

A Rough Guide to Single-Party Rule in a Multiparty Age: Tanzania in Comparative Perspective

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Research Question

While international reform pressures and subsequent multiparty reforms provided new opportunities for political entrepreneurs in Africa to identify, cultivate, and organize contention into popular opposition challenges to some of Africa's longstanding incumbent regimes, Tanzania's multiparty transition is notable for its apparent lack of popular opposition. Correspondingly so, Tanzania's longstanding incumbent, the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), today remains as one of Africa's most impressive cases of strong tenure. This is true despite the fact that the country underwent multiparty reforms in the early 1990s and has since held three multiparty elections. What is the causal basis for the CCM's continued dominance? More pointedly, why do measures of election victory margins show the CCM's tenure to be so atypically strong, yet a number of indicators show that the CCM governs with typical levels of repression? In my dissertation entitled "Single-Party Rule in a Multiparty Age: Tanzania in Comparative Perspective", I suggest that, in order to understand the CCM's post reform tenure, one must account for those societal factors that weaken the ability of opposition leaders to challenge it.

Tenure Strength

Table 1 illustrates the concept of tenure strength in comparative perspective. The country cases

Table 1. Margin of incumbent victory in multiparty Presidential elections.

	1	2
Burkina Faso (1991*, 1998, 2005)	83.9 %	78.2
Cameroon (1992, 1997*, 2004)	55.5 %	26.8
Djibouti (1993, 1999, 2005*)	67.4 %	43.4
Gabon (1993, 1998, 2005)	65.8 %	46.9
Guinea (1993, 1998, 2003*)	67.7 %	45.6
Mauritania (1992, 1997*, 2003)	65.0 %	39.3
Mozambique (1994, 1999, 2004)	56.4 %	18.7
Tanzania (1995, 2000, 2005)	71.3 %	52.7
Togo (1993*, 1998, 2003, 2005)	56.7 %	21.3
Average for all cases (n=30)	62.4 %	31.2

1: Average votes across elections

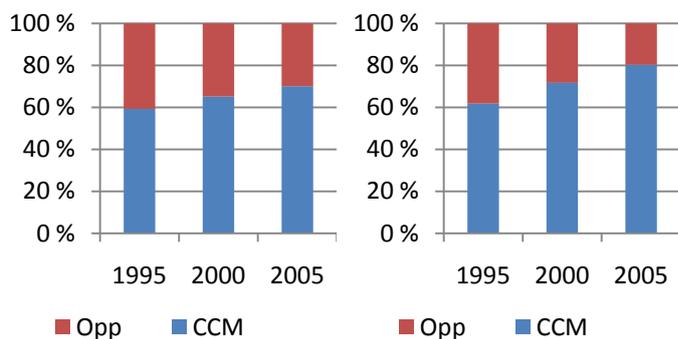
2: Average margin of victory (percentage points)

None of the cases had presidential runoffs. *Election values not counted where widespread election boycotts prevailed.

listed in table 1 have more or less experienced some form of multiparty political reform in the past 20 years, yet reform in each case has failed to coincide with regime turnover. The data demonstrates that, when compared to other cases of continued incumbent dominance following multiparty reform, the CCM's multiparty resiliency is unrivaled, save for Burkina Faso.

Additional illustrations of tenure strength are evident when looking at the changes in the CCM's multiparty election performance over time. The left-hand side of figure 1 shows that the share of votes for the CCM has

Figure 1. Share of Votes in: Parliamentary Elections Presidential Elections

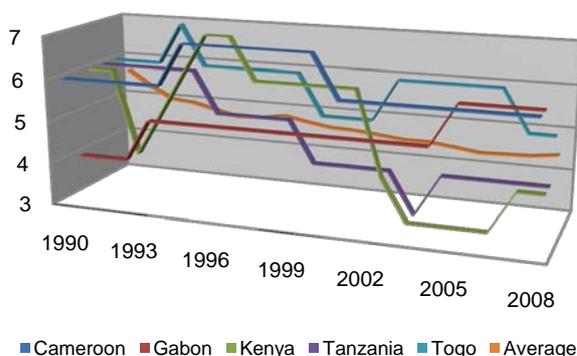


grown from 59.3% in the 1995 parliamentary election to 70.2% in 2005. The right-hand side of Figure 1 shows a similar trend in the Country's Presidential elections, where the CCM's vote share increased from 61.8% in 1995 to a remarkable 80.3% in 2005. What explains the CCM's somewhat unique ability to dominate in multiparty elections?

