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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The state and identity politics in Zanzibar: challenges to democratic consolidation in Tanzania

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A group of islands off the coast of East Africa, Zanzibar has been a semi-autonomous part of the United Republic of Tanzania since 1964. Despite a common language (Swahili), religion (Islam), and a high rate of intermarriage among the islands' multi-racial communities (including Africans and individuals of Arab, Persian, and Indian descent), Zanzibar politics has been marred by political conflicts that have culminated into political stand-offs, violence and lack of social and civic peace. At the core of these conflicts is the politicization of racial identity by leaders seeking the legitimacy to rule. Thus, unlike in Tanzania mainland, struggle for the control of the state in Zanzibar has been intense, deadly and zero-sum. Indeed, the distinctive character of the Zanzibar state itself makes it appealing for the political elites to politicize ethno-racial identities in order to claim legitimacy to rule. Two other things are at stake regarding the Zanzibar state: namely, the identity of the state (whether it is an Arab or African state) and sovereignty of the state (Zanzibar vs. Tanzania). This political instability threatens not only Zanzibar's relatively new democratic institutions, but also the Union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar and the prospects for democratic consolidation in Tanzania.

Keywords: Zanzibar; Tanzania; identity politics; democratic consolidation; ethnic conflict; Zanzibar elections

Introduction

Tanzania is renowned for her long-established civic peace and national unity among its 35 million people from diverse ethnic, religion and racial groups. She is regarded as the peace-broker and a model of national cohesion in the Eastern Africa region. As a semi-autonomous state, Zanzibar has been part of Tanzania for more than four decades now following the merger in 1964.¹ Indeed, an homogeneous culture is believed to be prevalent both in Tanzania Mainland and in Zanzibar, where the use of Swahili language has been a binding thread. For the case of Zanzibar, despite being a multi-racial society, a common predominant religion (Islam) coupled with a high rate of intermarriages among ethno-racial groups has made cultural homogeneity even stronger.

Yet, unlike in Tanzania Mainland, struggle for the control of the state in Zanzibar has been intense, deadly and zero-sum. Political competition in Zanzibar has largely been shaped by the politics of identity waged by the political leadership on the basis of race. Racial labels of 'Africans' vs. 'Arabs' are widely used in the

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context of political contestation for power. The article sets out to address one major question: *why do the political elites in Zanzibar resort to the use of politicized racial identity, particularly at election times?* It is the struggle over the control of the state that is the driving force behind the politics of identity in Zanzibar. However, while the struggle for control of the state accounts for a multitude of ethnic conflicts in various parts of the world, in Zanzibar, the distinctive character of the state itself makes it appealing for the political elites to politicize ethno-racial identities in order to claim legitimacy to rule. Apart from control of the state, two more things are at stake in Zanzibar: namely, the identity of the state (whether it is an Arab or African state) and sovereignty/autonomy of the state (Zanzibar vs. the Union). The control of the state by a certain group is therefore of paramount importance as it paves the way for either the preservation or reconstruction of state identity as well as state sovereignty. Stiff competition between two major political parties in Zanzibar brings to the fore these unresolved contradictions of the Zanzibar semi-autonomous state, which manifest themselves through the realm of ethno-racial politics.

Since Tanzania's return to multi-party democracy in 1992, Zanzibar politics has been marred by political conflicts that have culminated in political stand-offs, violence and a generalized lack of social and civic peace. Three rounds of competitive multi-party elections held in 1995, 2000 and 2005 did not enhance democracy but instead derailed it (Killian 2005). Both 1995 and 2000 elections were followed by the major opposition party's outright rejection of election results and refusal to recognize the victory of their opponents. They also declined to take up their seats in the Zanzibar legislature. Different teams of election observers declared in unison that these elections were not free and fair due to observed voter intimidation, fraud, vote-rigging and partisanship of the electoral body.² Donors' suspension of aid to the Zanzibar government was a reaction to these massive electoral irregularities and human rights abuses. Even the seemingly peaceful electoral environment in the 2005 elections was marred by significant anomalies in vote counting which led to a contested interpretation of the electoral results, both between major political parties and among electoral observers. The major opposition party refused to recognize the winner of the presidency and the government. However, they decided to take up their seats in the legislature. To this day, the opposition persists in its demand for a re-run of the presidential election, to be supervised not by the country's Electoral Commissions but by the United Nations.

Some of these troubled elections have been accompanied by sporadic violence. A mass demonstration protesting against the 2000 election results turned violent, leading to the killing of at least 30 people including two state security officers. Fearing for their lives, about 2000 people fled the country for Kenya as refugees.³ In a fierce struggle for inclusion and exclusion in the Permanent Voter Register prior to the 2005 elections, three people were killed, one of them a member of the para-military unit. Incidences of setting fire to or bombing government buildings, ruling-party offices and churches have been observed in various parts of Zanzibar. Freedom of speech has at times been constrained by the government's move to ban some newspapers and individual journalists, allegedly due to their 'threats to national unity'. Two Reconciliation Accords of 1999 and 2001 have been breached and are no longer regarded as the guiding framework for conflict resolution and management in Zanzibar. Overall, since the re-introduction of multi-party democracy in Tanzania, political confrontation between opposing members and

supporters of the two major political parties in Zanzibar have threatened the functioning of the newly established institutions of democracy.

This paper restricts itself to Zanzibar in an attempt to explain the nature and dynamics of identity politics in the islands. The paper also draws out implications of the identity politics for democratic consolidation in Zanzibar and Tanzania as whole. The discussion proceeds as follows: the next section discusses the theoretical aspects of the question of political identity as it relates to democratic consolidation. It will be followed by a presentation of the historical account of the state question and the shaping of political identities in section three. Section four analyses the manifestation of political identities and the way this impinges upon democratic consolidation, and is followed by a concluding statement.

Democratic consolidation and political identities: theoretical discussion

One of the recurrent features of new democracies in Latin America, Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and the former USSR is the resurgence of identity politics and its ramifications for the functioning of liberal democracy (Diamond and Plattner 1994, Fukuyama 2006, Joseph 1999, Glickman 1995). In many of these new democracies, the viability of democratic institutions and processes have become increasingly vulnerable to the forces of social and political groups who assert identities as the main determining criterion for inclusion or exclusion in the polity. Nowhere is this more apparent than in deeply divided societies. For instance, data from Latin America and post-communist Europe indicate that ethnically diverse states such as Romania, Ukraine, Guatemala, and Peru face more difficulties in constructing democratic institutions than less ethnically diverse states such as Hungary, Poland, Costa Rica and Uruguay (Van Cott 2005, p. 820). Africa has its share of ethnic conflicts in such countries as Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Angola, Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria, Chad, to mention only a few. Despite the fact that Africa had witnessed ethnic conflicts even prior to the third wave, the political pluralism that gained momentum in the 1990s has brought to the fore a multitude of competing diversities that were suppressed by previous authoritarian regimes. Multi-party competitive politics accompanied by the process of institutional redesigning has led to struggles over the legitimacy to rule among various groups in society. The question of 'who belongs here?' has become a buzzword in democratic competition, particularly in deeply divided societies.

Zanzibar is another case where racial identity is politicized and used in political mobilization to strengthen claims for legitimacy to rule. This has happened even when racial intermarriages over a long period of time have resulted in a colour overlap among Arabs, Persians and Africans, and to a certain degree, Indians. The use of the common Swahili language and a common religion of Islam are attributes that have somehow led to what Smith would call 'ethnic dissolution', where some ethnicities are absorbed or dissolved. It is indeed difficult to distinguish clearly, for instance, between Arabs and black Africans in Zanzibar. This is even more the case when people identify themselves as 'Arab' despite looking completely different. All this has made racial identity in Zanzibar a rather unreliable indicator of differentiation. Yet, at the climax of political competition, racial identity turns out to be the most defining element for political mobilization. This comes as no surprise given the fact that ethnic animosity has also been evident in societies without colour

differences, for instance between the Tutsi and Hutu in Burundi (Horowitz 1985). What is critical in this case is the claim for common ancestry, shared memories and symbols. As Smith points out, ethnic communities can be said to have survived 'if successive generations continue to identify with some persisting memories, symbols, myths and traditions ... and have a heightened sense of collective distinctiveness and mission' (Smith 1992, pp. 435, 440).

Drawing a distinction between ethnic and racial identity has been contentious in many studies. Many studies of political identities in Africa focus on ethnic identity and ignore the issue of race (Jerman 2002). In this study, it is the inclusive conception of ethnicity that is preferred, in which 'ethnicity embraces differences identified by color, language, religion or some other attributes of common origin' (Horowitz 1985, p. 41). At times, one's ethnic identity tends to be confounded with race and place of residence/location. In Zanzibar, long-time social interactions among Arabs, Indians, Persians and Africans have resulted into the creation of ethno-racial groups in which some people can prefer one identity over another depending on the situation. It is no wonder that this has led to flexibility or fluidity in individual identification among many people in Zanzibar. In this case, politicization of racial identity is employed in an effort to solidify and consolidate one's group identity as the permanent predictor of political support. Cut-throat competition between the two major political parties in Zanzibar has turned elections into a matter of life and death, in which every vote counts and hence must be sought under any circumstance. Indeed, it seems like political leaders are responding to ethnic demography by mobilizing ethnic groups that are large enough to represent a viable political support base for competition over state power (Posner 2004).

