

Symbols and Sounds of Multipartism in Tanzania: Reflections on the October 1995 General Elections

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Introduction

This article discusses and analyses some of the tendencies in the democratisation process in Tanzania. The article draws on the experience of the General Elections held in October 1995. It pays close attention to the symbols and sounds that coloured and characterised the process. The modest objective of the article is to deepen the discussion on democracy and reveal the various forms through which democracy is mocked and how genuine forms of expression are frustrated and bogged down. In this attempt the article evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of initiatives of the masses. This is imperative in view of the fact that it has become possible, given the social and economic conditions to which the majority of the people are subjected, to easily demobilise and silence them.

Flags and the Activist Supporters (or the *Wakereketwa* and *Wafurukutwa*)

The significance of symbols rests on their being able to stand for an object or an idea. However, it is important to caution, at this juncture, that symbols do not always carry and project their intended meanings. Depending on who is using them, symbols can be utilised to realise incommensurable purposes. Thus, political symbols could be used to demobilise and disorganise groups of people. Some sections of the society can also subject the same symbols to different usages and assign them distinct new meanings. Briefly, symbols acquire other meanings and usage depending on time and the social context (Malnos, 1973). These tendencies appear very clearly under both the single and the multiparty political system.

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In Tanzania, one overt sign of the presence of a multiparty political system was the mushrooming of various party symbols, including flags, banners, badges, insignia and clothing (especially scarves). These had different colours and illustrations to differentiate the parties. By election time there were thirteen fully registered political parties, and more than thirteen different flags. The new flags ended the monopoly of two official flags: that of the nation; and of the party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). The hoisting of flags thus became, in one sense, a symbolic representation of the ideas of change, or *mageuzi*, and the agencies of change—the political parties. It also meant that now there were “many voices” in the society. This became evident when those who used to have a monopoly of political ideas and authority attempted to stop other ‘political voices’ from being heard. In Zanzibar, for instance, the hoisting of flags became an important arena of contestation between the ruling CCM and the main opposition, the Civic United Front (CUF). In one case the police shot at two members of CUF who were trying to hoist their party flag (Bakari, 1997:109).

The people of Tanganyika celebrated the hoisting of their flag, as the British flag came down, on Independence Day. The changing of the flags symbolised the end of imperialism and a regaining of sovereignty. This victory was directly associated with the nationalist party - the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). Throughout the country, people sang in praise of the party. In contrast, the flags and chants under multipartism connoted for many the end of the authoritarianism and political oppression of TANU, now CCM, hence the appearance of such slogans as *waondoke, CCM. Lini? Sasa!* (CCM should leave office and relinquish power immediately).

Under the single party political system CCM flags were flown in most places. They were at every party and government office, and in some colleges, schools, cars, and stadia. In one sense this was meant to symbolise the presence of the party everywhere in the country, and to strengthen the notion that the party was not only popular but also a fixture in people’s daily lives. A more significant meaning is that the party and the state were fused. The CCM flag became a symbol of authority, and a guarantee of certain privileges and securities. The party flag may have become even more important than the national flag, as senior government officials, heads of parastatal organisations, officials of the security forces and government institutions sought to display it as their guarantee of security of tenure. In order to become part of this fraternity, therefore, or a *mwenzetu* (meaning “one of us”), people often found it useful to have a party flag.

Under single party rule, the party flag symbolised oppression and commandism for the common people. The party office at the cell, branch, and district levels acquired the judicial, tribunal, and state functions. The party official also became a representation of corruption and coercion of the so-called ‘voluntary’ contributions to party resources, which were actually forced on people. Instead of being a bridge between the people and the government, the party office and officials symbolised commanders who instilled fear among the people, as Fanon (1985: 146) once described another post-colonial situation.

In the early 1990s, when it was obvious that some kind of political liberalisation was inevitable, new developments began to take place. The youth, especially in Dar es Salaam, carried the party banner to shield themselves from the state’s coercive instruments. Working with the ten-cell leaders, they took the party to the streets by hoisting the party flags everywhere: in the market places, *vijiweni* (jobless corners), and in places where they conducted petty business. The youth took recourse to using the party flag to stop arbitrary police arrest and other forms of harassment. Like the senior government officials who sought security of tenure by drawing closer to higher party authorities, the youth sought some safety by identifying themselves with the party.

