
Regime Type and Civil War Susceptibility

The Case of Tanzania and Mozambique

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Some literature on civil war has described specific authoritarian regime types as more susceptible to civil war onset than others. It is argued that certain institutional configurations of some of these regimes present more opportunity to rebel, whereas others can keep in check the opportunity to rebel. Of all the authoritarian regimes mentioned by Gurses and Mason⁸⁶, for example, single party regimes are considered least vulnerable to civil war because of their ability to monopolize power and the political space in a country. Against this backdrop, this paper seeks to answer the question: why has the single party state in Mozambique experienced a civil war, while that of Tanzania has not?

Mozambique and Tanzania are one of the few countries in Africa that openly pursued socialist strategies after independence with power largely concentrated on the ruling parties—Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) and the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU, now known as Chama Cha Mapinduzi), respectively. Also both parties have remained in power to this day.

The paper argues that the relative strength of the Tanganyika African National Union's (TANU) structures in Tanzania, the less significance of foreign intervention in the post-independence politics, and the lack of colonial violence preceding independence

accounted for its ability to avoid civil war. Whereas in Mozambique, the weakness of FRELIMO's bureaucratic structures, the high level of foreign intervention in the country's post-colonial politics and the high level of violence preceding independence increased the country's chance of being mired in civil war after independence.

The structure of the paper is as follows: I begin with a brief survey of the literature on authoritarian regimes, with a specific focus on the single party variant and its manifestation in post-colonial Africa. A methodology section follows that provides key operational definitions of concepts and establish theoretical parameters for the argument, then the detailed case studies of Mozambique and Tanzania. The discussion section will then synthesize the findings in both cases as uncovered by the explanatory model, and take stock of other possible rival explanations. Lastly, the conclusion section will reiterate main points and discuss the implications of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political regimes are defined by Bratton and van de Walle as, "sets of formal procedures...that determine distribution of power. These rules describe who may engage in power and how."⁸⁷ In theory, democratic regimes have political platforms open to a wider range of interests than authoritarian regimes. Pointedly, Geddes classifies regimes as "authoritarian if opposition parties have been banned or subjected to serious harassment or institutional disadvantage, or if the ruling party has never lost control of the executive and has controlled at least two-

⁸⁶ Mehmet Gurses and T. David Mason. "Weak States, Regime Types, and Civil War," *Civil Wars* 12, no. 1 (2010), 140 – 155.

⁸⁷ Bratton, M and Van de Walle, *Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, London, 1997), 93.

thirds of legislative seats in all elections.”⁸⁸ However, authoritarian regimes also differ to the extent in which the political platform is open to opposition. Some disproportionately rely on brute force to curb opposition politics, while others balance force and other soft methods of rule. Consequently, authoritarian regime configuration affects its ability to avoid civil war.

Geddes develops a typology that differentiates regimes into personalist, military, single party regimes and hybrid regimes.⁸⁹ Of these, personalist regimes—where a leader has concentrated political power on himself or herself at the expense of institutions—are the most vulnerable to civil wars, whereas single party regimes are least vulnerable. The single party regime can be loosely defined as a regime that proscribes the legal operation of opposition parties. This is different from dominant party systems where opposition may legally operate but be unable to ascend to power.⁹⁰

Single party regimes are seen as least vulnerable to civil war because the states’ disproportionate amount of power allows it to deal harshly with opposition at its nascent stage.⁹¹ This regime also attempts to strike a balance between the main interests of the ruling clique, namely to remain in power, and to provide outlets for political expression which are not harmful to its overall survival. As a general rule, an increased reliance on violence signifies a failure in that balance of

interests. Civil war becomes a culmination of that failure.

It is also argued that the resilience of the single party state stems from the constraints that elites face in the initial stages of the formation of the party. Facing stiff opposition from other organizations vying for power may propel an organization to mobilize on a broad basis. However, faced with weaker constraints, the party may form elite coalitions instead of tapping into an inclusive people-centered constituency.⁹² In short, the power base of a single party is of utmost importance to its survival.

The foregoing argument is important because it suggests that the single party’s longevity is not necessarily connected with the single party per se, but that its internal mechanics play a significant role in its survival. This distinction is of essence since these regimes have shown different levels of longevity and ability to avoid civil war. This theory has substantial explanatory power as we examine FRELIMO’s and TANU’s organizational origins in the case study section. If the institutional base on which a specific single party forms itself is firm, it can increase its ability to co-opt rivals, further weakening opposition.⁹³

The single party regime in the early post-independence years in most African countries was justified as the only way of carrying out the common good—that is broad-based development for the benefit of all. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana was one of its notable proponents.⁹⁴ Indeed most

⁸⁸ Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Castles: Theory Building and Research Design In Comparative Politics* (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2003), 71.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 71 – 77.

⁹⁰ Beatriz Magaloni and Ruth Krichel. “Political Order and One-Party Rule,” *Annual Review of Political Science*, 13 (2010), 123–143.

