Identity and Politics in Tanzania

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Abstract
This article investigates the political mobilisation of identities during the 2000 general elections in mainland Tanzania. The political mobilisation of identities refers to the promotion of corporate interests by manipulating common ties (cultural, racial, regional, religious, gender, class, and nationality) by political leaders. The concepts of identity pluralism and societal norms are used to analyse why a single identity, like religion or ethnicity, has yet to become the main political divide in mainland Tanzania's electoral politics.[1]

Introduction

Drawing on evidence from Kenya and Nigeria, Oyugi (1997) and Diamond (1988) argue that multi-party elections in culturally divided poor nations facilitate the political mobilisation of ethnic group identities. In countries where ethnic identities are the dominant societal dividing line along which contests for power and resources occur, multi-party elections often intensify group animosities, providing increased opportunities for violent confrontations and/or state repression. This can be seen in Burundi where the 1993 general elections exacerbated Hutu and Tutsi competition for political power, and deepened the resolve of these groups to either establish or maintain their own system of exclusionary ethnocratic rule.[2] The political mobilisation of identities can also be seen in Zanzibar, part of the Union of Tanzania, where violent clashes between the state and Civic United Front (CUF) supporters accompanied the reintroduction of competitive multi-party politics in 1995. That year's divisive political rhetoric coupled with contested election results was reminiscent of the colonial elections that polarized Zanzibar along racial (African-Arab) and regional (Unguja-Pemba) lines. Another problematic Zanzibar election in October 2000 heightened ethnic, racial, regional and political tensions. However, the experiences of mainland Tanzania stand in stark contrast to the above trends. Contrary to the findings

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of Oyugi (1997) and Diamond (1988), and divergent to the experiences of Burundi and Zanzibar, both the 1995 and 2000 general elections on mainland Tanzania did not exhibit a strong systemic effort to mobilize identities at the national level.

Why have elections not led to nationwide attempts to politically mobilize identities on mainland Tanzania? This is an intriguing question because mainland Tanzania has many social and economic characteristics in common with Kenya, Nigeria, and Burundi where ethnic identities have become the main battle lines along which societal contests for power take place. Tanzania, Burundi, Kenya, and Nigeria all share a colonial heritage, grinding poverty, multi-ethnic societies, and intense political competition. In trying to understand why elections have not taken the form of identity group competition in Tanzania, it is important to understand the broader structural[3] variables (major social groups, nature of political system, societal norms and values) that shape the tactical choices political actors make about the viability of strategies to mobilize political support. What Tanzania does not share with the above three countries is a unique combination of characteristics that have so far hindered the political mobilisation of ethnic identities at the national level. These include: ethnic group plurality, cross-cutting identities, and broadly-held societal norms against manipulating ethnic ties to gain political support. At the grass roots level, these structural variables influence how the electorate defines its interests and shapes its response to a candidate or party's appeals for support. The combination of these three structural traits decreases the likelihood—but does not eliminate the possibility—that leaders or societal groups will politically organize around group identities. A situation of ethnic group plurality, cross-cutting identities, and societal norms hostile to "ethnic politics" has made political leaders sceptical that the political mobilisation of an identity would translate into electoral success. While some have tried, as of yet on mainland Tanzania, there is no conclusive example of a party, ethnic group, religious activist, or politician successfully creating an identity power base from which to launch a serious challenge for national power.

Conceptualising the Relationship between Identity and the Competition for Political Power

Identity is difficult to define and it is often unclear where to place the boundary lines between one identity group and another.[4] Often these boundary lines shift over time, as people try to define and redefine what it

means to be a group member. In analysing ethnicity, for example, scholars characteristically draw upon the concepts of primordial attachments and socially constructed cultural identities. Primordialism is the idea that ethnic group members share a pre-existing common culture that provides a set of enduring and structured social relations. In contrast, the notion of constructed identities stresses that elites and people at the grass roots level consciously manipulate symbols, culture, and social ties in order to construct ethnic identities that can be deployed to advance the interests of the elites, and perhaps the collectivity as a whole.

Gertz (1963), one of the leading proponents of primordialism, envisioned ethnic groups as enduring, self-perpetuating entities that offer people little, if any, choice over membership. For Gertz, individuals are born into ethnic groups and are socialized into a common culture. Group members internalise the same values, speak the same language, and are part of a unified social structure that operates according to unquestioned behavioural expectations. Deep psychological and emotional bonds, similar to those of family or kinship, ensure unity (Foster, 2000: 21-22). Marxist and modernisation approaches accepted the basic assumptions of primordial identities but stress that the emotional attachment to ethnic groups should decrease with the spread of market relations and the creation of multi-ethnic cities and trading centres. According to Marxists, as people come together to engage in economic activities and acquire the skills needed for life in a capitalist society, the primordial bonds would loosen their grip in this 'new cultural melting pot' (Newman, 1991: 451-452). Some Marxists explained away the persistence of ethnic identities as a type of false consciousness promoted by the dominant capitalist class in order to divide the workers and distract them from the main societal problem, class conflict. While both modernisation and Marxist approaches noted that ethnic groups provided emotional support in a world driven by impersonal socially atomizing market relations, they nonetheless saw ethnicity as symptomatic of more fundamental social trends (Newman, 1991: 453-454).