The initiatives of the youth added to a growing solidarity among the unemployed and semi-employed in Dar es Salaam and other urban centres of Tanzania, making them an important focus group for both budding and established political parties. The urban youth numbers, and their potential for emerging as an organised force, convinced all political parties that this was an important section of the public to be won. The opening of special party branches for the most activist of supporters, known as *wakereketwa* (if they supported CCM) or *wafurukutwa* (if they supported the opposition), became a necessary component of the politics of party competition. For the youth then, the hoisting of a party flag became a means of accessing some resources and favour. In Bariadi, for instance, two groups of youth opened special activist branch offices and agreed to hoist a party flag at each on condition that they receive payment in return.

This association of the flag with promises of monetary reward became clearer during the electoral process. Different political parties and leaders worked very hard to get the youth under their control, lest they come under the control of another party. From an initial attempt at self-organisation, the

youth in urban centres became vulnerable and easy prey for manipulation and demobilisation by political parties.

Flags, Illusory Popular Support and Party Visions

Political parties had a profound belief in the symbolic representation of flags for support and the signalling of an effective presence in an area. The flag also symbolised party influence and control. This conviction led most political parties to encourage as many people as possible to raise their banners. But in turn it involved discrediting other parties and misrepresenting meanings attached to their party symbols. In this regard, perhaps, CCM's symbols were attacked more than those of other political parties. For instance, the CCM flag, with its emblem of *jembe* and *nyundo* (hoe and hammer) - officially representing workers and peasants - was associated with authoritarianism and poverty. *Jembe* was identified as CCM's failure to transform agriculture, as the hand hoe continued to be the predominant agricultural implement, and *nyundo* was interpreted as the excessive authority the party vested in itself and its functionaries to 'hammer' dissenters. Since CCM 'abandoned' its Ujamaa ideology in 1989, while paying lip service to it, it fitted the description of Fanon (1983: 136) as having lost everything "but the shell, the name, the emblem and the motto". In fact, by the time of elections, CCM was in a state of ideological confusion. However, even when it had practically abandoned the ideology which appealed to the popular masses embracing an ideological orientation which accommodates the business community and accumulators, the party still wanted to keep its constituency of the poor - those whose votes count.

Discrediting the ruling party was one thing and attracting people to the opposition was another. So opposition political parties had to give themselves positive images. This was done through the meanings assigned to their symbols. The Civic United Front (CUF), for instance, had a white flag with an emblem of a weighing scale in the middle, surrounded by a shining golden sky, and supported by two hands below it. The party described the emblem as depicting its hopes for prosperity, love and respect for justice (Mmuya and Chaligha 1995: 13). However, within Zanzibar, members and supporters of CCM translated the party emblem as symbolising the return of the overthrown semi-colonial ruler, the Sultan.

The National Convention for Construction and Reform - Mageuzi (NCCRM) has a blue flag with two white stripes crossing the middle horizontally. Between these white stripes is the party emblem of a tractor on a farm, a

woman reading, and two wheat sheaves on each side. Below this is the inscription: *Demokrasia na Maendeleo* (Democracy and Development). The symbol is meant to represent agricultural and technological transformation through the promotion of scientific knowledge, as well as transparency and democratisation. While the symbols depicted all these, at some point the rallying clarion of the party became *uzawa* (indigenisation).

Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA) has a light blue flag with an emblem of two raised fingers, indicating the spirit of *mageuzi* (or change). The Tanzania Democratic Alliance (TADEA) has a blue flag with a woman carrying a baby on her back in the middle, apparently indicating the party's wish to make the lives of toiling women better.

Perhaps the symbol of the National Reconstruction Alliance (NRA) got the most negative interpretation. The tri-colour flag of red, white and black has a fist, depicting a revolutionary salute, the sun in the top left corner, and a broom. The party's own interpretation of the symbols included a guiding light and a cleansing of all evils brought by CCM. However, others said that the red colour stood for blood, which would flow if the party won the election; the black colour signified mourning and the white colour represented a *sanda* (shroud). This interpretation came from those who believed that the elections in Tanzania would be marred by fundamentalist elements within the Moslem community, which the NRA was thought to represent.

These symbols did not represent strong philosophical differences among the political parties. In fact, analysts have observed that despite the various symbols and what they officially represented, all political parties, including CCM, did not express a specific doctrine on which their policies were based (Mmuya and Chaligha, 1995: 64).