⁹¹ Mehmet Gurses and T. David Mason. “Weak States, Regime Types, and Civil War,” *Civil Wars* 12, no. 1 (2010), 141.

⁹² Benjamin Smith. “Life of the Party. The Origins of Regime Breakdown and the Persistence of Single-Party Rule.” *World Politics*. 57 (2005), 422.

⁹³ Jason Brownlee, *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. Cambridge: (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2007), 33.

⁹⁴ See: Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom: A Statement of African Ideology* (Oxford University Press, London, 1962), 117.

independence leaders saw opposition parties as divisive and hurtful to the development process of countries.⁹⁵ And it was on this basis that many single-party states ascended to power in Africa.

However, others have criticized the idea espoused by these leaders and other scholars that single party regimes are more stable than other types of regimes. They argue that the stifling of opposition and other political freedoms especially in *de jure* single-party regimes might sow the seeds of its own destruction. This is because a zero-sum game of politics arises which only presents violence as the only option to voice political opinion.⁹⁶ If the law stipulates that opposition is banned, then violence is the only viable option. Others have suggested that in practice, the one-party state in Africa was able to stem destabilizing separatist causes that are often the political ticket of opposition.⁹⁷ Thus, this view has insisted on the utility of this regime type especially in political environments characterized by diversity. Yet even then, the record of this regime type in Africa has been far more ambiguous. How does one account for the overthrow of some of the earliest single-party regimes such as Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) in 1966, and the resilience of other such as that of Tanzania?

Against this backdrop, this paper tackles the puzzle of occurrence of civil war in some single-party regimes in Africa and not in others. Focusing on Mozambique and Tanzania, it argues that the relative stability of a single party regime hinges on the strength of the party's structures, the role of foreign intervention in the post-independence

domestic politics of a country, and colonial violence preceding independence.

METHODOLOGY

Operationalized definitions of the above independent variables are as follows: firstly, "strength of the party's structures" refers to the extent to which the party can marshal support country-wide. The understanding is that the more it has support throughout the country the less chance for rebellion against it, and less risk of civil war. This is because the ruling party aims to dominate the political space, leaving little or no room for opposition to operate. Secondly the role of foreign intervention in the post-independence domestic politics of a country refers to the extent to which foreign governments support, through finances and armaments, opposition groups in that country. Lastly, "colonial violence preceding independence" refers to the intensity of fighting among different groups vying for power, five to ten years before independence, so that higher levels of fighting in this stipulated period presents a greater chance of fighting in the newly-emergent order.

This is a small-N comparative study that mainly relies on qualitative data and the comparative historical approach. To that end, it focuses on mid-level theorizing using Mill's method of difference—similar origins, different outcomes—to answer how countries of similar regime types have had different results vis-à-vis civil war vulnerability. Both Mozambique and Tanzania⁹⁸ were ruled by colonial authorities; the Portuguese and the

⁹⁵ Benjamin Neuberger, "Has the Single Party Failed in Africa?" *African Studies Review*. 17, no. 1 (1974), 173.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 174 - 175.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 174 - 175.

⁹⁸ This case study excludes the island of Zanzibar in the analysis of Tanzania, and focuses on the mainland—Tanganyika. This is because Zanzibar has had a slightly different political experience stemming from Oman sultanate rule that precedes any other Western colonial power. That makes it almost a separate case.

British prior to their independence in 1975 and 1961, respectively. Both states had ruling parties that pursued variants of socialist policies and were ruled, de facto, (and later de jure) by single party regimes.

It traces the set of causal processes operationalized above to account for the difference—civil war in one case (Mozambique) and non-occurrence in the other (Tanzania). The period to be focused on is post-independence up to the early 1990s, the latter date demarcating roughly when both states opened the political platform to other parties.

Conceptually, civil war is understood using Small's and Singer's definition: "any armed conflict that involves a) military action internal to the metropole, b) the active participation of the national government, and c) effective resistance by both sides"⁹⁹... "and state violence should be sustained and reciprocated and that the war exceeds a certain threshold of deaths (typically more than 1,000)"¹⁰⁰ This is the most commonly accepted definition of civil war by scholars and policy organizations.

MOZAMBIQUE: COLONIALISM AND VIOLENCE.

Portuguese presence in Mozambique dates circa 1498, and had been mainly limited to the coastlines. From this period up the 1800s, the Portuguese faced stiff opposition to their attempt to control many parts of the country, especially, the inland. Physical confrontation and "diplomacy" were part of the strategies African polities used in resisting

⁹⁹ Melvin Small and David Singer, *Resort to Arms: International and civil war, 1816 -1992* (Cage, Beverly Hills, 1982), 210.