Given its contextual nature, political identities are therefore understood as being instrumental rather than primordial by putting emphasis on their dynamics, situational and pragmatic nature (Horowitz 1985, Glickman 1995, Mamdani 2001). As opposed to cultural and market-based identities, political identities are those that are legally enforced and institutionally reproduced in the process of state formation (Mamdani 2001). In most cases, political identities emerge from situations of stress, in which identity is threatened, and when consequences of domination by another group are perceived to be enormous (Rothchild 1997, Horowitz 1985). For Zanzibar, politicization of racial identity becomes salient largely because it is not just groups whose identities are perceived to be threatened, but also because state identity and state sovereignty are perceived to be at stake.

While ethnic animosity has been part and parcel of Zanzibar politics for many years, politicization of racial identity becomes salient during times of fierce competition over who is to rule: that is, during elections. At the core of the problem is ownership and control of the Zanzibar state. The question of 'who should own the state' has been posed many times over a long period in the history of political struggle in Zanzibar. As Horowitz argues, 'control of the state and exemption from the control by others are among the main goals of ethnic conflict' (Horowitz 1985, p. 5). The increasing ethnic tension and political polarization in Zanzibar should therefore be understood in the context of the struggle to redefine and gain control of the state.

This discussion leads us to foresee the challenges of consolidating democracy in Tanzania in general and Zanzibar in particular. As a result of competing and politicized identities, consensus, negotiation, accommodation and compromise

become difficult. As the identity and the sovereignty of the state are being contested, the chances for building democratic institutions and processes remain slim. Amidst the intense struggle for ownership of the state, the rule of law and good governance become jeopardized, thereby limiting the prospects for democratic consolidation. In this case, the rule of law is inherently in tension with the political leadership's desire to control the state and defend its perceived identity.⁴ For instance, the fear of domination by one group over another tends to lead to what Wimmer calls the 'ethnicisation of state apparatus', which is inherently exclusive and detrimental to the development of the rule of law (Wimmer 1997).

Thus, even where the introduction of plural politics has resulted in legal and political reforms geared at establishing democratic institutions and processes, in many of the new democracies 'the formal rules about how institutions are supposed to work are often poor guides to what actually happens' (O'Donnell 1996, p. 40). Indeed, in situations of politicized ethno-racial identities, the assessment of democratic consolidation should go beyond the 'democratic process' that focuses largely on the holding of multi-party competitive elections. Instead, the focus should be on what Dankwart Rustow calls 'habituation', which describes a state in which 'the norms, procedures, and expectations of democracy become so internalized that actors routinely, instinctively conform to the written (and unwritten) rules of the game, even when they conflict and compete tensely' (Rustow 1970, p. 337).

The question of state and the shaping of political identities

The process of *state formation* is a product of a chain of events that began with the immigration of the early inhabitants to the islands followed by Arab and British colonialism, independence in 1963 and the 1964 Revolution, and culminated in the 1964 merger between Zanzibar and Tanganyika. As the state has changed hands, so too has the identity of the Zanzibar state. Indeed, as will be discussed below, the process of state formation is still unfolding. Being an island off the East African coast, Zanzibar attracted many immigrants including mainland Africans, Persians, Arabs, Indians, and Comorians. The Africans are believed to have originated from the hinterland of the East African countries of Tanganyika, Malawi, Mozambique and Eastern Congo. The Persians, who arrived in about the tenth century, came from the Persian Gulf region. Intermarriages between the Persian and African communities led to the gradual formation of an existing ethnic group that identifies itself as Shirazi, linking their origin to the Eastern Persian region around Shiraz (Lofchie 1965, p. 25, Bennett 1978, p. 5). It is this group that came to be divided into three ethnic groups: namely, the Hadimu, Tumbatu and the Pemba Shirazi. Apart from the early Persian-African interaction, the Arab traders and explorers also interacted with the local population to create a mix of Afro-Arab people.

In terms of political settings, the Shirazi were organized into small independent polities ruled largely by the Shirazi dynasties. There was never a unified centralized system of administration but each chieftainship was ruled separately. By the sixteenth century there existed about five independent rulers in Pemba and two or three in Unguja (Bennett 1978, p. 8). With the ascendancy of the Omani dynasty in the early eighteenth century, Islamic culture became widespread in the islands. Being part of the Omani empire, Zanzibar was under the control of its sultanate until 1832 when the Omani Arabs took effective control of Zanzibar, turning it into an

independent Arab state, and it remained so for about six decades.⁵ The period of Omani rule witnessed a flourishing slave trade that turned Zanzibar into a slave society. Hand in hand with the lucrative slave trade, the establishment of a clove plantation economy in Zanzibar led to the increased use of slave labour. It was estimated that about two-thirds of the islands' total population of 300,000 by the end of the 1850s were slaves brought in mainly from the African hinterland (Bennett 1978, p. 28). Given the commercial and strategic position of Zanzibar, as well as the need to put an effective end to the slave trade, the British colonialists took control of Zanzibar as a Protectorate in 1890. As the Protector, the British were supposed to take charge of defence and foreign affairs while the Sultan, as head of state, was in control of domestic affairs.

By the nineteenth century Zanzibar had become the main commercial centre on the East African coast, not only for Arab and Indian traders but also for merchants from the United States, Britain, France and Germany.⁶ As the colonial economy prospered through ivory, slaves, cloves and other commodities, changes occurred in Zanzibar society which became structured into a three-tiered pyramid. The Africans, who formed the class of agricultural and manual labourers, occupied the lowest tier. In the middle was a small Asian community engaged in commerce and in administration, especially in tax and revenue collection. The Arabs occupied top positions, maintained control over the plantation economy and ruled the country under the tutelage of the British colonial masters (Lofchie 1965, p. 73). It is important to point out that the Africans were hardly a homogeneous group. Distinctions were made between the Shirazi Africans and Africans of recent arrival from the mainland, who included slaves, freed slaves, their descendants and migrant labourers whose number increased especially after the abolition of the legal status of slavery in Zanzibar in 1897. The Shirazi group included the Hadimu, the Tumbatu and the Pembans.

The nature of the Arab economy contributed to the division among the local populations of Unguja and Pemba. Being the commercial and administrative centre, Unguja became the centre of Arab domination. Indeed, it was in Unguja where large-scale clove plantations were first established in 1830s (Sheriff 2001, p. 302). Both the Hadimu of southern and southeastern Unguja and the Mainlanders became the victims of oppression as labourers and victims of land alienation to provide for the expanded clove plantation by the Arabs. In contrast, the Shirazi in Pemba experienced less land alienation and their livelihood system was left more or less uninterrupted. In fact, many of the Pemba Shirazi were able to own clove plantations just as the Arabs did. There was a higher rate of intermarriage between the Shirazi and the Arabs in Pemba than in Unguja, where intermarriage was predominantly between the Hadimu Shirazi and mainland Africans (Sheriff and Tominaga, 1990, p. 307, Bennett 1978, p. 27). Thus, while African–Arab relations were highly antagonistic in Unguja, they were less so in Pemba.

In terms of political struggle, therefore, the Africans (including those from the Mainland and the Hadimu Shirazi in Unguja) were struggling against Arab hegemony and wanted to restore their expropriated land and local autonomy. Indeed, the alliance between the Hadimu Shirazi and the Mainlanders that became apparent during the time of modern nationalism emerged from the fact that they were both victims of land expropriation and forced labour by the Arabs. In addition, the Shirazi, especially those from Pemba, regarded the Mainlanders as enemies and

foreigners, accusing them of taking their jobs and promoting Christianity in a predominately Muslim state. The Arabs sought meanwhile to maintain their political and economic hegemony. As a result of all this, politics came to be deeply divided along racial/ethnic lines. Thus, rather than uniting various social groups in Zanzibar, it set them even further apart (Lofchie 1963).

As a result of the ethno-racial mix and intense struggle among various groups, the question of *indigeneity* came to the fore. Who were the indigenous population of Zanzibar? Who was supposed to be a 'true' representative of Africans in the colonial legislative council? Was it a Shirazi or African of Mainland origin? The conclusions reached in that debate have been reflected in the overall struggle for state power and in the continued attempts to vest the ownership of the state in the so-called 'sons of the soil'. A widely held view amongst scholars is that the original inhabitants are believed to be Bantu-speakers who migrated from the Mainland in about the third and fourth centuries (Gray 1962, Mukangara 2000, Lofchie 1965, Mbwiliza 2000). Scholars like Mbwiliza have been critical of the historiography of Zanzibar, which draws its understanding of Zanzibar society based on the 'perspective of seafarers' largely from documents retrieved from Arab and European travellers (Mbwiliza 2000, p. 11). This historiography places a great deal of focus on the influence of Persians and Arabs and ignores the history of early African immigrants. Other scholars, however, regard the Shirazi as the indigenous population whose claim to originality and to the land could hardly be contested by anyone (Bakari 2001, Kharusi 1967, Sheriff 1994).