Membership in More than One Party

The selling of membership cards became one of the major preoccupations of political parties, before and during the election period. Each party worked very hard to sell as many membership cards as possible. The more cards sold, it was assumed, the more members and supporters the party had. Depending on the social and political context of the time, this assumption was justified. During the anti-colonial struggles, for instance, selling nationalist party membership cards was very important for recruiting members. The membership card symbolised support for the anti-colonial struggles (Maguire, 1969: 181).

As seen earlier, the possession of a party card during single party rule became a ticket for many people to get certain rights and access to resources. During the multiparty elections, party membership cards served multiple purposes. For leaders of political parties, the card was a symbol of support and strength. That is why political parties declared, at every political rally, the number of people who joined their parties. Since they wanted to have a rapid increase in the number of their members, political parties sold their membership cards to everybody and everywhere – during political rallies, at party offices and in many other places. In this context political parties did not have exact records of the people who had bought cards and remained members of the party. There was no clear criterion on which to base one's qualification for membership. There were those who had complementary cards (thus becoming 'complementary members'), and those who bought the *papo kwa papo* (instant) membership cards, thus becoming *papo kwa papo* members. It would seem that the most important thing for most political parties was the quantity rather than the quality of its members. Political parties, especially those in the opposition, wanted everybody on board to help them win the elections and 'to reach the State House'.

The most interesting thing, however, is that while this was going on some people had membership cards of more than one political party. People bought party cards for different purposes, which quite often did not resemble those of the parties. The reasons for having several membership cards varied, but included:

1. Opportunity seeking for both established politicians and the poor unemployed youth in urban centres (Bayart, 1993: 230).
2. Earning some money by selling rival party cards that were in demand by another party as its own propaganda means of showing a larger number of opposition defections to it.
3. Being able to discuss political matters freely, as one would belong to more than one politically inclined discussion group.

The first point mentioned above revealed that opportunistic politics, or what Nzongola-Ntalaja (1995: 3) called *vagabondage politique*, was to be a feature of the electoral process. Established politicians who acquired membership cards from more than one political party found it easy and desirable to shift from one party to another in order to boost their chances of participating in the election as candidates. There was one case of an aspiring presidential candidate shifting from a party of origin to another. There were several such

cases for parliamentary positions. Of these, the most outstanding example is of a candidate who changed and sought nomination in three different political parties only to be nominated by the last party he had recourse to. For this type of person, membership in more than one party was a strategy for surviving as a politician. He wanted to be a parliamentarian at any cost. What led him and others of his kind to this was opportunism and careerism.

The second point shows that few people were committed to the parties whose membership cards they possessed. To them there was no fundamental difference among most parties. Parties were not only a disappointment but also politically meaningless, since they had become 'another form of moneymaking drudgery', as Bayart (1993: xii) described a similar situation. As a result, some people had decided to identify themselves with many parties and play the same game. This, however, had some negative results. It demobilised and weakened the solidarity that was forming among the poor sections of the society.

The third point refers to the great interest people developed in political discussions as the elections approached. With political parties pressing to gain people's identification and support, the discussions were for some time rather demagogic. In such discussions it sometimes became imperative for one to say what the majority wanted to hear. Different views and unpleasant utterances were not acceptable. It was easy to be identified with a party. The *mageuzi* supporters recognised each other by the kind of language they spoke and the candidates they supported. A membership card was a symbol of authority and knowledge about a party. So, possession of membership cards of more than one political party enabled a person to say anything without being accused of belonging to a different party. Those who did not possess membership cards of a *mageuzi* party were usually labelled CCM, an almost shameful identify at that time.

The CCM Campaign Messages

During the adoption of the Zanzibar Declaration in 1989, CCM embraced political liberalism and abandoned its guiding principles as spelled out in the Arusha declaration. Socialism and self-reliance, as a policy, became antiquated, as very few references were made to it by officials of the ruling party. As a result, the usual slogan of *chama kimoja, itikadi moja, nchi moja* (one party, one ideology, one country) or *kidumu Chama cha Mapinduzi, idumu siasa ya ujamaa na kujitegemea, zidumu fikra za Mwalimu Nyerere* (long live Chama cha Mapinduzi, long live the policy of socialism and self reliance, long live

Nyerere's ideas) were losing ground. They were replaced by 'non-ideological' phrases and slogans. Indeed, CCM was attempting to fit itself in the new political landscape, but it also wanted to impress upon its new allies that it was seriously doing away with the old image. That, in some ways, amounted to marginalising Nyerere and all those within the party who stood for the Arusha Declaration (Mmuya and Chaligha, 1995: 127)