¹⁰⁰ Nicholas Sambanis. "What Is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (2004), 816.

colonial occupation.¹⁰¹ The Ngoni ethnic group from the south waged one of the earliest notable wars against the Portuguese in 1895, and were eventually vanquished.¹⁰² The Correlates of War Project has coded this episode as the "Portuguese Gaza Empire War of 1895"; an extra-state war.¹⁰³

This defeat signaled the growing power of Portugal, which by the start of the 20th century had spread all over southern Mozambique.¹⁰⁴ The growing power of Portugal in the country was accompanied by forced conscriptions of indigenous people into workforces and stringent tax requirements on a level hitherto unknown amongst the people, which resulted in a growing resentment towards the authorities. The rise of the António de Oliveira Salazar regime in Portugal in 1932, further centralized the colonial structures in a bid to facilitate easier resource extraction to the benefit of the Portuguese economy.¹⁰⁵ Even in this early period, there were daily resistances of colonial authorities. Yet they remained sporadic and uncoordinated. These resistances were largely organized along lines of regions, ethnic groups, and specific production sectors. These divisions were also one of the biggest issues that FRELIMO faced even after independence. This problem that partly

¹⁰¹ Barry Munslow, *Mozambique: the Revolution and its Origins* (Longman, New York, 1983), 53.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 53.

¹⁰³ "An extra-state war involves fighting by a state system member outside its borders against the armed forces of an entity that is not a member of the interstate system." See; Meredith and Wayman, *Resort to War: 1816 – 2007* (Q.C Press, Washington D.C, 2010) Available: <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/data-sets/COW-war>.

¹⁰⁴ Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution, 1900 – 1982* (Westview Press, Colorado, 1983), 27.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 27.

enabled the operation of its arch-rival RENAMO after independence.

The systematic brutality of the Portuguese colonial regime against natives became the rallying cry of the nascent nationalist movement from the 1930s onwards. At the front of this new wave of resistance were the so-called *assimilado*.¹⁰⁶ This group, with the help of the little education they had received, began to question the contradictions and double standards of the colonial state. They detested their separation from ninety-nine per cent of the population who were not educated. This was a classic strategy the colonial authorities had devised to bar any form of dialogue between the educated and the uneducated, the former who were mostly in urban areas and the latter in rural areas.¹⁰⁷ Standing against this division, early nationalism was born in Mozambique at the core of which were the *mestizo*¹⁰⁸ and *assimilado*.

Organizationally, the nationalist movement first manifested itself in three groups: “UDENAMO (National Democratic Union of Mozambique), MANU (the Mozambican-Makonde Union), and UNAMI (National African Union of Independent

¹⁰⁶ The *assimilado* were an “indigenous petty-bourgeoisie... (constituting) a tiny minority of the wider African population. To become an *assimilado* one had to fulfil certain legal criteria. One had to swear loyalty to the colonial state, speak only Portuguese at home, adopt ‘European’ habits, abandon ‘heathen’ beliefs and have a Portuguese official vouch for their character.” See: Sumich and Honwana, ‘Strong Party, Weak States: Frelimo and State Survival through the Mozambican Civil War: An Analytical Narrative on State-making’ *Crisis States Research Centre* (2007), 6.

¹⁰⁷ Funada-Classen Sayaka, *Origins of War in Mozambique, A History of Unity and Division* (ZAF, Cape Town, 2013) at 145.

¹⁰⁸ Mestizo are generally those who were a mixture of Portuguese and Bantu/black parentage.

Mozambique).”¹⁰⁹ However, these groups had narrow interests that reflected ethnic and regional biases and this hindered their mobilization capacities. Later, with negotiations brokered in Tanzania by Julius Nyerere, these organizations reluctantly agreed to form a united movement against the Portuguese colonial authorities. So in 25 June 1964, FRELIMO was born “under the leadership of Dr. Eduardo Mondlane.”¹¹⁰ Evidently, from the beginning the structure of FRELIMO was rather rickety; a compromise necessitated by the desire to be rid of a common enemy.

After a long debate on the modus operandi of the new movement—centering on the use of armed resistance or peaceful demonstration—coupled with a series of failed negotiation attempts with the Portuguese government, FRELIMO finally launched an armed struggle against the colonial authorities after September 1964. “Groups had already been sent for training in Algeria soon after (the party’s) first congress.”¹¹¹ Thus, “in the dead of the night on 25 September 1964, FRELIMO soldiers, with logistical assistance from surrounding population, attacked the Portuguese administrative post at Chai in Cabo Delgado Province...and the guerillas were able to damage the post and kill one policeman and wound several.”¹¹²

This attack set off a chain of events in which the Portuguese government hunted down the insurgency’s network and arrested

¹⁰⁹ Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution, 1900 – 1982* (Westview Press, Colorado, 1983), 80-81.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 81.

¹¹¹ Barry Munslow, *Mozambique: the Revolution and its Origins* (Longman, New York, 1983) at 84.