The *ethnic demography* has also been a critical issue in seeking to determine group size and therefore entitlement to rule. Election results have been used as an indicator of group/party support, and hence entitlement to rule. The mainly African-supported party, the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), staked its right to rule on the basis of its securing a majority of votes in the 1957, 1961 and 1963 pre-independence elections. Yet, due to the first-past-the-post system, and alleged gerrymandering by the British colonial administration, the ASP failed to translate its votes into a majority of seats. In the recent multi-party elections, serious irregularities in the electoral process have made it difficult to determine the actual size of party support in Zanzibar. However, using the most commonly cited census of 1948, the Shirazi were the majority, constituting about 55.8% of the total population. However, division within the Shirazi identity has been detrimental to their collective mobilization. According to the 1948 census, the Hadimu, the Tumbatu and the Pembans constituted 15.8%, 17.4% and 22.6% of the total population respectively. The Africans of Mainland origin constituted 19.8% and the Arabs formed a minority of about 16.9%, followed by Indians (6.2%) and Comorians (1.1%) (Lofchie 1965, p. 74). In the political struggle, whereas the Tumbatu and Pembans allied themselves more with the Arabs, the Hadimu allied with the African Mainlanders. Thus, the divisions within the Shirazi identity made it difficult for Arabs or Africans to claim an exclusive mandate to rule.

Also, there have been attempts to downplay the presence of one ethnic group or another. For instance, some have suggested that Africans of Mainland origin have lost their identity and become indigenized Shirazi through intermarriages, Islamization and patrilineality: 'being a slave was synonymous as having no identity and ... a few Zanzibaris trace their origin from the Mainland' (Bakari 2001, pp. 67–68). However, the African Mainlanders seem to constitute a significant segment of

the total population in Zanzibar. Indeed, the African identity has enjoyed preference during post-revolution times. In the early 1970s, the Revolutionary government of Zanzibar issued a circular and mechanisms to enable people to change their identity, and indeed many of those who were Shirazi in the past subsequently identified themselves as 'Africans'. Consequently, while in 1948 about 56% of Zanzibaris identified themselves as Shirazi, only 42% said so in the early 1960s and this number had declined to 20% by the early 1980s (Bakari 2001, p. 71). This coincided with the time when Shirazi identity was under siege and many people found it safer to identify themselves as Africans. With the advent of political pluralism in the 1990s, expressions of Shirazi and Arab identity started to re-emerge. In the 1999 survey, 51.3% of the respondents identified themselves as 'Africans', 27.5% as Shirazi, and 12.7% as Arabs (Killian 2001). The identity fluidity/flexibility among Zanzibaris in identifying themselves with either group, depending on the situation, makes ethnicity an unpredictable criterion for party support in Zanzibar, despite politicians' desire to employ it in seeking state power.

British colonialism also played a crucial role in promoting ethno-racial political mobilization among groups. By the early 1920s, Zanzibar society was already divided into various communal associations pursuing group interests. Established civil society organizations were formed along these lines e.g. the African Association, the Shirazi Association, the Arab Association, the Indian Association, etc. Trade unions as well as political parties followed similar ethnic and racial patterns. Amongst all the groups, it was the Arab community that was highly favoured by British policies. The Arabs were preferred for recruitment in government bureaucracy as well as for representation in the colonial advisory body – for instance, representation in the Protectorate Council which was formed in 1914 and constituted the Sultan, the British, Arab and Asian communities. The composition remained more or less the same with the establishment of the Legislative Council (Legco) in 1926 in which the Arabs constituted the largest representation of all racial groups (Lofchie 1965, p. 65).

It was not until 1946 and 1947 respectively that two Africans of Shirazi identity were appointed to join the Legco. The selection of the Shirazi as representatives of the larger African majority was also a sign that the British defined the Shirazi as the indigenous Zanzibaris rather than Africans of Mainland origin. This led to further polarization within the African communities. The Africans of recent Mainland origin objected to this appointment, on the grounds that the Shirazi were of 'Asiatic' origin and hence could not be representative of Africans. In reply, the Shirazi argued that generational longevity in the islands had to be used as the criterion for representation, that is, the representative had to be an indigenous native of no less than five or six generations standing. This created a hurdle for the aspiring African representation of recent Mainland origin (Bennett 1978, p. 246).

Moreover, other policies of racially based opportunities were practised in education, agriculture and even in food rationing. During the time of food scarcity in the Second World War, a racially based formula was employed whereby Europeans and Asians (Arabs and Indians) were given preferential treatment over Africans. Europeans received bread, rice and meat and sugar, Asians received rice, while Africans received maize meal and beans (Mbwiliza 2000, pp. 4–5). With regard to education, Arabs were favoured more than any other group in admission to schools and scholarships, creating wide education inequalities among the

population. All this led to the increasing appeal for many Shirazi to aspire to an Arab identity, partly because of the associated benefits that were attached to it. This 'arabisation' process, as Glassman calls it, was achieved by various means, including owning clove plantations and acquiring an Arab name conferred by Arab dignitaries at an arranged function (Lofchie 1965, Glassman 2000, Mukangara 2000, Bakari 2001).

Furthermore, in the early 1950s, the British colonialists put in place mechanisms to prevent the Arab landed aristocracy from total collapse following the fall of the world market price for cloves.⁷ As a result of the severe economic crisis, the Arabs became heavily indebted to the Asian merchants and exporters, compelling the British to undertake several measures, including the adoption of legislation forbidding the alienation of land from Arabs and Africans to Asians, except with the consent of the British Resident. This was geared at preventing the transfer of property and funds from the Arabs to the Asian community. In justifying the need for a comprehensive plan to rescue the failing Arab economic position, one British officer is reported as saying that 'The real case for taking measures for the preservation of the Arab ... rests on grounds which are not economic ... The state of Zanzibar is Arab in origin and constitution' (Lofchie 1965, p. 14). The Attorney General of the colonial government was quoted in the legislative debates as saying: 'This is an Arab state. It is the duty of the protecting government to assist the protected people. It is impossible for us to stand by and take the risk of the expropriation of His Highness' people' (Lofchie 1965, p. 60). Thus defined as an Arab state, the British ended up perpetuating racial differences in Zanzibar along with a deep sense of collective struggle along ethno-racial lines.

With the advent of party politics in the mid-1950s, the Arabs were the first to effectively organize themselves into a political party called the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP), formed in 1955. Education and property ownership provided the Arabs with the upper hand in organizing themselves into an effective party machinery demanding independence from the British colonialists. Based on the appeal of common Islamic religion and the advocacy of multi-racialism, the ZNP was able to draw a significant level of support from the the African Shirazi. In 1957 the fragile union between the Shirazi Association and the African Association led to the formation of the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP). Whereas the ASP attracted Africans of Mainland origin and the Unguja Shirazi (the Hadimu), the ZNP drew its membership largely from Arabs, the Pemba Shirazi and the Tumbatu. However, the inherent tension within the African community could not keep the ASP unified. In 1959, a segment of the Pemba Shirazi broke away and formed their own political party, the Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party (ZPPP), thereby reducing ASP support in Pemba. In electoral politics, the ZPPP maintained a closer relationship with the ZNP than with the ASP.

Pre-independence elections were a reflection of deep political divisions, largely along racial-ethnic lines. In all four elections, campaigns were dominated by contrasting platforms and policy agenda reflecting ethno-racial interests. The ASP emphasized the unity of all Africans who had to struggle against Arab domination. It called into question the legitimacy of Arabs owning land, since they were foreigners, and presented both the Arab Association and the ZNP as groups composed of aliens (Lofchie 1965, p. 175). Indeed, Africans who joined the ZNP were referred to as 'ignorant Africans' (Mapuri 1996, p. 46). The ASP campaigned

for the redistribution of fertile land to Africans, as well as the so called 'Zanzibarization' of the civil service through recruiting more Africans into the higher echelons of administration (Lofchie 1965, p. 216). With regard to the eviction of African squatter-farmers by ZNP landowners, Abeid Karume, who later became the first president of the Revolutionary government, once remarked that 'the land belongs to you (Africans). Whoever tried to stop you is pouring petrol over himself with one hand and lighting it with the other. Only trees belong to the alien land owners' (Bureau of African Affairs 1963, p. 168). The aim of the nationalist struggle was to create an 'African self-government', as it was put in the *Afrika Kwetu*, an ASP-affiliated newspaper. And that 'anything short of an African state will never be accepted when self-government is achieved in this Protectorate. We are also opposed to multi-racial government in these Islands' (Lofchie 1965, p. 168).