Repression

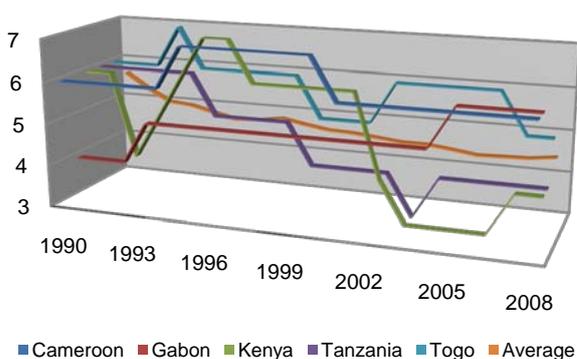
Tenure strength in non-democratic settings is often explained as a function of repression. In many cases, such as the RDPC in Cameroon, the RPT in Togo, and ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe, this relationship is clear. By contrast, the evidence presented in figures 3 and 4 below however, demonstrate the limited ability to rest causal explanations for CCM tenure on repression alone. Figure 3 demonstrates that, according to Freedom House political rights scores between 1990 and 2008, the CCM resembles the typical African (as gauged by the "average" trend line) but and differs substantially from other cases of strong tenure. Figure 4 demonstrates that, according to Freedom House civil liberties scores between 1990 and 2008, the CCM resembles the typical African case (again, as gauged by the "average" trend line) and differs substantially from other cases of strong tenure.

Figure 3. Political Rights Following Reform.



Furthermore, when looking at other data specific to Tanzania, we find that the overwhelming majority of the instances of repression occur on the small archipelago called Zanzibar. For example, based on a systematic analysis of U.S. State Department Human Rights Reports ranging from 1994 to 2006, I found some 61% of the reported human rights violations (politically related) to be restricted to Zanzibar.

Figure 4. Civil Liberties Following Reform.



Taken together, it is easy to see the limitations of repression as an explanation for the CCM's strong tenure. While repression is a tactic often employed, it tends to be most often relevant for the sometimes brutal political affairs on the Isles, where racialised class conflict and razor thin election margins has defined the political landscape in the past as well as the

present. Compared to other cases of strong tenure, repression in Tanzania is comparatively low, suggesting that other factors shape a context of party dominance that reduces the need to resort to widespread repression.

Explaining Strong Tenure in Tanzania

There are a variety of other possible variables that explain the CCM's tenure strength, including election rules and neopatrimonial rule. While each of these factors does play a role in reproducing the CCM's atypically strong tenure, there is nothing truly unique about Tanzania's election institutions or the prevalence of patron-client networks that center on the party-state nexus.

Instead, the approach I take when explaining the CCM's strong tenure focuses on history and process. My principle argument states that opposition weakness in Tanzania today is a product of the peripheral nature of Tanganyika's (present day Mainland) colonial economy that allowed a dominant urban faction to emerge as the seemingly uncontested victor in the struggle for independence. This faction in turn sought to implement a comparatively ambitious program of undermining the growth or consolidation of sub-national loyalties and blocking the growth of petty bourgeoisie and commercial bourgeoisie classes. These policies in turn constituted a milieu less conducive for the formation of organized opposition, despite the fact that new opportunities for organizing emerged in the early 1990s. Whereas sub-national loyalties and resources from non-state sites of wealth accumulation provided the basis for opposition party-building in other countries, in Tanzania, the social basis for opposition party-building was far less conducive to the rise of similar forms of contestation. Through a significant amount of historical work, the substantial body of my research traces the causal link between the social milieu at the time of independence, governance following independence, and weak multiparty contestation to the CCM arising out of the present social milieu.