By the 1970s it was becoming increasingly apparent that economic development was not decreasing the importance of cultural groups in society but was actually enlivening, transforming and sometimes even creating new ethnic identities (Newman, 1991: 455). According to the instrumentalist or constructivist approach, colonialism created nation states bringing together previously isolated ethnic groups into one political system. Benedict Anderson's idea of a 'imagined national community' illustrates how

colonialism constructed new national identities (Anderson, 1991:163-64). This view was echoed in MacGaffey's (1997) study of the Belgium Congo, where he noted the strong hand of colonial officials interested in creating unified cultural groups to ease their administrative difficulties. According to the instrumentalist perspective, the process of development within the new colonial political boundaries set off intense competition for education, jobs, land, social services, and other scarce resources. The colonial state encouraged politics along ethnic lines in an effort to frustrate the development of strong national movements that could challenge foreign occupation. However, there were also reasons for groups and leaders within colonial societies to create and mobilize ethnic identities for political ends. In the struggle for power and scarce resources, organized groups were better able to pressure the colonial state and to take other collective actions to enhance their share of the available assets. Shared cultural characteristics provided leaders with the basic organisational materials from which to instil a group solidarity that could be mobilized to serve the leaders' own ends (Wilmsen, 1996; Brass, 1991).

In response to the success of the pioneering ethnic groups, rival elites and opinion leaders attempted to organize 'their people' into coherent cultural groups that could be mobilized for political action. For example, in Kenya, the term Baluhya was not coined until the 1920s when colonial administrators first used it to describe the people living in the administrative area of North Kavirondo. North Kavirondo elites then adopted and promoted the idea of an Abaluhya ethnic group in order to bring unity to smaller culturally similar 'sub-groups' living in the area, and to provide the means with which to make demands on the colonial state (Ndegwa, 1997: 601). As independence neared, ethnic groups whose origins lay largely in colonial society, like the Kikuyu, Luo, and Abaluhya, provided political bases from which to launch campaigns to capture state power after decolonisation. In the post-colonial era, concern about being dominated by larger ethnic groups provided an incentive for minority groups to band together. For example, the Kalenjin became a major political force only after independence when the smaller and culturally more coherent "Nandi, Elgeyo, and Tugen transferred their allegiance to a larger community of identity and interest (the Kalenjin) and became numerically competitive in the state arena" (Ndegwa, 1997: 607). However, the notion of socially constructed identities being manipulated to serve a leader's own political goals leaves one important question unanswered. Why do the masses or

ordinary members of an ethnic group agree to be 'manipulated' by their elite leaders (Newman, 1991)?
A partial answer to this question is that on an individual level, ethnic ties are important for day-to-day struggles for jobs, education, land, and to cope with personal times of need. In the political realm, ethnic mobilisation allows group members to make claims on politicians for resources in return for supporting a leader's efforts to gain power (Ndegwa, 1997: 604). Or stated differently, ethnic mobilisation can bring benefits to rank and file group members.

However, Fearon and Laitin (1996) put forth a different perspective by focusing on inter-ethnic cooperation rather than conflict. They maintain that the potential benefits of cooperation usually outweigh the costs of endemic inter-ethnic violence. Therefore, leaders and ethnic group members have incentives to create formal and informal institutional arrangements to moderate ethnic polarisation (Fearon & Laitin, 1996: 730). For the purpose of understanding why ethnic political mobilisation has not yet occurred on a national scale in Tanzania, it is important to consider that elites can pay heavy costs for pursuing strategies aimed at polarizing identities. For example, it is possible that members of an ethnic group may not respond favourably to ethnic appeals. This doubt about the viability of an ethnic mobilisation strategy may influence elites and opinion leaders to forgo an ethnic strategy to gain political power by calculating that it may not produce the desired results.

Perhaps the key to understanding the political mobilisation of ethnicity is not losing sight of the fact that members often do have emotional bonds to their group. There is something unique to ethnicity that is represented in a strong type of identity solidarity, which when mobilized can quickly supersede other types of group allegiances (Newman, 1991: 464). This idea that the ethnic Genie is hard to return to the bottle after its release through political mobilisation can be seen in Ndegwa's (1997) case study of Kenya's political transition to multi-party politics. Ndegwa argues that ethnic identities in Kenya have been socially constructed, however, due to their political mobilisation they start to take on ascriptive primordial aspects, which are illustrated in the dilemma of trying to combine individual rights and ethnic group interests under a formally liberal political system. In Kenya, according to Ndegwa (1997), ethnic group interests drown out those of the individual. The disjuncture of groups' rights norms operating under an individual

liberal oriented constitutional and legal framework ends up contributing to the ethnicisation of political power.

In thinking about ethnic groups in Tanzania, an advocate of primordialism would emphasize the inherent interests of the cultural collective, and the ability of the ethnic group to define and articulate a common view of the past and present, as well as offer a coherent vision of the future. This suggests that leader and individual interests are made subservient to those of the group, and that leaders are accountable to their ethnic power bases (political leaders are constrained by the existing corporate interests of identity groups) for advancing a shared corporate culture interest. As will be shown below, there is some evidence that certain ethnic groups in Tanzania have a well-developed collective consciousness. However, this tends to be exhibited primarily during elections at a sub-national level.