¹¹² Isaacman and Isaacman, *Mozambique*, 84.

about 1500 FRELIMO sympathizers.¹¹³ The colonial authorities tried to limit FRELIMO's advances by "relocating peasants to strategic hamlets" and heavily patrolling the "Tanzania and Malawian borders," where the insurgents were most active.¹¹⁴ Among the most brutal strategies of counter-insurgency was the resettlement of peasants in new villages encircled with barbed wire. It became clear that the war would last for a long time. In 1965, Salazar allowed for the repatriation of foreign capital out of Mozambique at 100 per cent rate, a policy that had lasting ramifications on the Mozambican economy. He also increased cooperation with NATO and the white minority regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia, and increased the number of Portuguese forces to fight the guerillas in the country.¹¹⁵

After long years of intense fighting, resulting in the growth of liberated zones under FRELIMO, coupled with the military coup in Portugal that toppled the Salazar dictatorship, FRELIMO gained power in September 20 1974.¹¹⁶ The war resulted in "more than 33,000 casualties."¹¹⁷ It was in this context of a violent pre-independence struggle that the party came to power in 1975. With the defeat of the common enemy, its unity and exclusive rule in the country was to face major challenges.

FORMATION OF FRELIMO: A COMPROMISE

Although FRELIMO had managed to wage a successful war of independence, "its early years (1962 – 1989) were filled with

factionalism and purges."¹¹⁸ This had a lasting impact on the popularity of the party and its structures countrywide. Because the ruling elites came from the north and south of the country, the vacuum left at the center was capitalized upon by those who lost out in the early power struggles within FRELIMO, and this region became the stronghold of rebel-armed factions.¹¹⁹ Crucially, other scholars have suggested that the factionalism that bedeviled FRELIMO at its early stages did not necessarily revolve so much around ethnicity, as it did around the strategy to be used in confronting the colonial government. Some supported negotiation with Portuguese authorities, and other cited the violence of the regime as evidence that it would not relinquish power peacefully.¹²⁰ Indeed those of the latter opinion were to be proven right when in 1961 colonial military forces were increased from 3,000 to 12,000."¹²¹

The faction that supported armed struggle dominated the executive committee of the party and was able to push the agenda of armed struggle which began in earnest in 1974.¹²² Those who had lost out formed splinter groups which severely threatened FRELIMO's grip over the country after independence. As the armed struggle continued, the party faced another internal crisis relating to the administration of liberated zones, "military strategy and tactics to be pursued, the emancipation of women, education and the very definition of the enemy."¹²³ Here we see that even in the early

¹¹³ Munslow, *Mozambique*, 87.

¹¹⁴ Isaacman and Isaacman, *Mozambique*, 100.

¹¹⁵ Munslow, *Mozambique*, 87.

¹¹⁶ Isaacman and Isaacman, *Mozambique*, 106.

¹¹⁷ Data Appendix for Monica Duffy Toft, *Securing the Peace: The Durable Settlement of Civil Wars* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/sites/www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/files/documents/MTcodebook2010_0.pdf

¹¹⁸ Jason Sumich and Joao Honwana, "Strong Party, Weak States: Frelimo and State Survival through the Mozambican Civil War: An Analytical Narrative on State-making." *Crisis States Research Centre* (2007) at 6 and 7.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, 7.

¹²⁰ Munslow, *Mozambique*, 83.

¹²¹ *Ibid* 83.

¹²² Isaacman and Isaacman, *Mozambique*, 83.

¹²³ Munslow, *Mozambique*, 104.

period of the party, policy was highly contested and divisive. Also, the party lacked a solid foundation and popular support from the ordinary people.

So when independence was gained in Mozambique, the party and the country were in a state of shambles. Even excepting the factionalism within FRELIMO, the party faced the daunting task of reconstructing and uniting a country that had been ravaged by pre-independence civil war. Finnegan captures the situation aptly:

Frelimo was left to run an effectively bankrupt country with virtually no trained people. The illiteracy rate was over 90 percent. There were six economists, two agronomists, not a single geologist, and fewer than a thousand black high school graduates in all of Mozambique. Of 350 railroad engineers working in 1975, just one was black and he was an agent of the Portuguese secret police.¹²⁴

The leadership was faced with the challenges of rebuilding the nation from scratch and dealing with the internal problems of the party. This dearth of human resource and an economy abandoned by the Portuguese who emigrated *en masse*, led the party to nationalize companies and pursue interventionist strategies at a pace they had not anticipated. In 1977, the leadership declared the party as Marxist-Leninist pursuing scientific socialism.¹²⁵ The subsequent failure of socialist policies,

¹²⁴ William Finnegan, *A Complicated War: The Harrowing of Mozambique* (University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1992) at 30.

¹²⁵ Sumich and Honwana, "Strong Party, Weak States: Frelimo and State Survival through the Mozambican Civil War: An Analytical Narrative on State-making," 7.

coupled with the suspicion that socialism raised in Mozambique's white-ruled neighbors (especially in Rhodesia and South Africa), made the country vulnerable to the outbreak of another civil war.