Having realized that they constituted a minority and needed to build majority support, the Arab-led ZNP party campaigned for the building of an Islamic multi-racial society as opposed to the ASP's concept of Zanzibar as an emerging African state. In many of their campaign speeches,⁸ the ZNP maintained that a vote for the ASP meant christianizing Zanzibar, destroying Islam, and Tanganyika taking over (Lofchie 1965, p. 207). Given the ZNP resentment towards Africans of Mainland origin, its appeal to multi-racialism was more rhetoric than reality. This resentment was accompanied by the ZNP's desire to protect the 'purity' of Zanzibar's culture from being infiltrated by unwanted influences. In support of restricting citizenship for African Mainlanders, the ZNP argued that 'we in this country possess traditions which we cherish ... To allow hardly assimilated immigrants to have a say in our political life has tended to disrupt this heritage which has bequeathed to us by our ancestors' (Zanzibar Protectorate 1960, p. 52).

In addition, the ZNP advocated mechanisms to safeguard the monarchy. In the ZNP recommendation to the Constitutional Commissioner in 1960, it is stated that 'the dignity, position, correct attitude in dealing with affairs of state, achieved through the personality and wisdom of our present Sultan, should be preserved constitutionally' (Zanzibar Protectorate 1960, p. 52). It is in this context that the ZNP were proposing the adoption of a bicameral legislature, with a lower house composed of elected members and the upper house composed of members nominated by the His Highness the Sultan.

Just as the ASP's appeal was based on fear of Arab domination, the ZNP's appeal was based on the fear of domination by Mainlanders. It proposed a strict citizenship requirement in order to control what it called the 'cheap citizenship' granted to a large class of immigrants, making them eligible to 'compete on equal terms with the native nationals for the few sources of employment and educational facilities available ... the exercise of political rights by such a section of the population is a mockery of democracy, and a direct threat to the economic wellbeing of the people' (Zanzibar Protectorate 1960, pp. 51–52). *Al Falaq*, the Arab Association newspaper, also made remarks perpetuating division among Africans that 'the majority of Africans are aliens', thereby discrediting the merger between the Shirazi and other Africans (*Al Falaq*, 17 April 1957). Multi-party competitive elections were marred by incidents of violence and civil unrest, and social life became highly politicized whereby, for instance, squatters (African Mainlanders) were evicted from ZNP member-owned plantations, ASP, ZNP or ZPPP supporters could not attend each other's social ceremonies, and Africans boycotted Arab-owned shops.

In all four pre-independence elections, the ASP was able to win by either a plurality or majority of votes but failed to translate its votes into a legislative majority. This was mainly due to the inherent defects of the first-past-the-post electoral system, as well as the British-engineered gerrymandering of electoral constituencies. The ASP's strong electoral base happened to be in areas where the Hadimu and Mainland Africans were the majority. ZNP/ZPPP's strong electoral base was in areas where the Pemba Shirazi, Arabs or Indians were in the majority. Thus in terms of party affiliation, Zanzibar was divided almost evenly between the two political groupings.

The 1957 elections were geared at electing six members to the Legco. Attempts to form an internal government became futile in January 1961 when two members of ZPPP decided to align themselves with the ZNP. The other member decided to align with the ASP, creating a deadlock of 10 seats for each side. This led to the formation of a transitory coalition government between the ASP and the ZNP. An alliance between the ZNP and the ZPPP in the elections of June 1961 provided them with a majority of seats to form an internal self-government with the ASP as an opposition party. The July 1963 elections were set as the prelude to independence. Constituencies were re-demarcated and increased from 23 to 31. To a large extent, this process, which is prone to 'gerrymandering', favoured the ZNP: for instance, an additional constituency was added in the ZNP stronghold of Stone Town despite its small population in relation to others.

Independence in 1963 brought to power a coalition of the pro-Arab ZNP and the smaller ZPPP, leaving the ASP as an opposition party even though it had obtained 54% of the votes cast. Another significant development took place a few months before the July 1963 elections. Due to differing views within the ZNP, the radical left wing faction of the party broke away and formed the Umma Party, which had a socialist orientation. It did not file its own candidates for the elections but supported those of the ASP. This association between the Umma Party and the ASP was instrumental in pushing the latter towards a socialist position.

The struggle over who should control the state was concluded by the triumph of the Arab minority and a segment of the African Shirazi, which led to the adoption of the constitutional monarchy with the Sultan as the head of the state and a Shirazi as the prime minister. Upon coming to power, the new government began its exclusive and repressive policies. Signs were evident that the ZNP/ZPPP government was equipping itself with the aim of creating an exclusive state by enacting policies that favoured the ruling elite and its supporters while excluding those of the ASP. It

Table 1. Election results in 1957, 1961 and 1963 elections (percentage of votes and actual number of seats).⁹

Party	ASP		ZNP		ZPPP		Others	
	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats
July 1957	60.1*	5	21.6	–	–	–	16.6	1
Jan. 1961	43.25	10	38.46	9	18.27	3	–	–
June 1961	50.6	10	35.5	10	13.5	3	–	–
July 1963	54.2	13	29.8	12	15.9	6	–	–

Note: * This percentage includes the votes of the two independents from Pemba.

Table 2. Distribution of seats between Unguja and Pemba in the 1957–63 elections.

Party	ASP		ZNP		ZPPP		Others		Total constit.
	Unguja	Pemba	Unguja	Pemba	Unguja	Pemba	Unguja	Pemba	
Election									
July 1957	3	2*	–	–	–	–	1	–	6
Jan. 1961	8	2	5	4	–	3	–	–	22
June 1961	8	2	5	5	–	3	–	–	23
July 1963	11	2	6	6	–	6	–	–	31

Note: * These seats were won by the two independents in Pemba who were only affiliated with ASP.

became apparent that inclusion in the government was equated with inclusion in a particular community and vice versa, a tendency very common in divided societies (Horowitz 1994). Laws were enacted that restricted the activities of political parties, the press and civil society organizations. The Umma Party was among the first victims of these draconian laws as it was banned on 6 January 1964 and its assets confiscated by the government. Treason charges were being prepared against some of the leaders of the opposition (Babu 1991). ‘Arabization’ of government posts was taking place at a faster rate by removing Europeans and Mainland Africans from the police force and other posts and replacing them with Arabs, Asians and Shirazi (Lofchie 1965). In order to benefit the larger plantation owners, many of whom happened to be Arabs and Asians, the government adopted a policy that made loans available to landowners according to the size of their holdings (Bennett 1978). The fear of the continuation of the Arab state was aggravated by these exclusive measures. Having secured the popular vote, ASP supporters did not understand their failure to form the government: they regarded the ZNP/ZPPP government as being led by the alien minority and hence illegitimate. All this clearly shows the problematic nature of the Zanzibar state.

Thus to the African majority, 1963 independence equalled Arab independence, as About Jumbe, who later became the Karume’s successor in 1972, once remarked in the Legislative Council debate in September 1961: ‘I should ask the Honourable Council to look at the word and consider when we talk of independence what exactly do we mean. To whom? To one-third of the population of our country ... When two-thirds of the country have no say in it?’ (Zanzibar Protectorate 1961, p. 16). The origins of the Revolution go back some years, and led to the outbreak of violent unrest on 12 January 1964, which overthrew the Arab oligarchy and installed an African-led government.¹⁰ It is estimated that more than 5000 Arabs were killed, many more were detained and their property confiscated or destroyed (Yeager 1989, p. 27). The Revolutionary government confiscated a total of 611 homes and 60% of confiscations occurred in Stone Town, a residential area for Arabs and Asians (Myers 2000, p. 443). The ZNP/ZPPP government ruled for about one month only. With the Revolution, control of the state shifted to the African majority: it put an end to competitive politics and suppressed all other parties with significant following and electoral support.¹¹ The Arab and Shirazi (especially the Pemba Shirazi) identities came under severe attack.

The 1964 Revolution marked a significant turning point for the character of the Zanzibar state, and it crushed the Arab power base. ZNP/ZPPP supporters were either forced to comply with the regime or flee the country. The identity of the state

became categorically defined as African. The move towards socialist ideology also became evident with social welfare policies on land distribution and nationalization of economic ventures. Yet its regime remained fragile due to fear of counter-revolutionary attack by the Sultan and his supporters. The United States was also getting increasingly uneasy about the potential rising of 'another Cuba' off the East African coast, and plans were afoot for intervention to neutralize the radical faction of the Revolutionary government.¹² Competing factions within the ASP itself, between the left wing and the reactionary revolutionary die-hards, created a great deal of instability. All this created an environment for the union between Zanzibar and Tanganyika on 26 April 1964. This marked the continuation of the struggle for the preservation of state identity and the beginning of a new struggle for state sovereignty vs. the Union government.