Alternately, for the instrumentalist, ethnic interests are defined from above, by a crafty leadership that moulds group interests in a way that resonates with a pre-defined collectivity while addressing their own personal political concerns.[5] Clearly, during the campaign period, parties and candidates consciously manipulated identities to win political support. But these appeals were directed at a number of identities: gender, class, religious, as well as ethnic. In essence, in Tanzania, mobilizing ethnic identities is not a proven formula for generating political support. There seems to be no one theoretical or practical explanation to account for Tanzania so far avoiding a nationwide political ethnic mobilisation. However, insights into the dynamic relationship between identity and electoral politics can be gleaned from primordial and constructivist theories of ethnicity, and by recognizing that the interests of leaders and ethnic group members are shaped by the following factors: the existence of ethnic group plurality, cross-cutting identities, and a political culture where so far there has been a strong effort to socialize citizens to avoid political competition along ethnic lines.

Ethnic Group Pluralism

In Tanzania, there is a large number of small ethnic groups with fluid boundaries. The 1967 census, the last to take into account ethnic groups, noted that the process of classifying people along ethnic lines was complicated and imprecise, but it nonetheless listed 130 African ethnic groups (Egero & Roushdi, 1973). Twenty-three years later Foster, Hitchcock, and Lyimo (2000: 102) observed that 120 is most often cited as the number of

different Tanzanian ethnic groups. The largest ethnic groups according to the 1967 census were the Sukuma (12.4%), Makonde (3.9%), Chaga (3.6%), Haya (3.3%), and Nyamwezi (3.3%) (Egeero & Roushdi, 1973). In the years since the 1967 census it is unclear how demographic, social, economic, and political trends have influenced the relative size and conceptualisations of Tanzania's various ethnic groups. However, it is likely that the largest ethnic group is still a small minority in Tanzania's overall population. For example, if the relative size of ethnic groups remained constant, no single ethnic group would be larger than 15% of the population. Under the rules of multi-party elections, assuming that an ethnic group could mobilize all eligible members to vote for one party, it would still garner only a small proportion of the votes solely based on the support of one cultural group. Faced with the existing situation, efforts to politically mobilize ethnic groups would have to centre on creating new super-ethnic groups by combining separate cultural groupings into one larger entity.

Efforts at ethnic group mobilisation could also be directed at forming an electoral coalition of ethnic groups to capture state power. Kelsall (2000: 547) estimates that the closely related Sukuma and Nyamwezi may form 20% of the population, which is large enough to be moulded into an ethnic power base. Indeed, John Cheyo's United Democratic Party, with its strength mainly in the Sukuma-Nyamwezi heartland, could be interpreted as an attempt to mobilize ethnic political support. Kelsall (ibid), however, discounts this possibility as viable for capturing power at the national level. Kelsall notes there are problems in building strong political unity among the Sukuma-Nyamwezi because they lived in dispersed chiefdoms prior to colonial rule and these cultural groups seemed to be neither particularly favoured nor exploited during the colonial era in comparison to other African ethnic groups. Therefore, at present, the perceived political need for ethnic unity to protect privileges or fight injustice does not exist. Electoral results seem to prove Kelsall right with Cheyo garnering only 4.2% of the vote in the 2000 presidential elections.[6] Thus, the situation of ethnic group plurality, in which no ethnic group is likely to be larger than 20% of the population, creates a strong incentive to form parties that appeal across a number of ethnic identities.

Identity Group Pluralism

While ethnic groups provide identifiable power bases, they are just one out of a number of societal identities based on ascriptive and/or associational

allegiances that pervade the Tanzanian political landscape. Often these other societal identities cut across ethnic boundaries. In short, Tanzania has what could be called identity group pluralism. In post-colonial Tanzania, in addition to ethnicity, at least six major group identities have served as the basis for political organisation. These identities are nation, region, race, class, gender, and religion. As with ethnicity, other forms of identity need to be accommodated within any political party that wants to have a chance at winning national elections. The discussion below gives a brief overview of the six identities listed above.

National identities were very important, especially in the period immediately after independence. In an effort to make a break with the old colonial order, the new TANU government deported a number of Europeans for exhibiting colonial or racist attitudes, and confiscated the assets of the expatriate Dar es Salaam club after sixty-nine TANU leaders were denied membership (Smith, 1971: 47-49). A few years later, aspects of national identity in the economic realm moved to the forefront of Tanzanian politics. One aspect of the policy of *ujamaa* (1967-1985) aimed at rectifying the imbalances of the colonial economy, where non-Tanzanians controlled many of the leading enterprises in the country.

With economic and political liberalisation there has been a revival of the importance of national identities. With liberalisation, the economy is turning around and there are new opportunities to make money. This is attracting foreigners to Tanzania. Added to this is Tanzania's eight borders with neighbouring countries in East and Southern Africa, as well as historic links to the Middle East, the Indian sub-continent, and Europe. As of 2001, Tanzania did not have a national identity card, which contributed to a considerable degree of ambiguity regarding the citizenship status of many people living in Tanzania. With the introduction of competitive multi-party elections, and the right to vote and hold office being limited to Tanzanian citizens; Liberalisation has encouraged politicians to take a renewed interest in national identities. During the 2000 General Elections there were accusations that non-citizens voted. Old allegations resurfaced that the Ilala MP and Minister for Industry, Trade and Commerce (Iddi Simba), and the head of a large media company (Jenerali Ulimwengu) were not Tanzanians. Ironically, Simba is one of the leading proponents within CCM of 'indigenisation'.[7] In the aftermath of the elections, during the first quarter of 2001, the immigration department declared a number of prominent people in Tanzania to be non-citizens. The list included: CCM National Executive

Committee members Anatory Aman and Moudline Castico; former Tanzanian Ambassador to Nigeria, Timothy Bandora; the Head of Habari Media Corporation, Jenerali Unlimwengu; and a student leader at the University of Dar es Salaam - which was closed after a student strike during the campaign period (*Uhuru*, March 21, 2001: 1, 10).