The spectacular failure of the country's policies led to a shortage of goods and food. Also, as an unintended consequence, these policies benefitted wealthy peasants who could exploit party connections, to the detriment of the majority. Furthermore, the party's abolition of traditional practices such as *lobola* (bride wealth), polygamy, and religious associations,¹²⁶ isolated some sections of the peasantry from the party who were against these new decrees. Although Isaacman and Isaacman suggest that the party had implanted itself fairly securely in most of the country, its dominance in the north and south, and the increasing unpopularity of its socialist strategies were to be the pretext on which foreign intervention and attendant destabilization of the country were to be primarily based upon.

FOREIGN INTERVENTION: GEOPOLITICS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE COLD WAR.

The geopolitics of Southern Africa from the late 1970s onwards may have been one of the most important contributing factors to the occurrence of civil war in Mozambique shortly after independence. With the threat posed, "by the creation of a socialist, black majority-run state in their immediate vicinity, [South Africa and Rhodesia], with implicit approval from Western, capitalist countries, aided and abetted the formation of a counter-revolutionary movement, RENAMO, in the late 1970s."¹²⁷ A left-leaning black majority

¹²⁶ *Ibid* at 10.

¹²⁷ Mary H. Moran and M. Anne Pitcher, "The 'Basket Case' and the 'Poster Child': Explaining the End of Civil Conflicts in Liberia and

state in their midst meant friendly territory for insurgent movements that South Africa and Rhodesia faced at the time.

Indeed, FRELIMO had earlier openly pledged to support the “front line states” in their cause to rid southern Africa of the remaining white-minority regimes.¹²⁸ To that end, independence in Mozambique brought with it a growing base of Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and Zimbabwe African Patriotic Union (ZAPU) insurgent movements from Rhodesia, and also that of the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan-African Congress (PAC) inside Mozambique.¹²⁹

Initially, foreign intervention in Mozambique was executed through Resistencia Nacional Mozambicana (MNR/RENAMO) “set up by the Rhodesians to be a fifth column inside Mozambique. Its members were men from various Portuguese special forces units who fled to Rhodesia in 1974...these then increased their numbers by raiding FRELIMO re-education camps...and recruiting people with no vested interest in FRELIMO.”¹³⁰ This counter-insurgency group assisted the Rhodesian government in hunting down rebels of the Zimbabwean African National Liberal Army (ZANLA) and implementing its own agenda of destabilizing the newly-formed socialist government.¹³¹

With the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980, “South African military intelligence took over the MNR,” and established

operation bases near the South-African Mozambican border.¹³² South African government’s funding of RENAMO made FRELIMO helpless in stemming the growth of the new insurgent movement. The consequence was the civil war that broke out in 1979.

Hanlon notes that, “for an organization with no historic roots, the MNR was very effective....the main important factor (for its success) was force—armed bands would simply kidnap hundreds of young men (and women)...those escaping were killed.”¹³³ And “by mid-1983, the rebels were operating in eight of the country’s eleven provinces.”¹³⁴ Besides receiving support from their South African patrons, they also capitalized on the frustration of peasants on the failure of the “new development projects”.¹³⁵

Moran and Pitcher note that “by the mid-1980s the...war had destroyed hundreds of schools and health clinics, disrupted rural trading networks, undermined food security, killed thousands of people and dislocated hundreds of thousands more to camps in more secure areas of Mozambique or across borders in Zimbabwe and Malawi.”¹³⁶ The foreign-funded insurgency obviously dealt a serious blow to a country still attempting to rebuild on the ruins of the war of liberation in 1975, and further undermined its institutional structures all over the country, especially in central Mozambique, the stronghold of RENAMO.

The harsh economic conditions created by the drought of 1983, and increasing attacks from the insurgents led FRELIMO to

Mozambique,” *Third World Quarterly* 25, No. 3 (2004) at 510.

¹²⁸ Isaacman and Isaacman, *Mozambique*, 173.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 174.

¹³⁰ Joseph Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours: Apartheid Power in Southern Africa* (Catholic Institute for International Relations, London 1986), 139.

¹³¹ Alcinda Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa* (University of Pennsylvania Press: Pennsylvania, 2006), 8.

¹³² Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours*, 140.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 141.

¹³⁴ Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours*, 8.

¹³⁵ Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours*, 141.

¹³⁶ Moran and Pitcher, “The ‘Basket Case’ and the ‘Poster Child’: Explaining the End of Civil Conflicts in Liberia and Mozambique,” 510.

begin courting the West, and managed to secure food aid. Under pressure from the rebels, the Mozambican state also signed the Nkomati non-aggression pact in 1984 with the South African government, hoping that the latter would stop funding the rebels. However, this accord turned out to be useless, as the South African government never stopped funding the insurgents.¹³⁷ By this time, the government had lost full control of the state and was battling for survival.

