, parliamentary and local elections were conducted under a multiparty political dispensation.

This article argues that constructing a truly functioning multiparty system in Uganda is extremely challenging due to the following key factors: limited understanding of multipartyism, the attitudinal disposition of key political actors towards multiparty politics, the manner in which interest and pressure groups get involved in the political process, sectarianism (ethnicity and religion) as a basis of political identity, the lack of clear

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