Religion has proved to be one of the most important societal dividing lines. Foster, Hitchcock, and Lyimo (2000: 135) assert that in Tanzania religious problems have been more prominent than ethnic ones.[8] There are three main spiritual traditions in Tanzania: Islam, Christianity, and traditional African spiritual beliefs. There are no reliable estimates on what percentages of the population follow each religious tradition. In fact, the 1967 census—the last to categorize people according to religion—continues to raise controversy as it showed that followers of local beliefs made up 37% of the population, Christians made up 32% and Muslims 30%. Many Tanzanian Muslims feel that this census was doctored intentionally to reduce the percentage of Muslims as the 1957 census showed Muslims outnumbering Christians.

There is considerable evidence that religious divisions are more rigid and more strongly asserted at the grass roots level than those of other identity groups. In a 1994 survey conducted by the Political Science Department of the University of Dar es Salaam, more respondents disapproved of their children marrying someone from a different religious group than marrying someone from a different social class, ethnic group, race, or political affiliation (Mushi, 1997: 187). Religious identities have been politicised. An Islamicist movement actively promotes the idea that the state favours Christians, and that Muslims are being discriminated against in terms of receiving education and gaining access to state power (Heilman and Kaiser 2001). In response, CCM accused Islamicists of using Mosques to rally support for its rival, CUF. All of the three leading parties, CCM, TLP, and CUF, used preachers and sheikhs to bolster their support on the campaign trail. However, the impact of an Islamicist movement on electoral politics appears to be limited. For example, CCM ran successful campaigns in heavily Muslim areas on the mainland; and CUF leaders stressed secular issues like the need to efficiently manage the economy and to ensure that human rights were respected. This suggests that while some issues are amenable to being interpreted as being part of a Muslim-Christian dichotomy, others do not lend themselves to being defined in terms of inter-religious conflict. Indeed, some of the most intractable forms of religious conflict, such as the internal struggles to control individual Mosques or

Church dioceses, have occurred within Christian or Muslim communities. In measuring the depth of inter-religious tensions, it also must be taken into account that not all people who claim to follow a faith are strong believers. For example, while some are devout followers of either Islam or Christianity, other followers have weaker ties to these religious traditions, and other group identities take precedence. Also, many Africans have not given up their traditional spiritual belief systems, including followers of both Christianity and Islam.[9]

Region is an identity that can overlap with ethnicity and religion. There are some areas where regional identities are reinforced by religion. For example, Zanzibar is over 95% Muslim, and on the coast there is a high percentage of Muslims. Pre-colonial centres of trade, such as Tabora and Kigoma, also have high percentages of Muslims. It is believed that a high proportion of Christians live in the southwest and north-central areas of the country, which were centres of colonial era development.

The main regional division in Tanzania is between the mainland and Zanzibar. There is a strong movement on the islands for greater autonomy and/or independence. During and after the disputed 2000 Zanzibari elections, there were complaints that the state was systematically harassing Pembans and CUF supporters. There is considerable evidence that the identities of being a CUF partisan, being from Pemba, and opposing the Zanzibar Revolution are considered by the state to be reinforcing. It is not exactly clear what the long-term effect of a post-election clampdown on Pemba and CUF (which included fairly widespread political violence) will have on the islands. However, it does seem that, especially in Pemba, post election violence has strengthened the position of those who support greater autonomy or independence for the islands. These trends, however, could be mitigated somewhat by CUF's push to become a strong national party. While there were charges that CUF is a regional, Zanzibar—or more specifically Pemban—party, the results of the 2000 elections give CUF the foundation to argue that it is the strongest opposition party on the mainland.[10]

While the main regional division is often interpreted as the one separating the islands from the mainland, there is evidence that regional identities on the mainland are becoming increasingly important. In many respects the line dividing regionalism from ethnicity is blurry. While most of mainland Tanzania's twenty regions are multi-ethnic, there is nonetheless a close relationship between regionalism and ethnicity. In Tanzania, there is a rough

parallel between local and district boundaries and ethnic divisions (Mmuya, 1998: 152-153). Mmuya (*ibid*) observes that during the CCM presidential nomination exercise in 1995, individual candidates had strong bases of support from their home districts and home regions. Mmuya (ibid) further argues that with liberalisation, regionalism and ethnicity are becoming increasingly important within CCM. This view was echoed in an article in the March 17-24, 2001 issue of the *East African* newspaper that claimed President Mkapa was deeply concerned about regional divisions within CCM. The article named one grouping as the G-7, which represented the Lake Zone, and mentioned that there were two other regional factions representing Dar es Salaam and Mbeya.[11] Additionally, the regional power blocks were said to wield considerable influence over who would contest for elected office under CCM, who would occupy party positions, and who would manage regional co-operative societies in their home areas (Rwambali, 2001: 1,36).