FRELIMO could not defeat RENAMO in battle because its resources had been dissipated by the long-drawn conflict. However, in the 1980s RENAMO's resource tap dried out as apartheid South Africa channeled its energy to quelling disturbances at home.¹³⁸ This resulting stalemate facilitated the brokering of peace talks led by the Catholic Church,¹³⁹ and after several months of negotiations the two warring parties signed the "General Peace Agreement in Rome in 1992."¹⁴⁰ This devastating civil war left an estimated 1,000,000 people dead.

TANZANIA: AFRICAN SOCIALISM

This section argues that unlike Mozambique, Tanzania had a peaceful transition to independence, and its post-independence politics were characterized by little or no foreign involvement. Also, the strength and popularity of TANU around the country effectively stifled viable opposition. An intersection of these variables is a sufficient cause of non-occurrence of civil war in Tanzanian post-colonial politics.

¹³⁷ Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours*.

¹³⁸ Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours*, 9.

¹³⁹ Moran and Pitcher, "The 'Basket Case' and the 'Poster Child': Explaining the End of Civil Conflicts in Liberia and Mozambique," 511.

¹⁴⁰ Hanlon, *Beggar Your Neighbours*, 9.

*History of Colonial Tanzania*¹⁴¹

Colonial rule in Tanzania began with the Germans in 1885 to 1920. Thereafter the British ruled the country under a League of Nations mandate from 1920 to 1961.¹⁴² While the Germans discriminated African populations, they did not create stratified rule among the different ethnic groups.¹⁴³ Nonetheless, their rule weakened traditional structures of rule among indigenous ethnic groups replacing them with those in line with colonial interests.

A notable resistance in this period was the Maji Maji movement waged by stateless ethnic groups, from 1905 to 1907. The Germans severely crushed this resistance, resulting in an estimated 75,000 deaths and three years of famine.¹⁴⁴ The Correlates of War Project codes this rebellion as an extra-state war.¹⁴⁵ This was the only notable episode of physical resistance against a colonial power in Tanzania's colonial experience. Lindemann and Putzel argue that this defeat may be one explanation why opposition towards the British later was largely peaceful.¹⁴⁶ The crushing defeat of the rebellion lingered in the minds of the people so that it influenced their subsequent approaches toward resistance.

¹⁴¹ Before independence, mainland Tanzania was referred to as Tanganyika.

¹⁴² Stephan Lindemann and James Putzel. *State Resilience in Tanzania – Draft Analytical Narrative*, 1. Available from online at www.lse.ac.uk/internationalDevelopment/research/crisisStates/download/seminars/PutzellLindemannTanzaniaApr30.pdf [Accessed 13 May 2016].

¹⁴³ *Ibid* at 3.

¹⁴⁴ Andrew Coulson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy*, (Oxford Scholarship Online, 2013) at 56.

¹⁴⁵ Sarkees and Wayman. *Resort to War: 1816 – 2007*.

¹⁴⁶ Lindemann and Putzel, *State Resilience*, 5.

British colonial rule in Tanganyika emphasized indirect rule. The consequence was the invention of traditional chiefs within ethnic groups that traditionally did not have them. However, Lindermann and Putzel argue that relatively speaking, the British never pursued an open policy of divide and rule among the ethnic groups even though there were imbalances in army recruitment.¹⁴⁷ Thus during British rule there was no physical confrontation between the ethnic groups of Tanganyika and the colonial authorities.

To echo an earlier point, Omari argues that the Germans had already brutally pacified the warring ethnic tribes in Tanganyika, so that the British found a much more conducive environment.¹⁴⁸ Whatever the reasons for lack of confrontation, it is clear that this non-violent approach paved a smoother path toward independence. The discontinuity of violence associated with German colonialism and the Maji Maji rebellion, and the relatively peaceful period under British rule may have influenced, to a certain extent, the less violent politics of post-colonial Tanganyika.

ORIGINS AND STRUCTURE OF THE TANGANYIKA AFRICAN NATIONAL UNION (TANU)

One of the remarkable things about TANU was its ability to marshal broad-based support for its cause during the British colonial era, and its popularity after independence as the ruling party of Tanzania. Generally speaking, the nationalist movement in Tanzania was an amalgamation of three bodies representing African interests in the

colony: the Tanganyika African Association (TAA), “the trade union movement”, and the cooperative movement that had its base in the rural areas.¹⁴⁹ Thus from its founding TANU enjoyed a geographical and class spread that most nationalist movements in Africa could only hope for. Unlike Mozambique’s FRELIMO, these organizations that came to constitute TANU were not based on ethnic or regional interests, but on occupation, an obstacle that was relatively easier to supplant.

Under the leadership of intellectuals recruited mainly from the TAA, TANU worked to produce a united front against British colonialism through co-opting chiefs in the rural areas and other agricultural-based tribal organizations fighting unfair colonial laws.¹⁵⁰ After its successful consolidation, the new party presented its explicit goals including: the end of British colonialism, opposition to all forms of tribalism, the formation of branches in all the regions of Tanganyika to work hand-in-glove with the central committee of the party.¹⁵¹ From the beginning, the leadership invested on the local population and in the formation of representative structures. Instead of alienating traditional authorities, these were incorporated into party structures, and in decision-making processes at the local level. The increasing popularity of the party is reflected in the following numbers. Between 1954 and 1957, TANU membership grew from 15,000 to 200,000¹⁵² managing to not only to be a coalition of elites but mobilizing the peasantry as well.