From 1964, with neither competitive elections nor constitution, Zanzibar was ruled by decree making it almost impossible for any social group to challenge the regime.¹³ Any dissent was severely suppressed. Thus the incentives for politicized politics were significantly minimized. Zanzibaris, like other Tanzanians, were referred to as 'peasants and workers'. There was no reference to ethno-racial categories in formal discourse. Some previous members of the ZNP/ZPPP were actually incorporated into the civil service while others assumed political posts. Overall, they were not seen as posing a serious threat to the regime.¹⁴ It is important to point out that in spite of capturing state power, the majority of ASP members and supporters constituted the same group that had long been excluded from educational advancement. This compelled them to rely on the expertise of their erstwhile enemies, previous supporters of the ZNP and the ZPPP.

The Union was forged between J.K Nyerere and Abeid Karume as an immediate step to neutralize the radical faction of the ASP, as well as to ensure security of the new Revolutionary government. Only three months after the Revolution, Zanzibar united with Tanganyika to form the United Republic of Tanzania. The fully-fledged African state of the People's Republic of Zanzibar was short-lived. It enjoyed sovereign power for only three months before surrendering part of it, and becoming a micro-state under the Union government. Being in power for a mere 100 days, Zanzibar's merger with the larger partner state created another part of the problems surrounding the status of the state.

Throughout its existence, the state of the Union has been rather shaky due to its alleged questionable legitimacy, inherent structural defects, difficulties of sharing costs and benefits and increased demands for autonomy. Tanzania is a unitary state with a two-government structure. This structure includes the Union government with the union executive, legislature and the judiciary. The Union government is also responsible for Tanzania Mainland issues. The Zanzibar government possesses a semi-autonomous status with its own executive, legislature and judiciary and exercises its sovereignty over domestic matters and all non-union matters. Union matters are broad, including a wide range of areas which cover a significant part of the sovereignty of the Zanzibar state. The original Article of the Union consisted of 11 union matters which have increased over the years to 22. Foreign affairs, defence and security, police, emergency powers, citizenship, external borrowing and trade, mineral oil resources, higher education, court of appeal and registration of political parties are just some of a long list. The composition of the Union list has been a centre of controversy between

Zanzibar and the Union government. For the Zanzibar government, the longer the Union list, the more the sovereignty of the Zanzibar state is eroded.

As a result, the struggle for state sovereignty vs. the Union government persisted. This was clearly observed during the 1983/84 constitutional debates in Zanzibar where the demands for autonomy were raised by the people and even by the state-owned media. As one famous programme aired by Radio Tanzania, Zanzibar, lamented, 'We want our Islands back ... we don't want a Union of one or two governments. We want a federation so that each part has its own government and its flag' (Peter and Othman 2006, p. 63). Various attempts by the Zanzibar government to assert its pursuit of increased autonomy were met with outright rejection by the Union government, thereby preventing any progress towards this goal. It was in this context that Zanzibar's President Aboud Jumbe was forced to resign in 1984 because of his intention to call for a Special Constitutional Court to determine the fate of Zanzibar. Later in 1988, the former Chief Minister, Seif Sherrif Hamad, and some Cabinet members were also expelled from the party and forced to resign, partly because of their pursuit of autonomy for Zanzibar.¹⁵ Thus, the struggle for control of the Zanzibar state continued even after the Revolution and the overthrow of the Arab-led regime. However, rather than being waged along ethno-racial lines, the struggle came to be between the islanders vs. Mainlanders (or, in Swahili, '*Wabara* vs. *Wazanzibari*')

Yet the Revolutionary government was not unified. It was divided between the so-called Liberators and Frontliners (Mapuri 1996). The former were the veterans and staunch advocates of the Revolution. The latter group consisted of those who were seen to have loyalties to the ousted Arab regime. Some of these were incorporated in the government from the defunct Umma party, ZNP and ZPPP. Though united in their quest for Zanzibar autonomy, they differed on the ways and means of attaining it. This forced the ruling regime to engage in the politics of struggle for autonomy, while at the same time seeking power consolidation within the Revolutionary government. This led to arbitrary arrests and detention of certain leaders, and suppression of any kind of dissent against the Revolutionary government from any quarter.

Furthermore, the re-establishment of the East African Community in 1997 and the ongoing process to create the East African Federation are further blows to the character of the Zanzibar state. Some elements in the Revolutionary government of Zanzibar would prefer to join the Federation as an independent state (*Daily News*, 15 March 2007). This becomes difficult as Zanzibar is part of Tanzania and, given its semi-autonomous status, it cannot be party to the proposed Federation which is supposed to be a conglomerate of independent states. Some members in Zanzibar's legislature prefer a more gradual approach until problems in the Union are resolved. In a 2004 Research and Education for Democracy (REDET) survey, more Zanzibaris were opposed to the proposed Federation than Mainlanders. What is striking about the contested sovereignty of the state under multi-party competitive politics is its politicization along ethno-racial lines. It is to this discussion that we now turn.

Multi-party democracy and the resurgence of politics of identity

With the re-introduction of multi-party competition, old political divisions and memories have come to the fore. In the urge to win elections, memories, symbols and beliefs of the past are becoming politicized to an alarming degree. Unlike in

Tanzania Mainland where post-independence one-party dominance continues, Zanzibar is a typical case of a two-party system with two major parties competing vigorously against each other. These are Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and the Civic United Front (CUF). Based on their platforms and electoral patterns, CCM and CUF are largely an extension of the old division between the ASP on one side and the ZNP/ZPPP on the other. The major opposition party, CUF, seems to be a replicate of the previous ZNP/ZPPP alliance while the ruling party, CCM, fully represents the old ASP interests (Mmuya and Chaligha 1993, Mukangara 2000). Four decades after the 1963 elections, both parties still command electoral support in their traditional constituencies. CUF tends to draw a majority of its support from Pemba and among non-Africans, while CCM is supported primarily by Unguja islanders and Africans. In the 1995 elections, whereas CCM won all of its 26 parliamentary seats in Unguja, CUF won all the seats in Pemba, and three seats in Unguja Stone Town and the enclave of Tumbatu.¹⁶ In the 2005 parliamentary elections, CUF won all the seats in Pemba and one seat in Unguja Stone Town. It is important to point out that re-demarcation of constituencies prior to the 2005 elections partly accounts for the electoral patterns observed. These changes involved increasing the number of constituencies in Unguja from 29 to 32 and reducing those in Pemba from 21 to 18. This was partly because of shifting demographic patterns. Thus despite an increase in the CUF vote in Unguja during the 2005 elections, it was able to win only one constituency there. As Table 3 shows, CUF won three seats in 1995 in Unguja with only 25.5% of the vote and won only one seat in 2005 with 41.5% of total votes.

Geographical distribution of electoral support for the presidential candidates shows the same patterns of CUF and CCM electoral support. About 91% of CCM presidential votes came from Unguja while only 9% were obtained from Pemba. In contrast, 42% of CUF presidential votes were obtained from Unguja and 58% from Pemba. Compared to the 1995 election results, CUF seems to be expanding its support base in Unguja while that of CCM seems to be shrinking in Pemba. It is therefore getting increasingly difficult for CCM to break the rigidity of Pemba's electorate while it is becoming easier for CUF to convince the electorate in Unguja. It is nevertheless more likely that the CUF votes in Unguja are from people from Pemba, who have migrated to Unguja seeking opportunities in business and education. The expansion of the CUF support base in Unguja has taken place more

Table 3. Elections for Zanzibar House of Representatives (1995–2005).

Election year/party	Party	Pemba			Unguja		
		Votes	% Votes	Seats	Votes	% Votes	Seats
1995	CCM	21,632	13.9	–	134,399	86.1	26
	CUF	118,716	74.7	21	40,212	25.5	3
	Others	–	–	–	–	–	–
2005	CCM	23,346	10.3	–	203,713	89.7	31
	CUF	115,693	58.5	18	82,117	41.5	1
	Others	3,083	22.7	–	10,501	77.3	–

Source: ZEMOG 1995 Report, NDI 2005 Report.

dramatically in the urban western region than in other regions where there has been the fastest population increase in Zanzibar.

The revival of multi-party politics in 1992 brought in its wake not only the potential for democratization, but also the revival of unresolved questions surrounding control of the state and its identity and status. For the regime in power, democratization can potentially lead to losing control of the state, its African identity, and the possibility of being ruled by what they see as being the remnants of the Sultanate oligarchy. State sovereignty is also at stake, given the fact that the policy of the major opposition party is to re-acquire what they call 'the lost glory of Zanzibar sovereignty'. During elections, campaigns have assumed the vivid racial tones of Africans vs. Arabs. During the 1995 campaigns, for instance, in predicting victory one CUF leader said that 'elections would lead to the end of a black man's rule' (Mapuri, 1997, p. 3). The CUF presidential candidate is quoted as saying that 'the African-led Revolutionary government has been far more brutal than the Arab aristocracy' (Mapuri 1996, p. 77), and 'that people's living standards were better off before the Revolution than it is today' (TEMCO 2006, p. 58). To CCM leaders and supporters, these statements were interpreted to mean that CUF intended to re-install the so-called 'Arab regime' if it captured power.