Race was the primary societal dividing line during the colonial era. Prior to independence, race largely determined access to political power, economic resources, and prospects for socio-economic advancement. The colonial racial pyramid (European-Asian-African) emphasized white privileges and black duties. Housing, education, economic activities, and political power were allocated along racial lines. In the immediate post-colonial era, Zuberi Mtemvu and the African National Congress promoted the idea of 'Africa for the Africans' and Tanzanian citizenship for Africans only. A variant of 'Africa for the Africans' resurfaced in the early 1990s when some African business people pushed the idea of indigenisation. Indigenisation stressed that special preferences should be given to Africans in terms of buying parastatals and gaining access to commercial resources because they were held back to a much greater extent by colonial era discrimination and socialism than their Asian counterparts. Indigenisation reached a mass audience in Dar es Salaam on January 23, 1993, when Christopher Mtikila, the outspoken preacher-politician, accused Asians of undermining Tanzania's economy and impoverishing Africans. After his impassioned speech at Jangwani grounds, the vehicles of Asian motorists were stoned. However, since 1994, racial tensions have subsided and a number of Asian candidates did well in CCM preferential elections, and in the general elections of 1995 and 2000. However, proponents of indigenisation are an important component of CCM's ruling coalition.

Class was the main identity during the *ujamaa* era. At times class overlapped with national identities and race as Europeans and Asians were often depicted as the capitalist exploiting class, while Africans were the exploited workers and peasants. Despite the close association between nationality, race and class, the first president, Julius Nyerere, emphasized a vision of social and economic equality where all Tanzanians, regardless of race, would be treated equally under the law. While *ujamaa* did have an adverse effect on wealthy Asians and Europeans, there were also cases of upper class Africans having difficulties with the socialist regime. Also, at no point did top state officials sanction overt ethnic or racial appeals targeting Asians or Europeans.

With regard to whether class is coterminous or a cross-cutting identity with African ethnic groups, Foster, Hitchcock, and Lyimo (2000: 102) note that in general there is little correlation between the two. The authors do, however, note that the Wachaga, Wahaya, Wanyakyusa, and Wasukuma are thought to have been favoured historically in terms of education, which has led to members of these groups occupying a disproportionate number of positions of power and influence. It should also be noted that some ethnic groups—such as the Makonde from southern Tanzania—have become synonymous with grinding poverty and lack of opportunity.[12]

Gender has gained increasing salience in recent years. In the Parliament women are guaranteed at least 20% of seats based on the percentage of elected MPs that a party wins. Preceding and following the 2000 elections there were a number of conferences, often donor funded, to support women candidates for political office. During the elections gender activists called on women to support women candidates for political office. However, the results of these efforts have not been striking. For example, in the 2000 elections only ten out of nearly 231 parliamentary elections resulted in women winning seats.[13]

At different times throughout the country's history leaders have tried to politically mobilize identities. However, while the different group identities are important and have provided dividing lines for societal conflicts, no single identity has become an all-encompassing category that takes precedence over others. That is, the nature of Tanzania's identities remains more overlapping than reinforcing. For example, while no statistics are kept on the percentages of racial or ethnic groups in the national population, Africans most likely make up more than 90% of Tanzania's citizens, making

this the largest identity group. However, the African identity is divided along ethnic, religious, and class lines. Over one hundred ethnic groups make up the African racial category, and most African ethnic groups are made up of people who have different class, gender, and religious identities. The numerous and often cross-cutting identities have created a situation of identity group pluralism, making it difficult to politically mobilize a single-all encompassing identity group.

Societal Norms Regarding the Political Mobilisation of Identity Groups

Strong norms exist within Tanzania against mobilizing ethnic identities for political purposes. For example, the electoral code of conduct, which was signed by most of the political parties, forbids candidates and parties from conducting campaign rallies in languages other than Kiswahili and English, the official languages of the country. Clearly, this is an effort to mitigate ethnic based politics. While norms against ethnic politics are at times contravened at the local, constituent, and regional levels, they have not yet been seriously violated at the national level. Even at the local level, invoking ethnic identities as a means for mobilizing support has the risk of threatening multi-ethnic coalitions that are seen as essential for winning elections.

What are the norms regarding ethnic group mobilisation for political ends? In general Tanzanian leaders and citizens are committed to the ideals that politics should not be structured along identity group lines. Leaders, the press, and the public in their personal conversations constantly refer to countries such as Kenya, Rwanda, and Burundi as negative examples of societies with politicized identities. Since independence the state and cultural leaders have exerted a considerable effort toward building the idea of being Tanzanian. Under Nyerere strong emphasis was placed on constructing a national identity at the expense of ethnic identities. It was under the first president that the state abolished the position of chief, an administrative and cultural leadership position. Kelsall (2000: 547) notes that after independence the party controlled the access to gaining and holding national leadership positions. Party leaders shared a nation-building ethos where "loyalty to Nyerere, fluency in the ideological language of *ujamaa*, and administrative competence," rather than strong local ties, were a prerequisite for political or administrative career advancement (*ibid*). In short, to gain positions of national and regional responsibility, power bases needed to be built within the central party hierarchy and not among local power brokers whose political base was located within a particular ethnic group.