Consequently, when the party rose to power as Tanzania gained independence in 1961, it was in a position of relative strength. Its post-colonial political discourse was characterized by three features, namely;

¹⁴⁷ Ibid at 5.

¹⁴⁸ Abidallah Omari, “Civil-military relations in Tanzania,” in eds. Rocky Williams, Gavin Cawthra and Diane Abrahams, *Ourselves to Know. Civil-Military Relations and Defence Transformation in Southern Africa*. (Pretoria: Institute for Strategic Studies, 2002), 93.

¹⁴⁹ Lindemann and Putzel, *State Resilience*, 8.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 8.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, 9.

¹⁵² Coulson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy*, 151.

“egalitarianism, mass participation in politics at all levels, and anti-elitism.”¹⁵³ Its commitment to ensuring broad-based development led to its relative popularity in most sectors of the society. Encouraging mass participation, the party sought to “narrow the mass-elite gap and to create a sense of responsibility on the part of citizens.”¹⁵⁴ This kind of broad-based one-party state system was carefully calibrated to give individuals a sense of belonging while at the same time acting to curb elite corruption within the party’s structures.¹⁵⁵

Even though Tanzania has a diverse ethnic community, the party managed to promote inter-ethnic cooperation and this helped to reduce the politicization of ethnicity.¹⁵⁶ Malipula argues that inter-ethnic cooperation was one of TANU’s key strategies even before independence. As a result, the nationalistic bent of the party, its institutionalization in Tanzanian society from an early period increased its popularity among the people. This popularity further squeezed recruitment base of rival parties. Opposition was dealt a final blow when it was officially outlawed by the Arusha Declaration of 1967.

The Arusha Declaration of 1967 outlined the party’s policy position and its commitment to serve the common people. Incidentally, it was this document that officially designated Tanzania as a single-party state, pursuing African socialism. Part of this declaration stated that “every citizen is an integral part of the nation and as the right to take an equal part in government at local,

regional and national levels”¹⁵⁷ Consequently, the structure of the party allowed a degree of autonomy at the local level.

In following a position the party had stated before independence, TANU nationalized white settler farms and distributed land to peasants in a bid to counteract the power of free-hold farmers in the country.¹⁵⁸ In part, the Arusha Declaration argues “every TANU and government leader must be either a peasant or a worker, and should in no way be associated with the practices of capitalism or feudalism.”¹⁵⁹ This and the above-mentioned systematic processes strengthened TANU’s rule in the post-independence period. The policy of balancing the political needs of sectors of society, and the corporatist structure of the party, in effect, left small space from which opposition could recruit. Also, the party was able to absorb counter-elites into its political program.

That said, single-party state’s structures were not without its detractors. For one, the party often formulated policies from the top, and regional structures did not have much influence on policy.¹⁶⁰ The villagization program (*ujamaa vijijini*) was a case in point. Peasants were relocated to “newly constructed settlements in order to promote efficient agricultural production and to facilitate the equitable delivery of basic services” without their consent.¹⁶¹ The success of this project is

¹⁵³ Patrick J. McGowan and H. K. M. Wacirah. (1974). “The Evolution of Tanzanian Political Leadership.” *African Studies Review*. 17, no. 1 (1974), 179.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 179.

¹⁵⁵ Lindemann and Putzel, *State Resilience*, 11.

¹⁵⁶ Mrisho Malipula. “Depoliticised Ethnicity in Tanzania: A Structural and Historical Narrative.” *Afrika Focus*. 17, (2014), 51.

¹⁵⁷ Arusha Declaration. Part 1 c) Available online at <https://www.marxists.org/subject/africa/nyerere/1967/arusha-declaration.htm> [Accessed 13 May 2016].

¹⁵⁸ Lindemann and Putzel, *State Resilience*, 14.

¹⁵⁹ Arusha Declaration. Part 5 a)

¹⁶⁰ Howard Stein, “Theories of the State in Tanzania.” *Journal of Modern African Studies*. 23, no. 1 (1985), 109.

¹⁶¹ Paul J. Kaiser. “Structural Adjustment and the Fragile Nation: The Demise of Social Unity in

ambiguous, although it is largely considered a failure. As Kaiser shows, “in the final years of the *ujamaa* era, basic consumer goods were rarely available, the transportation infrastructure was collapsing, and the government was unable to provide many of the basic health-care and education services that were promised immediately following the Arusha Declaration.”¹⁶² This was a result of the declaration’s shunning of foreign investment and emphasis on self-reliance, which resulted in a severe foreign exchange deficit.