The theoretical framework that runs through the entirety of my dissertation work argues that social milieus where political entrepreneurs/actors are able to rally together material and ideational resources are more likely to produce vibrant and sustained political parties versus milieus where material resources are scarce and ideational structures less polarized. The importance of these resources is defined as follows:

- Ideational resources: identities as resources for mobilizing support around political party focal points
- Material resources: finances, expertise as resources for party developing and functioning

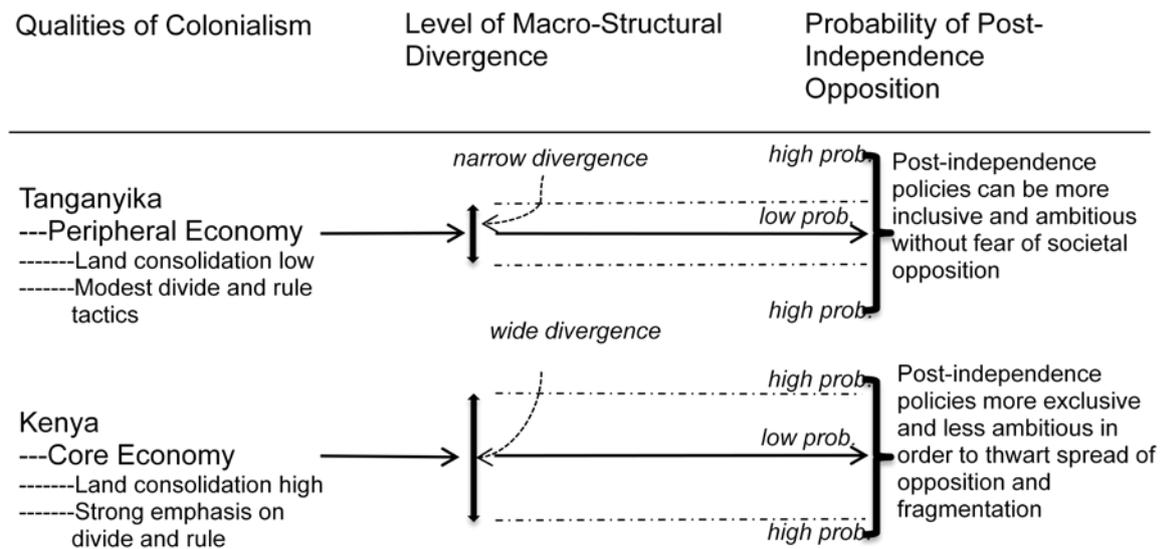
Taken together, high levels of polarization and concentrations of material resources describe an environment with a high level of structural divergence. Structural divergence describes the overall probability for elites to successfully translate political ambitions into casually relevant national political forces.

Emergence of TANU (Tanzania African National Union) Dominance

My historical analysis begins by suggesting that legacies of colonial rule (formally ending in 1961) created a structural environment that fundamentally shaped the coalition that led to the rise of the CCM's Mainland antecedent party, the Tanzania African National Union (TANU). Integrated as a peripheral component of British colonial rule (as described on the left-hand side in figure 5), the structural consequences of colonial rule produced a materially weak petty capitalist class and

minimal levels of ethnic polarization. Taken together, these two factors minimized the influence that conservative social forces had in the national political arena. Stated differently, the ideational and material structures at the time of independence (low structural divergence) ensured a reduced likelihood that the most powerful and ambitious rural elites would be able to emerge as rural spokespersons for popular ethnic movements with the capacity for challenging the urban intellectuals for control of the state or significantly weakening the post-independence development agenda.

Figure 5. Post-Colonial Implications of Macro-structural divergence.