While many leaders in Africa and elsewhere have paid lip service to the need to promote national unity and condemn ethnic nepotism, the Tanzanian state under Nyerere, Mwinyi, and Mkapa has made a sincere attempt to ensure that these values were reflected in state policies. The state developed the idea of a shared national culture through staging festivals and national school arts competitions (Kelsall, 2000: 546), posting civil servants outside of their home areas, and having secondary students—who attend state boarding schools—study outside of their home regions. Perhaps the biggest unifying cultural institution in Tanzania is Kiswahili. It is the language of education, the state, business, and it is used at home in urban areas as well as at the coast. It has been developed by the state (ibid), accepted by cultural elites, and adopted at the grassroots level.

The ideals that powered the independence movement provided the moral justification for promoting a national culture, and diminishing the importance of ethnic identities. TANU, like other African nationalist movements, based its struggle for independence on the idea that racial prejudice was morally unjust. In the rigid colonial racial hierarchy, political and legal rights were linked in descending order to the racial categories of European, Asian, Arab, and African. Segregation existed from the cradle to the grave, affecting hospitals, housing, schools, social clubs, economic activities, and burial grounds (Mustafa, 1990: 52). The Tanganyikan African National Union (TANU) was a political party that embodied African nationalism with members coming from different ethnic and religious groups. During the liberation struggle no party emerged to seriously challenge TANU's position in representing African aspirations. Julius Nyerere interpreted these aspirations to be ending the privileges of Europeans and Asians; while at the same time accepting them into an open, equal, and non-racial society. The independence era citizenship act established the right for all racial groups to gain Tanzanian citizenship, and Nyerere persistently warned the nation about the twin evils of religious and ethnic chauvinism. State policy purposefully aimed at building a national identity. Efforts to express ethnic identities were minimized, and classifying people according to cultural groups was not used in the national census after 1967. The ethnic power bases of regional leaders were undermined by such deliberate policies as the state appointing leaders of cooperative societies, often from 'outside' ethnic groups, especially after the reorganisation of this sector in 1971. In general, the acceptance of nation building policies at the grassroots and elite level supports the idea that Tanzanians value open fluid

ethnic identities on the personal level with controls to limit political mobilisation within the national community.

The extent to which these policies both shaped and built on existing views of ethnicity can be seen in the response to violent conflict between small-scale farmers and pastorialists in Kilosa District, near Morogoro. Kilosa is inhabited by a number of small-scale farmers who come from different ethnic groups. There are also a large number of Masai cattle herders in the district. Violent clashes over land use erupted between the farmers and pastorialists soon after the 2000 elections. Interestingly, the press and the government framed the clashes as a conflict between pastorialists and farmers (functional categories), rather than describing the issue in terms of ethnic violence. This is not to deny anti-Masai feelings by many non-Masai in Kilosa, but the media, the state, CCM and opposition leaders refrained from referring to the disturbances in Morogoro as ethnic violence, thereby reaffirming shared common values regarding the national community.

Identity and the 2000 Elections on Mainland Tanzania

Elections and other contests for power entail strategic behaviour by individuals and groups in order to achieve their desired objectives. This calls attention to the rational goal oriented activities of political elites, especially regarding strategies to build up their political support. However, it is important to realize that the boundaries of rational strategic actions, and even the desires of actors, are shaped by factors such as values, norms, culture, and social structures. Given that structural variables shape the parameters of decision-making, groups and individuals can pursue three basic types of strategies designed either to: (a) change the rules of the game (change structural variables), (b) maximize benefits under existing rules, or (c) try to maximize their benefits under existing rules while at the same time trying to modify societal values and social structures to their advantage. In applying the above to the 2000 General Elections, parties and politicians had the option to try to influence structural power relations (manipulate symbols, change societal values regarding the relationship between politics and ethnic groups, change the constitution) and/or maximize personal or group benefits under the existing laws and norms covering the mobilisation of identity groups for political power.

Key to understanding the strategic decisions of Tanzanians regarding ethnic political mobilisation are the structural factors of the existence of multiple

politically meaningful identities, and a national political culture that disdains identity group politics. For example, a party wanting to use ethnic appeals to gain voters' support faces considerable obstacles. These include trying to mobilize certain ethnic identities without sparking a counter mobilisation of other ethnic groups, and the need to change national norms regarding the participation of ethnic groups in politics.

Ethnicity is taken into account by leading national politicians, societal leaders, and the general public. An examination of the campaign strategies used in the 2000 general elections illustrates that the leaders of the three major political parties tried to put together broad coalitions of identity groups as opposed to mobilizing along the lines of one exclusive identity. It is likely that mainstream political leaders in both the ruling and opposition parties are sceptical about the viability of mobilizing an exclusive identity as a strategy for gaining power, fearing that it would likely produce a hostile reaction among other groups.[14] For presidential elections, where widespread support is essential for victory, a party or candidate seen as representing ethnic interests would lose support from those defined as 'outsiders', whose interests would suffer if preferences were given to 'in-group members'.