Yet, the country managed to weather this crisis and the subsequent IMF imposed Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) of 1981 to 1995 without disintegrating into civil war. In fact, no party has yet managed to pose as viable opposition to TANU. The party’s institutionalization in Tanzanian society and its ability to reinvent itself in times of crises and change, accounts for relative stability in the country’s post-colonial period, and the lack of civil conflict.

NEOCOLONIALISM IN TANZANIAN POST-INDEPENDENCE POLITICS?

Literature suggests that there was no systemic involvement of foreign governments in the domestic affairs of Tanzania to the extent seen in the Mozambican case. The British colonial administration attempted to create a rival party in 1956 called the United Tanganyika Party (UTP) “composed of disgruntled chiefs and white settlers,”¹⁶³ but it was too weak in the face of TANU’s popularity. When a split occurred in TANU leadership, there emerged “the African National Congress (ANC) that represented Africans only and thereby challenged TANU’s

Tanzania.” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*. 34, no. 2 (1996), 229.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 231.

¹⁶³ Lindemann and Putzel, *State Resilience*, 9 - 10.

ideology of unity and equality.”¹⁶⁴ However, this party’s divisive and partisan ideology did not sit well with the people of Tanzania who had already internalized the ideology of unity of all Tanzanians regardless of ethnicity and religion, propagated by TANU.

From a geo-political and Cold War politics standpoint, one might argue that unlike Mozambique, whose declaration as socialist directly threatened the survival of South Africa and Rhodesia as white-minority ruled states, TANU’s socialism could be tolerated because Tanzania’s geographical location did not threaten the West’s calculations of balance of power in the region. Yet even taking this into account, it can be said with relative confidence that the colonial history of Tanzania, the commitment of the party to build local infrastructure and garner wide support had substantial influence of the longevity of its single party regime, and the lack of any civil war episode in the country’s post-independence period.

Ultimately, Tanzania’s single party regime hinged on the relatively peaceful transition, a strong party base and structures, and the relative lack of foreign involvement in the domestic affairs of the country through arming and funding opposition groups.

DISCUSSION

This paper has traced three processes in the case studies reviewed, and the findings are largely consistent with the initial hypothesis—that civil war occurrence, or lack thereof, in Mozambique and Tanzania was a product of the intersection of these factors: violence preceding independence, structures and institutionalization of parties, and foreign intervention in domestic politics.

Of note is that in the Mozambican case, violence preceding independence, coupled with the re-involvement of the Portuguese in the country’s politics under the

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

auspices of RENAMO, and later, South African involvement, were the two most important factors that account for relapse into civil war in 1979. It seems that even though FRELIMO did not have strong institutions in all of Mozambique, civil war would not have been possible without foreign power involvement.

In contrast, the extent of rural mobilization and support TANU had, even in times of crisis, is singularly intriguing. So was its ability to fight politicization of ethnicity in its structures and around the country. This and its official ban on opposition had the effect of casting all opposition in the eyes of the people, as divisive and therefore undesirable. TANU possessed a remarkable ability to reinvent itself in times of crisis, a rare quality amongst many single-party regimes in Africa.

An interesting finding was the involvement of TANU in the formation of FRELIMO, and its support for its insurgency during the war of liberation. It begs the question therefore, as to what extent Mozambique learned from the lessons of its neighbor in terms of the implementation of socialism. Whatever the case may be, it seems that the African socialism of Nyerere was much more homegrown than that of FRELIMO which has been interpreted by some scholars as more “scientific” and Leninist.

In spite of all of this, a self-criticism is in order. Cold war realities in Southern Africa loom larger in Mozambican post-independence politics, than they did in Tanzania, and this analysis has not delved deeply into this variable. The foregoing does not falsify the argument presented by the paper, but only highlights another potential avenue of research. For one, further research could focus on the role of the Cold war powers in propping up single party regimes in Africa. Also, some have credited the stability and popularity of TANU to the leadership

skills of Julius Nyerere. This analysis has largely eschewed the leadership argument and focused mainly on structural analysis of the parties. No doubt leadership does play a role in organizational capacity.

CONCLUSION

This paper argued that the ability of a single-party to avoid civil war is largely influenced by internal and external dynamics. This proposition was tested on two single-party regimes in Africa, and the results showed that colonial violence preceding independence, weak institutions and foreign intervention increase the susceptibility to civil war. The findings open up the “black-box” that is the single-party, and call for further research on the nature of this regime type.

The single-party state should not be assumed to be stable at face value. Studying closely its internal dynamics, policymakers and scholars can come to understand the real basis of stability or lack thereof of this regime type. This understanding can lead to sound recommendations on the political stability of this regime type and the chance of civil war onset. Thus the contribution of this study is largely heuristic. It has traced three processes and found compelling evidence to support its hypothesis. It therefore behooves other researchers to test this hypothesis on other cases, or come up with rival explanations linking this regime type to civil war onset.