Before the elections it was not clear as to what the slogan of CCM was going to be. It was obvious that the party was experiencing a crisis of identity and was searching for a new image. In a period when it was no longer possible to sing *CCM yajenga nchi* (CCM builds the nation) a new song had to be sought and taught. The party's propaganda choir, the Tanzania One Theatre (TOT), tried to relieve the party of this problem when it came up with a song called *CCM nambari wani* (CCM is number one). Then, after some time, the party came up with a new catch phrase. At every meeting, members and supporters of this party sang *CCM ina wenyewe, CCM ina wenyewe* (CCM is anchored among solid supporters). At the time that the party was singing this slogan, there was a fear that a split in the party was imminent (Ulimwengu, 1996). Party phraseologists warned those contemplating leaving that CCM would surprise them, hence the song *atakayeiacha CCM tutamwacha kwenye mataa* (whoever leaves CCM will be left out in the cold).

By the time of elections the party had settled on one very long slogan. The slogan, however, did not hide the profound fear and uncertainty the party had. Moreover, the slogan avoided an ideological tag, which was typical of the party in the pre-multiparty era. The slogan went as follows:

Kidumu Chama cha Mapinduzi (Long live CCM)

Kidumu na kitaendelea kudumu, ndani ya vyama vingi (CCM will survive and thrive in multiparty politics)

Kina wenyewe, wenyewe ni sisi pamoja na wewe na waliobaki nyumbani hata kama hawapendi (we, and those left at home, are its solid supporters)

CCM nambari wani na wanachama kibao (CCM is number one, and has numerous supporters)

Following a cut-throat competition in the presidential nomination process within the party, CCM emerged as a somewhat weakened party. There was a temporary state of confusion and uncertainty. Within the party there was a profound fear of losing the elections and it would seem that some CCM

members had 'resigned' themselves to that possibility. The fear was based on the fact that NCCR-M had fielded a popular figure, a former CCM cadre and minister, Mr. Augustine Mrema. Biblically described in one campaign poster as the *stone the builder rejected, which shall be the corner stone*, Mr. Mrema was stripped of his ministerial position after he joined parliamentary backbenchers in attacking the government's performance, thereby breaching the rule of collective responsibility. Demoted in February 1995, he almost immediately started visiting various places in the country, expressing his intention to run for president. CCM's fear was evidenced by a situation in which those opposed to one nomination aspirant openly shouted out the slogan that *if you elect Msuya you are electing Mrema*, while those who were opposed to the eventual party candidate, Benjamin Mkapa, sang out the slogan *CCM bye bye*, meaning that the party was going to lose the election with Mkapa as the candidate. The fear was also obvious in the Party Manifesto. The opening statement, quoting the Father of the Nation, Julius Nyerere, stated:

It is possible that in this election the President of Tanzania might come from a party other than CCM. But a better president of Tanzania will come from CCM.

That aside, the CCM campaign was relatively well organised. This, however, had nothing to do with the message, which to a large extent was not much different from that of other parties. The CCM manifesto, as it was the case for the previous elections held under the one party system, promised people a continuity of *ujamaa na kujitegemea* (socialism and self-reliance) as the guiding policy for reviving the economy. However, the manifesto made it clear that the policy had to reflect the reality of the times. As noted above, the *ujamaa* vision was deliberately avoided in the campaign. This was particularly the case when the opposition parties challenged *ujamaa* and blamed it for ruining the country economically.

The Sounds of Corruption in the Election Campaigns

Fighting corruption was a major campaign message carried by the presidential candidates, as well as those contesting parliamentary seats. This had become a major part of the national agenda even before the elections. Both the World Bank and the IMF had earlier warned the government that no aid would be given until a serious commitment to fighting corruption was shown. It was not by accident that the CCM presidential candidate made this his catchword. Wherever he went the message was, *"I will fight against corruption uncompromisingly and will stand with those who suffer under this*

practice". This promise was made despite widespread doubts on how CCM could possibly fight corruption, when in fact it had thrived under its rule.