That the major parties have shunned a strategy aimed at mobilizing an exclusive identity to garner political support does not mean that identity politics are not important. In the traditionally intense competition for ruling party nominations, even before the advent of multi-partyism, there were strong incentives for elites to make use of ethnic strategies to struggle for power within the party. Mmuya (1998, 152-153) notes that within CCM "…members from the same ethnic group have tended to support their member on purely rational calculations that once their candidate wins, benefits are likely to start spreading from the 'tribe' and then radiate to outer circles." Despite internal CCM politics sometimes taking on ethnic overtones, the party has shown a remarkable ability to close ranks and project a broad identity group coalition when facing external electoral opposition in local, parliamentary, and presidential elections. One of the reasons for this strong unity is that the party offers the best vehicle to win an elected office (the performance of the opposition evaluated in terms of securing parliamentarian seats was much worse in 2000 than 1995). A second reason is that the National Executive Committee has the final say over who the party's candidates will be for elected office. This factor encourages the creation of a good working relationship with party leaders at the centre, in addition to building strong local level bases of support.

As with the ruling party, competition within the opposition parties often takes on ethnic overtones. When NCCR-Mageuzi reached its height during the 1995 elections, it drew its main support from power bases in the West Lake (Wahaya), East Lake (Waluo), and Kilimanjaro (Wachaga). Within the party the main leaders had strong regional bases of support. For example, in West Lake Prince Bagenda had strong support among the Wahaya, while on the East Lake Mabere Marando had a power base among the Waluo. There were a number of prominent Wachaga in the party such as James Mbatia and Augustine Mrema. The tendency toward ethnic mobilisation on the part of NCCR-Mageuzi, however, was muted because the leaders with strong ethnic bases of support inside the party nonetheless could not claim to speak on behalf of their respective ethnic groups as CCM also had strong support in those ethnic groups, while CHADEMA also had support around Kilimanjaro. Within NCCR-Maguezi the leaders also looked to shore up their position through appealing to non-ethnic identities like intellectuals and the *walalahoi* (urban lower class) (Mmuya, 1998: 85-86).

During the inter-party electoral competition, there were attempts by parties and politicians to politicize ethnic identities. During the 2000 elections political parties used ethnic appeals in local and parliamentary campaigns. There were some candidates running for parliament who manipulated cultural symbols, gave speeches in local languages, and deliberately created feelings of 'in' and 'out' groups based on ethnicity. John Cheyo, the presidential candidate from UDP was most noted for these tactics. However, ethnic appeals were largely limited to the local, district, or regional level. Neither leaders of the ruling party or opposition accepted ethnic mobilisation (with the possible exception of UDP) as a viable strategy for winning national level elections, or building party identification. At the grassroots level there is little evidence that ethnic appeals resonated with voters or the general public outside of regional and sub-regional contestations for power and resources. Mara Region, which was widely noted as a hotbed for ethnic politics, serves as a good illustration of the difficulty faced by parties in trying to translate local political support based on ethnic lines to the national level presidential election.

TEMCO monitor reports for Mara Region in northwest Tanzania indicated an intense political rivalry between an alliance of the closely related Wakuria and Wazanaki ethnic groups against the other ethnic groups, most notably the Wajita. While the most numerous 'ethnic group' in Mara is the

Wakuria/Wazanaki alliance, in some of the region's seven parliamentary constituencies the Wakuria/Wazanaki were in the minority. TEMCO monitors reported that the Wakuria/Wazanaki 'alliance ethnic group' controlled the regional leadership positions in CCM, and that there was a widely held belief among members of 'out' ethnic groups that the Wakuria/Wazanaki used these positions to advance their group interests in opposition to other ethnic groups (Wajita, Wakwaya, Waruli, Wasukuma, Waluo, and Wasuba) (Rwetembula, 2000). In particular, it was felt that this dominant group used its influence in the party at the regional level to sway CCM's nomination process for the party's parliamentary candidates. In most of the constituencies, CCM's regional leadership was able to ensure that members from the Wakuria/Wazanaki alliance won during the party's preferential voting (Ibid). This provided a strong incentive for non-Wakuria/Wazanaki parliamentary candidates to switch to opposition parties. One TEMCO monitor noted the strong influence of ethnicity on the parliamentary campaigns by saying, "On the surface the candidates talk the party message, but the people value their ethnic groups" (TEMCO Monitor Reports-Mara Region, 2000). At the parliamentary level, TLP was strongly associated with the Wajita/Wakwaya. NCCR-Mageuzi was said to have support from the Luo. The depth of ethnic loyalties reached the extent that at one point during the campaign, CCM parliamentarian candidates Arphaxad Masambu in Mwibara and Nyaburi Tembe in Bunda (Wakuria) claimed that some CCM officials (presumably non-Wakuria/Wazanaki) were openly campaigning for their TLP opponents (who were Wajita). CCM was the strongest party in the region winning six out the seven constituencies. TLP won one seat, and NCCR candidates won 35.6% and 32.7% of the vote in finishing second to their CCM counterparts in Rorya and Serengeti (United Republic of Tanzania Parliamentary Election Results 2000).