In their campaigns, CCM leaders warned their supporters that CUF was a party representing Arab interests and that voting for it would lead to the restoration of the Sultanate, and the subsequent break-up of the Union (Mapuri 2000, p. 3). Atrocities of slavery are usually recounted in many CCM campaign meetings, the common message being that 'if you bring CUF to power you will once again turn yourself into a slave'. It is this politicization of the memory of past racial relations that constitutes the main part of both formal and informal dialogue during campaigns, thereby promoting racial animosity between and among social groups.

Irreducible differences in policy outlook and platform are also observed between the two major parties. Whereas the need to cherish and protect the 1964 Revolution is stated in CCM party documents and reiterated in various public forums, CUF questions the legality of the 1964 Revolution. It has declared that it will pay reparation and/or return confiscated property, including homes and land, to the pre-revolution owners, and will convict all those proved to have engaged in arbitrary killings and torture during the time of the Revolutionary regime (ZEMOG Report 1995, p. 84). Whereas CCM formally supports the Union and its existing

Table 4. Zanzibar presidential election results (1995–2005).

Election year	Political party	Presidential elections			
		Total votes	Percentage	Unguja votes %	Pemba votes %
1995	CCM	165,271	50.24	87.4	12.6
	CUF	163,706	49.76	39.0	61.0
2000	CCM	248,095	67.04	–	–
	CUF	122,000	32.96	–	–
2005	CCM	239,832	53.18	90.6	9.4
	CUF	207,773	46.07	42	58
	Others	3,403	0.75	–	–

Source: ZEMOG Report (1995), TEMCO Report (2000).

two-government structure, CUF advocates the sovereignty of the Zanzibar state through the establishment of a federal three-government structure. Indeed, the CUF election manifesto calls for the suspension of the additional union matters pending a comprehensive review of the Union's structure and jurisdiction.

Based on this, the struggle over the identity of the state is vigorously waged. Having gone through the highly competitive 1995 elections, Omari Mapuri, the former Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Education in Zanzibar,¹⁷ who believes that CUF leaders in Zanzibar are only *de jure* leaders and that the *de facto* leaders are Zanzibari Arabs in the Gulf, makes a strong case for the African identity of the Zanzibar state by arguing that 'the Zanzibar population is predominantly black; the colour of indigenous Africans'. And in so doing there is a need to ensure that 'the great 1964 Revolution remains for ever and that Zanzibar remains African'. That is the only way that Africans as the majority of Zanzibaris can determine their own fate and the destiny of Zanzibar (Mapuri 1997, pp.41, 83). At the climax of politicized racial politics during campaigns, CCM regards all those who support CUF and those hailing from Pemba as one, and they are all generically labelled 'Arabs' (Waarabu). For CUF, on their part, the Africans and those who support CCM are largely portrayed as 'Mainlanders' ('Wabara').

This trend has been accompanied by allegations of discrimination in the civil service based on 'Upemba' (TEMCO 2000, p. 106). It is important to point out that a tendency towards 'ethnicizing' state bureaucracy was promoted by the colonial government. It was continued and intensified by the ZNP/ZPPP government in its brief reign (December 1963–January 1964). In the 1980s, the then Minister for Education, Seif Sherrif Hamad, was also accused of being biased for recruiting and providing scholarships to his fellow Pembans. Following the disputed election in 1995, many civil servants hailing from Pemba were either fired or arbitrarily transferred. Fair and equal opportunities of employment, regardless of party affiliation or one's origin to the 'special forces' of Zanzibar, were among the agreements reached in the 2001 Reconciliation Accord.

Part of the racially based campaigns is the mobilization of youth by the two major parties. Both have youth wings that play a critical role during election campaigns by providing security and mobilizing voters. CUF youth wingers are known as 'Blue guards' while CCM's are nicknamed 'Janjaweed'. The rising militancy among these youths has raised fear and security concerns, especially during campaigns when these groups have been alleged to engage in acts of terrorizing and intimidating voters.¹⁸ Furthermore, despite the fact that about 99% of Zanzibaris are Muslims, there have been some signs of religious animosity during electoral campaigns. CUF is blamed for being a Muslim party 'with an intent of establishing an Islamic state' (Mapuri 1997, p. 5). Moreover, categorization is being made even among Muslims themselves. Some consider themselves as 'clean Muslims' (largely CUF supporters) while others are regarded as 'Kaffirs' (largely CCM supporters) (TEMCO Newsletter 2005c; Mmuya and Chaligha 1993).

As a result of all this, competition for control of the state has turned out to be very intense and at times violent. The contested character of the Zanzibar state makes it very appealing for politicians to resort to the politicization of racial identity in order to claim legitimacy to rule, and subsequent preservation or reconstruction of the identity and sovereignty of the state. This struggle tends to have adverse effects on democratic consolidation in Tanzania in general and Zanzibar in particular.

Implications of competing political identities and democratic consolidation

Elections become an instrument to maintain state power

Repetitive competitive elections in 1995, 2000 and 2005 have not been able to withstand the power of the politics of identity expressed at various stages of the election process. Exclusion of voters based on the labels of 'Wapemba' vs. 'Wabara' has been a recurrent feature of the registration and voting processes in both islands of Unguja and Pemba. In the 2005 elections, for instance, cases of exclusions of 'Wapemba' were reported in Unguja North region and some exclusion of 'Wabara' was observed in North Pemba (TEMCO Newsletter 2005b). Both political parties have been engaged in various manipulations to maximize their chance of electoral victory including importing voters into Zanzibar, strategic use of security personnel registering as voters, and outright refusal to register some eligible voters based on their areas of origin and party affiliation.

Furthermore, in monitoring and supervising the voter registration process the two dominant political parties engaged in both mobilizing and demobilizing potential voters based on their origin and/or race. In the 2005 registration to a Permanent Voter Register (PVR), a distinctive case of de-mobilization happened in the Makaani in Ole constituency in Pemba North region. Makaani hosts people of Mainland origin, particularly the Makonde, Sukuma and Nyamwezi. Many of these are Zanzibaris and have been living in Makaani for decades. Yet despite their eligibility, TEMCO observers found that some CUF supporters threatened these residents not to show up for registration. Similar cases were reported in Unguja North region, where the Shehas (local government representatives), were barring some people from registering simply because they originated from Pemba (TEMCO Newsletter 2005a).

Moreover, CUF's resentment against the 'Mainlanders' partly stems from their belief that the Union government contributes to the manipulation of the election process by sending the military personnel during voter registration and voting. In the 2005 elections, registration of voters near military camps created a great deal of chaos and disharmony when CUF supporters attempted to prevent military personnel from registering. There were allegations that military personnel not residing in the camp were brought in to be registered in several of the registration centres (TEMCO Newsletter, 2005b). Table 5 shows the registration patterns near military camps in only one district of Zanzibar. In all these centres the registration of voters exceeded the estimated number of voters by a large margin.

Thus in the context of stiff competition for the control of the state, the gap between the established formal rules and what really takes place persists in repeated rounds of elections, making these less useful in consolidating democracy. In this case, 'when departures from democratic framework are not just one feature of the system but a recurring and defining feature, they signal a lack of commitment to the basic procedural framework of democracy' (Diamond *et al.* 1997, p. xxi).

Ambivalent popular support for institutions of democracy

Citizens' support for democracy is considered to be an important ingredient for the consolidation of democracy in a country. That is when all relevant actors find

Table 5. Turnout in registration centres in Central District with military camps nearby.

Registration centre	Military camp ¹⁹	Estimated voters	Registered voters	% of registered voters
Ubago School	Ubago TPDF	441	1402	317.91
Machui School	Machui JKU & FFU	696	1060	152.30
Posta Kaepwani	Unguja Ukuu Navy (KMKM)	1268	2076	163.72
Tunguu School	Tunguu Fire Brigades	520	556	106.92
Marumbi School	Marumbi KMKM	561	876	156.15
Dungabweni School	Dunga JKU & TPDF	1520	2106	138.55
Jendele School	Jendele JKU	907	1366	152.81
Cheju School	Cheju Prison	971	1163	119.77
Bambi Sec. School	Bambi JKU	1336	2125	159.06

Source: TEMCO 2006, p. 216.

democracy to be ‘the only game in town’ in which various issues, including conflicts, are expected to be resolved within and not outside the democratic framework. Thus the ‘unquestioning embrace of democratic procedures’ by a significant segment of the citizenry is indeed a crucial element of consolidation (Diamond *et al.* 1997, p. xviii). Unlike in Tanzania Mainland, citizens’ support for multi-party democracy in Zanzibar is comparatively low. According to a 1999 survey, whereas about 54% of respondents in the Mainland supported multi-party democracy, only 41% in Zanzibar shared the same view. In contrast, more than half the respondents (51%) in Zanzibar expressed their support for the old single-party political system. Indeed, a majority of these respondents happened to be members of the ruling party, CCM (72.2%). All respondents who reported that they belonged to the opposition party, CUF, expressed support for the multi-party system.