African Socialism as a Development Agenda

TANU's relatively free hand vis-à-vis rural conservatism enables the passage of an ambitious transformative agenda during single-party rule, an agenda commonly referred to as African socialism or Ujamaa. These policies would institute a series of structural legacies that weakened the ability would be political entrepreneurs to take advantages of changing political opportunity structures that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The legacies of these policies (described in the middle of figure 6) include a strong sense of national identity and cohesiveness, the minimization of economic and political inequality, and the weakening of capitalization outside the spatial reach of the party-state nexus.

The most notable policies under African socialism are as follows:

- Nationalization of commanding heights: eschews capitalism; weakens material basis for organizing opposition
- Rural development: regional/ethnic party; eradicates local power structures created during colonial rule; weakens the ability to mobilize around sub-national focal points
- Leadership code (restrictions): weakens intra-party nodes of economic power; corruption and inequality less visible
- Language policy: common mode of communication; source of national identity and focal point for CCM
- Education policy: parity across regions; sense of national corporate identity and focal point for CCM

- National cultural production: sporting events, dance, theater; source of national corporate identity and focal point for CCM

Figure 6. African Socialism and Multiparty Outcome.

Red = material components, Black = ideational components



Structural Consequences of African Socialism

African socialism reproduced a structural environment with low degrees of divergence not unlike that inherited at independence, at least to the extent that weak capitalization and ideational polarization provided a poor milieu for opposition party-building (see middle and right-hand side of figure 6). While powerful commercial and petty capitalist elites, or well organized labor leaders in Malawi, Kenya, and Zambia were in a financial and organizational position for constructing contention, in Tanzania, these same elements were far more resource starved.

Similarly, the ideational developments in Tanzania left few focal points for opposition party-building. One of the most compelling pieces of data comes from an analysis of Afrobarometer surveys taken in 2005. As table 2 illustrates, Afrobarometer surveys suggest that Tanzanians have one of the most developed senses of national identity in sub-Saharan Africa. Why is this important for explaining the CCM's tenure strength? Quite simply, the crystallization of national identity weakens sub-national loyalties as potential opposition focal points, while serving as a focal point most advantageous for CCM multiparty campaigns. In multiparty politics, the CCM emerges as the vanguard of national unity against those divisive elements wanting to bring ethnic havoc to the country.

Table 2. National Identity versus Ethnic Identity.

	Natnl only	Natnl more than Ethnic	Both equally	More ethnic than Natnl	Ethnic Only	Don't know
Botswana	34.7 %	3.7 %	48.7 %	5.5 %	7.0 %	0.4 %
Kenya	24.5 %	15.0 %	44.0 %	9.3 %	6.4 %	0.8 %
Malawi	23.0 %	4.5 %	47.8 %	3.8 %	18.2 %	2.7 %
Nigeria	19.4 %	13.7 %	46.5 %	15.4 %	4.4 %	0.6 %
Tanzania	70.3 %	9.2 %	12.5 %	4.3 %	2.9 %	0.8 %
Uganda	18.2 %	13.2 %	48.9 %	13.2 %	6.3 %	0.3 %
Zambia	19.7 %	9.7 %	60.3 %	7.4 %	2.8 %	0.2 %
Avg (n=16)	33.4 %	11.8 %	39.3 %	9.0 %	5.5 %	1.0 %

Source: Afrobarometer 2005

Conclusion

In the general sub-Saharan multiparty reform pattern, a combined capitalist class development and sub-national factionalism fed the ability of political entrepreneurs to form vigorous opposition parties capable of threatening incumbents. The outcomes included 1) regime turnover and 2) continued tenure through highly repressive means. In Tanzania by contrast, weak capitalist class development and a strong sense of national cohesion fearful of the adverse effects of sub-national loyalties leaves political entrepreneurs without the material/ideational space for building equally capable political organizations. The CCM therefore, does not necessarily reign as some sort of benign hegemon, but rather as a regime that maximizes tenure strength, while minimizing coercion that might go punished by international lenders.