The Unity, Peace and Stability Slogan

Apart from reducing corruption, CCM promised to ensure unity, peace and stability. The dictum became: *Chagua CCM, chagua Mkapa, chagua Amani* (elect CCM, elect Mkapa, choose peace). The 1994 genocide in Rwanda and the conflict in Burundi became instruments of CCM for instilling fear among the people, and for adding weight to the message that if a party other than CCM was elected it would bring an end to peace, unity and stability. Through videos people were made to believe that what had happened to both Rwanda and Burundi was due to the adoption of multiparty politics. The fact that *Abanyarwanda* and *Abarundi* were victims of a long history of terror and authoritarian regimes was not mentioned.

In the context of the elections, CCM faced many challenges and had to respond cautiously but appropriately. It did not need an opposition party to remind it that its image among part of the public was tarnished. In the popular language of some people, CCM was identified with *rushwa, kulindana na mizengwe* (corruption, scratching one another's back, and manoeuvring). Others had made a mockery of the party's abbreviation, CCM, as: *Chama Cha Majambazi* (Party of Robbers) and *Chukua Chako Mapema* (Loot Early). They referred to Chama Tawala (Ruling Party) as Chama Twawala (Our Party Feeds on People).

The party was aware of this image, and a great effort was made to regain the public's confidence. One thing the party did was to present to the voters a presidential candidate who was *Bwana Msafi* (Mr. Clean). The candidate was promoted as one who had never been associated with corruption. Benjamin Mkapa was thus put forward not only as an answer to the problems of corruption but also to shore up the legitimacy of the party itself.

However, it was evident that the candidate had difficulties in openly accepting that his party was full of corrupt elements. In a televised interview, organised by the Election Fair Play Committee, Mr. Mkapa dismissed the claim that most of the candidates nominated by his party to run for parliamentary seats were corrupt. The candidate's position on this issue was in contradiction with that of Julius Nyerere. Accepting to campaign for Mkapa and for CCM generally, Nyerere nevertheless refused to campaign for the corrupt elements of any party, including those in his own party. On

several occasions, before and during the election, Nyerere openly accused the party of harbouring corrupt elements, and even asked people not to vote for CCM candidates he regarded as corrupt.

The image of the party and that of the presidential candidate were pitted against each other. This became obvious when some people came up with chants like *Mkapa Safi, CCM Bomu* (Mkapa is good, CCM useless). These voices were strengthened by Nyerere who—in his campaign meetings—equated CCM to a big fishnet capable of catching not only fish but also other things that might be harmful. Nyerere's message was clear, that within CCM there were both unscrupulous and good people and the presidential candidate was one of the good elements. This attempt to de-couple the candidate from the party, though temporary, was necessary in order to boost the candidate's chances of winning.

CCM tried to strengthen the 'positive' image of their candidate by tarnishing the image of other political parties. The new parties were labelled as *vyama vya wahuini* (parties of hooligans) that lacked *sera* (policies). In his campaign meetings, Nyerere asked voters not to elect leaders from these parties. He argued that these parties were 'nascent, and needed time to learn, grow and develop'. In Mwanza Nyerere warned that they would be making a grave mistake if they were to elect these parties on an experimental basis: "You will regret, a country is a country, you cannot give it to a party to experiment with."

The NCCR-M Campaign Messages

Perhaps no party demonstrated its confidence about winning the election more than the National Convention for Construction and Reform-Mageuzi (NCCR-M). Apart from its non-ideological orientation, the NCCR-M's slogan promised people *mageuzi, kwa amani, komesha rushwa, na ushindi, mpaka Ikulu* (peaceful change, eradication of corruption, and victory up to the State House). Indeed, in terms of popularity and support from the masses, the NCCR-M was CCM's main challenger. It attracted a majority of the urban youth and intellectuals. Its strength was augmented by Augustine Mrema who, as noted already, left CCM and joined NCCR-M while accusing the former of embracing corrupt elements. His campaign message, as many anticipated, was: "Look at my previous record. I am the only leader who stood against corruption and thus the only one who is qualified to fight against it". As far as other campaign messages were concerned, however, there was no fundamental difference between CCM and NCCR-M.