However, while ethnic rivalries were closely related to the parliamentarian campaigns, they did not carry over into the presidential election. In Mara, the CCM presidential candidate received a higher percentage of the vote than the CCM parliamentarian candidates in all seven constituencies. This suggests that in constituencies like Mwibara, Tarime, and Musoma Urban—where TLP parliamentary candidates either won or ran a close second to CCM—many voters who supported TLP parliamentarian candidates voted for the CCM presidential candidate. A comparison of the parliamentary and presidential election results seems to support the conclusion that the 'minority' ethnic groups lent their support to opposition parties out of an effort to contest the Wakuria/Wazanaki control over the region's politics,

and not due to plans to mobilize their ethnic identities to oppose CCM's presidential candidate at the national level.

Conclusion

The results of the 2000 elections suggest that in the pluralist identity landscape of Tanzania, the mobilisation of ethnic identities at the individual, group, and national level can simultaneously reinforce national unity and sub-national conflict. The concepts of primoriadialism and instrumentalism are helpful in understanding this process, especially with regard to elucidating social values and the boundaries of acceptable ethnic political behaviour. As instrumentalists argue, the elections demonstrate that the political mobilisation of ethnic groups is fluid; operating at local, district, regional, and national levels. However, evidence also suggests that political leaders (both CCM and opposition) tend to share a belief that ethnic attachments can be a strong and destructive force when fully mobilized. There is also evidence of a rational calculation among both opposition and ruling party leaders that the utility of using ethnic appeals must be balanced against a likely strong counter response from 'outside' groups. National political leadership has tried to build on Nyerere's legacy of promoting a transcendent national identity. Tanzania's identity group pluralism—based on overlapping and internally divided ethnic, racial, religious, regional, gender, class, and national affinities—has discouraged attempts to mobilize ethnic identities to serve the purpose of providing a power base for national level politics. The leaders of CCM, CUF and TLP ran their mainland campaigns on the premise that it is impossible to take power or to govern without broad based support in most of Tanzania's ethnic communities. However, as the Mara elections demonstrate, at the local or regional level there is a greater opportunity to manipulate ethnic ties for political purposes, while at the same time supporting the dominant party in national presidential elections.

Acknowledgements

This paper grew out of a study conducted with Paul Kaiser (University of Pennsylvania) on religious identity and politics in Tanzania. It is also based on the author's work with the Tanzanian Election Monitoring Committee (TEMCO) during the 2000 General Elections. The author would like to acknowledge an intellectual debt to Daudi Mukangara and Max Mmuya of

the Political Science Department at the University of Dar es Salaam for sharing their insights on Tanzania politics. The author would also like to thank Research for Education and Democracy in Tanzania (REDET) for making available information from its study on religion and politics in Tanzania.

Notes

1. The concepts of identity pluralism and societal norms were originally applied to Tanzanian politics in an unpublished paper that dealt with religion called "Power and Religious Identities in Tanzania" (2001), which was co-authored with Paul Kaiser.
2. For a discussion of how elections exacerbated ethnic conflict in Burundi see Prunier (1995).
3. Structural variables refer to enduring patterns of social organisation and interactions.
4. This discussion of ethnicity draws on Heilman and Kaiser 2001.
5. These interests could be accumulating personal wealth, undermining challengers for political power or enhancing one's prestige.
6. The percentage of votes for Cheyo in the Lake zone, home area of the Sukuma-Naymwezi, was substantially higher than his national support. In 2000 he got 12.3% of the vote there.
7. Indigenisation refers to the goal of increasing African Tanzanian participation in the economy.
8. This assertion is also supported by numerous newspaper articles that tell of Muslims and Christians fighting over such things as control over cemeteries and whether a deceased should be buried according to Muslim or Christian tradition. In the early 1990s an upsurge in Christian and Muslim fundamentalism eventually led to conflicts between the state and some Muslims over the destruction of pork butcheries in Dar es Salaam. The state also clashed with Muslims at the Mwembe Chai Mosque in Dar es Salaam in 1998. See Chacha, 2001; *An-nuur,* 2000; *Leo ni Leo,* 2000; and *Mtanzania,* 2000 for more details on these events.
9. The generalisations for this section were drawn from REDET's 2000-2001 research on conflict and religion in Tanzania. In particular paper drafts

by Yusuf Lawi and Patrick Masanja "African Traditional Religion in Tanzania"; Athumani Liviga and Zubeda Tumbo-Masabo "Mulsims in Tanzania: Quest for Equal Footing"; and Mohamemed Bakari and Laurean Ndumbaro "Religion and Governance in Tanzania" were used for the discussion of religious identities in Tanzania.

10. Professor Ibrahim Lipumba earned 1,329,124 votes (16.3%) and finished second to Benjamin Mkapa (71.7%, 5,862,128 votes). Agustine Mrema, from TLP finished third with less than half of Lipumba's totals. However, CUF only managed to win two parliamentary seats on the mainland while TLP and CHADEMA won four, and UDP won three.
11. The East African named CCM-A and CCM-B as internal factions but failed to mention what they represented. The article also made reference to tensions within CCM between Asian MPs/officials and supporters of indigenisation.
12. Machinga is a term used to describe street hawkers who are popularly thought to be Makonde, who mainly hail from the southern regions of Lindi and Mtwara.
13. Not all of the 231 constituencies held elections on October 29 because some candidates died or became ill.
14. For example, Mmuya advanced the argument that within CCM, members from the same religion were hesitant to support a candidate of that religion fearing it would cause a backlash from party members of the other religion (1998, 153-154).

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