Compared to the 1999 Afrobarometer’s average level of support for Africa (64.3%), Zanzibar’s rate of 41% was low, lagging behind other African countries (Bratton and Mattes 1999, p. 6). Seven years later the support for multi-party democracy in Tanzania as a whole seems to have increased significantly for both the Mainland and Zanzibar. According to the survey undertaken by REDET in March 2006, over two-thirds of the respondents in Tanzania expressed their support for the multi-party competitive system (63.3%). Compared to the average African level of support of 61%, as established by the 2006 Afrobarometer study of 12 countries, Tanzania was above the average (Bratton and Cho 2006, p. 17). However, when the REDET 2006 survey data is disaggregated, there is a marked difference in the level of support between Zanzibar and the Mainland. Whereas 65.5% of respondents in Tanzania Mainland supported multi-party democracy, the support level in Zanzibar

Table 6. Tanzanians’ support for party systems (March 1999).

Party system	Tanzania	Mainland	Zanzibar
Multi-party system	51.5 (299)	54.4 (247)	40.9 (52)
Single-party system	40.4 (235)	37.4 (170)	51.2 (65)
No difference	8.1 (47)	8.1 (37)	7.9 (10)
Total	100 (581)	100 (454)	100 (127)

Source: Killian (2001).

was lower by 10% (55%). Indeed more respondents in the Zanzibar sample (34%) still preferred the one-party system than in that of the Mainland (25%).

Furthermore, the increase in the level of support for multi-party democracy among the citizens of Zanzibar from 41% in 1999 to 55% in 2006 is a very important signal for democratic consolidation, at least on the citizenry's side.²⁰ Indeed, the public in general has expressed a high level of racial tolerance even during times when their level of support for a multi-party political system has been low. Based on the 1999 survey, a majority of respondents seem to be comfortable with intermarriages between racial groups (see Table 8). This is largely attributed to a long history of intermarriage among different ethno-racial groups in Zanzibar society. Indeed, a majority of the respondents reported that they would agree if their daughter/son married a person from a different political party. This likewise seems to reflect the political realities in Zanzibar, where one family can consist of members belonging to different opposed parties.

However, when it comes to religion, about 68.5% of the respondents expressed their reluctance to allow inter-religious marriages. Given the fact that about 99% of Zanzibaris are Muslims, this finding is not actually a surprise. What is surprising is the Zanzibaris' orientation towards accepting a political leader from another racial group. An overwhelming majority of respondents reported that they would mind if their member of parliament (MP) happened to come from a different racial group (77%), or was of a different religion (72%). Ironically, although they can tolerate social interactions through inter-racial marriages, many Zanzibaris seem to be less tolerant of political leadership by a different race or religion. Moreover, whereas a majority of Zanzibaris seem to be supportive of a certain level of competition between political parties (58%) and free media (57.5%), a majority of them are less

Table 7. Tanzanians' support for party systems (March 2006).

Party system	Tanzania	Mainland	Zanzibar
Multi-party system	63.3 (857)	65.5 (690)	55.3 (166)
Single-party system	27.9 (369)	25.4 (267)	34.0 (102)
No difference	9.4 (127)	9.1 (96)	10.7 (32)
Total	100 (1353)	100 (1053)	100 (300)

Source: REDET Opinion Poll, March 2006.

Table 8. Racial tolerance among Zanzibaris (1999 survey).

Questions	Would agree	Somewhat agree	Would disagree	Depends on his/her decision	Total
Son marry from different racial group	59.8 (76)	2.4 (3)	21.3 (27)	16.5 (21)	100 (127)
Daughter marry from different racial group	56.7 (72)	4.7 (6)	22.8 (29)	15.8 (20)	100 (127)
Son marry from different political party	51.2 (65)	4.7 (6)	27.6 (35)	16.6 (21)	100 (127)
Daughter marry from different political party	59.1 (75)	4.7 (6)	25.2 (32)	11.0 (14)	100 (127)
Son marry from another religion	11.8 (15)	4.7 (6)	68.5 (87)	15.0 (19)	100 (127)
If your MP is of different race/colour	Don't mind	Somewhat mind	Would mind	Don't know	Total
	14.2 (18)	7.1 (9)	77.2 (98)	1.6 (2)	100 (127)
If your MP is of different religion	17.3 (22)	8.7 (11)	71.7 (91)	2.4 (3)	100 (127)

receptive of the idea of alternation of power between one party and another, which is a crucial element of democratic competition. As Table 9 shows, 56% of the respondents believed that only CCM should be allowed to rule. All this poses a challenge to democratic consolidation.

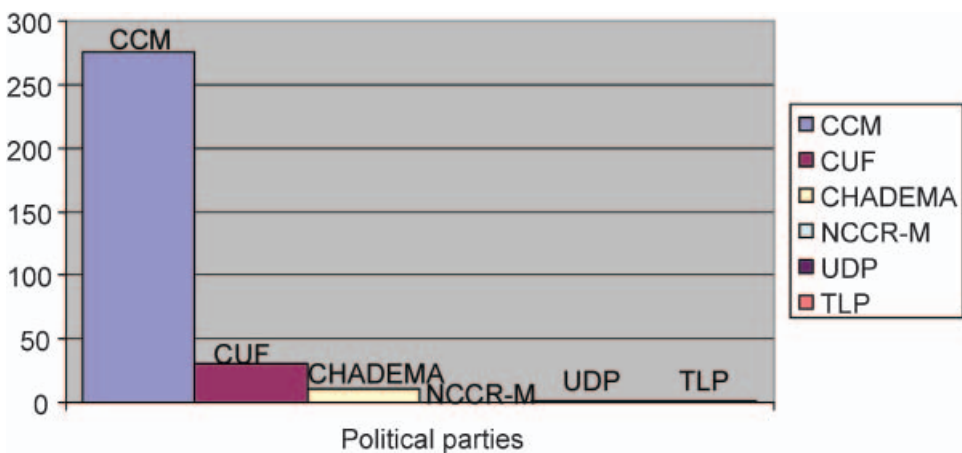
CUF's status as the leading opposition party in Tanzania is at risk

Since 1995, CUF has been the leading opposition party with the highest number of seats in the Union parliament, despite the fact that a majority of its seats are derived from Zanzibar. In the 2005 Union election for instance, CCM led with a total of 275 seats, followed by CUF which secured 30 seats (see Figure 1).²¹ Yet despite having the largest share of parliamentary seats in the Union parliament, CUF lost all of its constituencies in the Mainland, won all the parliamentary seats in Pemba, and secured only one in Unguja.²² Nevertheless, unlike other opposition parties in Tanzania, CUF has a strong social base held together by a perceived common history and a collective sense of marginalization.

CUF's electoral performance can partly be explained by the increased politicization of ethno-racial identities during election times. Labels attached to

Table 9. Respondents' support for institutions/processes of democracy.

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree	Other	Total
All political parties be allowed to hold public meetings	58.3 (74)	7.1 (9)	24.4 (31)	10.3 (13)	100 (127)
Government critics should not contest for national leadership	28.3 (36)	3.1 (4)	59.8 (76)	8.7 (11)	100 (127)
Privately-owned media should be restricted	18.9 (24)	11.8 (15)	57.5 (73)	11.8 (15)	100 (127)
Only CCM should be allowed to rule	55.9 (71)	0.8 (1)	39.4 (50)	4.0 (6)	100 (127)



Source: Tanzania's National Election Commission (NEC): Election Reports, 2005.

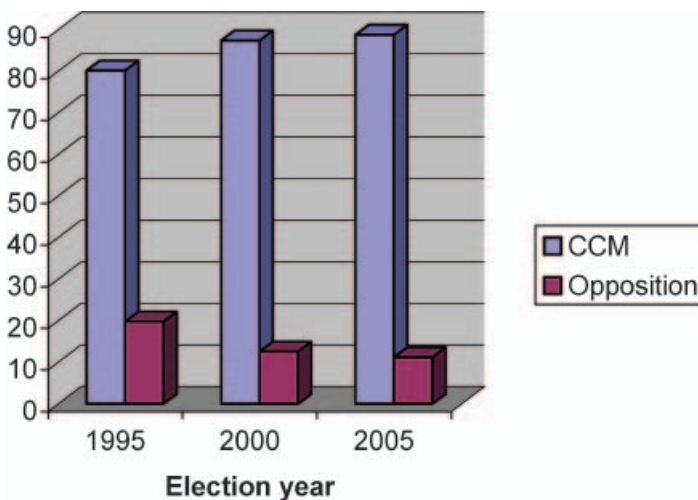
Figure 1. 2005 parliamentary seats by parties.

CUF as being a ‘Pemba’ party’, ‘Islamic party’ or ‘Arab party’ make it difficult to expand its social base to the Mainland. Indeed, what happens in Zanzibar tends to create a spillover effect for CUF’s performance in Tanzania Mainland.