Apart from the anti-corruption message, the presidential candidate for NCCR-M, in a populist fashion, made a lot of sweeping and contradictory promises. This revealed the absence of a clear ideology and sense of direction in the party. In Shinyanga, for instance, he promised to legalise *gongo*, an illicit and potent alcoholic drink that is consumed mainly by common people. He also promised to stand firm against all men who beat up women 'as if they were small children', and to assist women on questions of inheritance. However, his image as defender of women rights was challenged by Angelina, a woman who claimed to have been neglected and abandoned after she bore him a child out of wedlock. The whole population was promised the abolition of the 'Freedom Torch Run', on grounds that it was an out-of-touch relic of the early independence era. The student community and people in general were promised a great increase in the budget allocation for education (to a share of about 30% of the budget). The people of Dodoma were assured that the government seat would move to Dodoma, and the Moslem communities were promised affirmative action on their claims once the NCCR-M came to power. NCCR-M also promised *wazawa* (indigenous Tanzanians) the control of the economy, job creation for the unemployed youth, and the creation of the government of Tanganyika within the Union. This particular promise was given prominence at every campaign meeting of the party. A song in praise of Tanganyika, for example, launched NCCR-M's closing campaign meeting in Dar es Salaam.

Although the meaning of the concept *mageuzi* is contestable, it became a synonym for democratisation and change. NCCR-M laid claim to the term and considered itself to be the real *mageuzi* party. It used the term to convey the message to voters that 'if people wanted change and democracy NCCR-M was their inevitable choice'. The party and its presidential candidate presented themselves as the answer to the problems of *walala hoi* (poor people). Its self-confidence was strengthened by the large crowds attending the campaign meetings addressed by its presidential candidate, Augustine Mrema. In every campaign rally, especially in urban areas, Mrema became the centre of attraction for the youth and the unemployed. After every campaign meeting Mrema's car was simply pushed along, rather than driven, by multitudes of supporters as a sign of fondness, while they chanted *Mrema...Rais, Mrema...Rais* (Mrema...President, Mrema...President). There was no doubt that the youth wanted change and that they saw Mrema as having the will to bring this about.

It was this apparent support that made the candidate proclaim that "I am now very popular and the whole country supports me. It is not possible to lose in this election; it will be a miracle to lose" (HEKO, 1995). The same

observation was made by another high-ranking NCCR-M politician, the late Abdulrahman Babu, when he said: "Everybody knows that we shall win, even you (journalists) know that we shall win" (Mtanzania, 1995). However, the major difference between Babu's and Mrema's observation was that Babu saw the possibility of losing, hence the need to prepare for other tasks ahead of the elections, when he added: "If we lose we will start building a better party in days to come".

The Personality Factor and the Campaign Message

The promotion of personalities in Tanzania was a common phenomenon under the single-party authoritarian rule that found its way into the multiparty era. Experience from other parts of the continent shows that too much trust and loyalty are often invested in candidates who may have no other agenda than fighting for political office, which may lead to the disappointment and frustration of supporters (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1995: 5). The notion that *njia ya Ikulu ni wazi* (the road to State House is clear), in which the presidential candidate and other members of NCCR-M believed, bred overconfidence and arrogance, as well as intolerance. Everybody was now expected to 'sing' the praises of NCCR-M and its candidate. Even those who sympathised with this party but wanted to see things taking a different direction were not tolerated. The silencing took place in a demagogic way by labelling those who dared to raise questions about Mrema or the party as CCM stooges (HEKO, 1995). It was within the same context that some people alluded to Mrema as a gift from 'God'. The personality of Mrema, therefore, was built up into a kind of cult.

The Campaign Messages of the Other Parties

There were two other parties that contested the presidential election. These were the United Democratic Party (UDP) and the Civic United Front (CUF). Although they had an impact in the election, theirs was far less than that of CCM and NCCR-M. They also made promises and directed their share of accusations against CCM. UDP promised love and prosperity, but was identified with *kujaza mifuko mapesa* (filling pockets with money). This was because its presidential candidate promised everybody a much higher income once he was elected president. He also promised to convene a constitutional conference, an agenda completely abandoned by the opposition as a campaign message, and to form a government of national unity. UDP's message to voters concerning CCM was: If you elect Mkapa you are electing Nyerere, and if you elect Nyerere you are choosing *ujamaa*, which is tantamount to choosing poverty. This party also advocated the

privatisation of land and the consolidation and hastening of the market reforms. Though not one of the strong parties, it was forthright in speaking out on its policies.

CUF presented itself as a party for 'justice to all', guided by its 'ideology' of *utajirisho* (prosperity). In the Union elections, its presidential candidate promised voters prosperity and development. His campaign catch phrase thus became: *Nikopesheni kura zenu niwalipe maendeleo* (lend me your votes and I will repay you with development). This slogan embraced the view that development has to be brought to the people.

Other parties took part in the election but did not field a presidential candidate. Smaller parties, such as the National League for Democracy (NLD) and the National Reconstruction Alliance (NRA), also focused their slogan on replacing CCM as the ruling party. NLD's slogan was: *Waondoke CCM. Lini?... Sasa!* (CCM must go. When?...Now!). NRA's slogan went as follows: *NRA! Mwamko wa umma, jua, mwanagaza, ufagio, fagia maovu yote, yaliyoletwa na nani? Na CCM* (NRA! Mass consciousness, the sun, the light, and the broom to sweep away all evil brought by CCM). Most of the small parties, however, were not taken seriously by voters and very few paid attention to their messages.

Nyerere's Position: Father of the Nation or Father of CCM?

Julius Nyerere, the former president of Tanzania, had an imposing presence during the *mageuzi* period. He was not only an advocate of multipartyism before its introduction, but also a leading critic of the ruling party, CCM. His role in the party, and several of his interventions in national politics, rolled him back onto the saddle of decision making in the country. During the nomination process for the CCM presidential candidate, he is said to have played a critical role in ensuring that the party emerged with a reliable and electable candidate. This intervention won him both friends and foes within and outside the party. He got more enemies outside the party when he pledged that if CCM came up with a 'good' candidate he would campaign for him.

That role aside, Nyerere became both a 'clearinghouse' for those aspiring for the presidency and a 'punching bag' for those displeased by his various positions on the elections. As a clearinghouse, many aspiring presidential candidates from his party, and at least one candidate from the opposition, sought his advice. At this point it was quite obvious that those who looked

forward to becoming future leaders of Tanzania accepted Nyerere's reputation as the national 'father figure'. However, the moment his advice was not pleasing or his blessing was not forthcoming, Nyerere was accused of manipulative and cunning behaviour. It was during such moments that his status as 'Father of the Nation' was contested and reduced to that of 'Father of CCM'. In this way, opposition parties tried to discredit *Mzee Kifimbo* (the old man with a stick), a reference to a short club he usually carried, which was generally taken to be a symbol of great power.

In campaign meetings, local newspapers and cartoons, Nyerere's name and personality became a target of attack by the opposition. In one cartoon he was depicted as an old father who had no mercy for other children as he favoured only one son - the CCM presidential candidate - and left the others to starve. The media, cartoonists and politicians in the opposition promoted the notion that Nyerere was behaving 'as if Tanzania belonged to him and he had the right to give it to anybody he liked'. The opposition wanted the society to believe that the problems of Tanzania would come to an end if Nyerere was forgotten. However, they felt that their victory in the elections depended on what role Nyerere was going to play. As far as they were concerned, with Nyerere's involvement in the elections there would not be fair and free elections.

Clearly the personality of Nyerere became a central factor in the electoral process. Some candidates and parties in the opposition asked him not to engage in partisan political campaigns. Some looked for legal grounds to stop him from campaigning, and others tried to wage a negative public offensive against him to win voter support. Newspapers kept carrying stories about Nyerere, and there was a moment when he overshadowed all the candidates contesting the presidential seat. The greater attention given to him led to a consolidation of the notion that stability in Tanzania depended on Nyerere.

This, to a large extent, strengthened the old myth about the 'magical' power of Nyerere, a myth that some elements in the opposition wanted transferred to their campaign. In Bukoba, for instance, a *mwananchi* (ordinary citizen) who was among the thousands who waited in heavy rain commented with surprise that *umshaija mulogi* (this man must be a wizard). Another remark, made in Shinyanga after thousands thronged a stadium to listen to Nyerere, illustrated the influence of the former president: "Who would stop him were he to decide to take back his country!"

Conclusion

The multiparty era in Tanzania raised hopes and expectations among the populace. It also opened up opportunities for people to freely and actively participate in politics. This has been shown here through their expressions. As indicated in this paper, the value of these expressions in terms of accuracy and their contributions to democratisation is varied. Many were directly representative of the situation. Some were satirical and yet accurate. Others were records of the variety of opinions that one expects to find in an unfolding plural society. And yet others were simply cynical commentaries designed to mischievously mislead people from making informed political choices - a role performed by party leaders, their organisational expressions and their ordinary followers. The danger in this last aspect, as shown here, is that there was a greater likelihood for the popular masses to adopt the sounds and symbols, rather than the content of the multiparty democratisation process, thus derailing or delaying that process and the ever-urgent agenda of development.

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