Overall, however, it is important to point out that all opposition political parties in Tanzania, including CUF, are facing difficult times in establishing an electoral social base on the mainland. In Union elections, CCM secured an overwhelming victory in all three competitive general elections of 1995, 2000 and 2005. Figure 2 clearly indicates that the percentage of seats for CCM has increased from about 80% in 1995 to about 89% in 2005 of all constituency seats in the house. In contrast, the percentage of seats for opposition parties declined from about 20% to a mere 11%. As a consequence, Tanzania as a whole can be categorized as a dominant one-party system with the exception of a few areas, including Zanzibar, which exhibit the vibrancy of a two-party system. At the same time, while it has been difficult for CUF to expand its electoral base on the mainland, the divisive politics and rigidity of Zanzibari voters also make it extremely difficult for the Mainland-based political parties to make inroads in gaining electoral support in Zanzibar. Thus, the dynamics of party competition in Zanzibar seem to have some effect on the development of effective opposition and the consolidation of democracy in Tanzania as whole.

The state of the Union

The struggle for state power in Zanzibar also seems to have an effect on the state of the Union. As the Union government grapples with how to mediate political conflicts in Zanzibar and/or control the political processes in Zanzibar, it at times gets in the way of the Revolutionary government’s moves to consolidate power.²³ This tends to put the government of Zanzibar on the defensive, hence adding fuel to its pursuit of autonomy. The introduction of multi-party competitive politics has



Source: Tanzania’s National Election Commission (NEC): Election Reports, 1995, 2000, 2005.

Figure 2. Parliamentary seats (%).

therefore been accompanied by increasing assertiveness on the part of the Zanzibar government for more political space and autonomy from the Union.

As a result, the Union government is being compelled to make significant concessions, including holding regular meetings between Union government officials and Zanzibar government officials under the leadership of the Union Prime Minister and Zanzibar Chief Minister to discuss problems pending in the Union. A new ministry has been created under the Vice President's Office dealing with union matters. On its 41st Revolutionary anniversary, Zanzibar inaugurated its own flag. Although the flag is not supposed to be raised at international forums, it has provided a significant symbol for the autonomy of the Zanzibar state. Moreover, the Zanzibar government has outlined 15 union matters that should be removed from the Union list (Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar 2004, pp. 2–4). They include: oil and natural gas, higher learning, post services and telecommunication, external trade, taxation, international relations, industrial licensing, research, statistics, harbours, aviation, police and intelligence. In addition, it has proposed the introduction of a bicameral legislature, comprising an upper chamber dealing with union matters and a lower chamber handling other issues. The call to have a separate police force and intelligence service may be seen as the government's attempt to enhance its coercive instruments of state power. Thus, amidst fierce political competition, the Zanzibar ruling elite is waging a battle on two fronts – the Opposition and the Union government.

The survival of the Union has been critical for reasons beyond the spirit of pan-Africanism and African unity. Just as security concerns were among the important determinants for the Union in 1964, the same concerns seem to be the driving force for the Union. For the Union leadership in the Mainland, the concerns stem from the perceived fear that if left alone, Zanzibar may pose a threat to Tanzanian security due to its historical links to the Arab world and emerging signs of radical Islam, particularly among the youth. For the CCM Zanzibar leadership, the Union is a significant support in maintaining power. Thus for the political leadership, the necessity of the Union seems to be crystal clear. On the side of the public, however, more than half of the respondents (52%) in the 2004 nationwide REDET survey reported that they were unaware of the benefits of the Union. Out of the 48% who said they were aware, the following benefits were mentioned: peace and security (18.8%), social relations (10.3%), good leadership (8.2%), economic benefits for trade (6.6%), employment (1.5%), education (0.8%) and other benefits (1.9%) (REDET poll 2004).

Conclusion

The contested character of the Zanzibar state poses an obstacle to the consolidation of democracy in the islands. Given the fear of the perceived consequences of domination by another group, political competition for state power turns out to be fierce, violent and uncompromising. Politicization of ethno-racial identities is therefore employed in attempts to gain and regain control of the state, and to preserve or reconstruct its identity and sovereignty. Yet to many scholars and even practitioners, Tanzania represents a single unit for analysis, enabling them to make generalizations about the country's political behaviour and processes. This kind of analysis tends to ignore variations between the two partner states. Unlike on the

Tanzanian mainland, the nature of the state in Zanzibar turns out to be the main determining variable for democratic consolidation.

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Notes

1. The United Republic of Tanzania is a union of two formerly sovereign states, namely, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. After the 1964 merger, Tanganyika came to be referred as Tanzania Mainland. Zanzibar consists of two main islands of about one million people of whom 58% live in Unguja Island and 42% live in Pemba Island.
2. Zanzibar Election Monitoring Group (ZEMOG), International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), Commonwealth Observer Group, International Observer Group (IOG) and Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee (TEMCO)
3. This was the first time in the country's history that Tanzanians have sought refuge in a neighbouring country due to political conflicts and civil unrest.
4. For more detail on the tension between the rule-of-law development and autocracy (liberal or otherwise), see Carothers (2007).
5. Prior to 1832 the Omani Arabs could exercise their distant sovereignty in Zanzibar, which provided a certain degree of independence for the local rulers. In 1832 Sultan Seyyid Said of Oman decided to shift his capital from Muscat to Zanzibar, and it remained there until 1856 when Zanzibar became a separate entity from the Oman Empire.
6. The first commercial treaty signed between the Sultan of Zanzibar, Sultan Said Sultan and a Western country was with the United States, signed on September 1833, followed by the British in 1839 and France in 1844.
7. For details about the indebtedness of the landed agricultural class in Zanzibar see Lofchie (1965, chap. 4).
8. ZNP campaign speeches at Mkoani, Pemba on 13 April 1961 and Dunga, Unguja, 13 April 1961 as quoted by Lofchie (1965, p. 207).
9. All elections, except the 1963 elections, were carried out within a framework of limited enfranchisement in which voter qualification was based on gender (whereby women were excluded), on property and literacy level. Voting rights were extended to women from the June 1961 elections and universal franchise was adopted in the 1963 elections.
10. Indeed, some have argued that the 1964 violent revolution was motivated by both ethnic concerns – to establish Zanzibar as an African state – and ideological concerns – to institute a revolutionary Marxist regime. See Anglin (2000, p. 41).
11. The assassination of the first ASP president, Abeid Karume, in 1972 was seen as revenge for what happened during the Revolution.
12. On the role of the US in the formation of the 1964 Union, see Wilson (1989).
13. Zanzibar adopted the first constitution after the Revolution in 1979 Zanzibar Constitution and Elections were held from 1980.
14. Wolf Dourado, the Attorney General under Karume's Revolutionary government despite the fact that he was working with the ZNP/ZPPP regime (see Peter and Othman 2006, p. 51). Seif Sherrif Hamad held the highest post as the Chief Minister (1984–88) and later as Minister of Education (1977).
15. Seif Sherrif Hamad was the Zanzibar Chief Minister between 1984 and 1988, when he was summarily dismissed from his ministerial post and from the ruling party.

16. The 2000 elections were marred by serious irregularities, frauds and mismanagement which made international and domestic observers declare that they were 'fatally flawed'. Members and supporters of CUF boycotted the vote in a re-run of elections in 16 problematic constituencies and they also boycotted overseeing the counting of votes in the postponed constituencies.
17. Mr Omari Mapuri, who was also the Minister for Information in the Union government, is currently serving as Tanzanian Ambassador in China. He also served as the Director of Advocacy and Propaganda of the ruling party, CCM.
18. For details see TEMCO Newsletter (2005c); Brents and Mshigeni (2004).
19. Tanzania Peoples' Defense Force (TPDF); Field Force Unit (FFU); Reserve for National Service (JKU), Special Unit for Prevention of Corruption (KMKM)
20. It is important to note that although comparisons between the two surveys are made, the 1999 survey covered only eight regions in Tanzania whereas the 2006 survey covered all regions. Thus the comparison is only tentative, enabling us to get a general rather than a definitive trend of Tanzanian public opinion on democracy.
21. The number of parliamentary seats includes both those secured through direct constituency elections and special seats for women allocated to parties in accordance with their respective percentages of parliamentary votes.
22. Despite the fact that CUF did not win any legislative seats in Tanzania Mainland, it was able to gather about 14% of the total parliamentary votes in the Union elections. Also, although it did not win any seats, CUF was able to secure about 40% of parliamentary votes in each of the 15 constituencies in Tanzania Mainland.
23. For instance, back in 1995, the late Julius K. Nyerere advised the CCM leadership in Zanzibar to form a coalition government with CUF. The idea was categorically rejected. In his inaugural speech before the Union parliament on 30 December 2005, President Jakaya Kikwete stated his intention to deal with the political rift in Zanzibar. The Zanzibar CCM leadership denied the presence of any political rift in the islands.

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