The Costs of Party System Change: The Case of Tanzania

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Introduction

While the relationship between political stability/instability and development has received considerable attention from economists, sociologists and political scientists, considerably less attention has been paid to the socio-economic consequences of party system change or instability.

In their study of the impact of party system change on the quality of democracy in South East Asia, Nwokora and Pelizzo (2015) have presented a new measure that can be used to measure the magnitude of party system change during a historical period—or the changeability of a country's party system during that time. They use this newly created measure to investigate the relationship between party system change and the "quality of democracy." To measure the latter, they adopted a slightly modified version of the framework proposed by Morlino which assesses democratic qualities in terms of procedures (rule of law, electoral accountability, inter-institutional accountability, competition), outputs (freedoms, equality) and outcome (FDI). Applying these frameworks, Nwokora and Pelizzo (2015) found a statistically significant association between the changeability of a party system and two of the indicators used to assess the rule of law (physical integrity, corruption perception index), the indicator of inter-institutional accountability and with the outcome (FDI), but not with other procedural aspects of democracy or with the democratic outputs.

As Tanzanians prepare to go to the polls and the country awaits an election that could mark the end of the CCM rule, potentially ushering in dramatic change in the Tanzanian party system, analysing the relationship between the changeability of the Tanzanian party system and the various aspects of the Tanzanian democracy is both timely and valuable. This is so for at least two reasons. First, such an analysis provides a basis for assessing whether and to what extent the political consequences of party system change in Tanzania are similar to the observations made by Nwokora and Pelizzo (2015) for the South East Asian region. By doing so, we are also able to make a contribution to the comparative study of the consequences of party system change—a topic which, as Nwokora and Pelizzo (2015) reported, has not been adequately covered in the literature. Secondly, such an analysis can also enable us to make some tentative, but educated, guesses as to what may happen in Tanzania if, as many observers have repeatedly predicted, the Presidential elections of next October mark the end of the CCM's rule.

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Tanzania in the the Party Systems Scholarship

For over a hundred years party system attributes have been extensively investigated because they provided a clear indication of the characteristics and the functioning of party systems which, in turn, were regarded as having wide-ranging effects. Government stability, government effectiveness, duration of the constitutional order (Sartori, 1976; Mainwaring, 1993), quality of legislation (Tsebelis, 2002), government spending and public debt (Kontopoulos and Perotti, 1996)—to name just a few outcomes—have all been shown to be affected by party system attributes.

While scholars have devoted considerable attention to investigating the effects of several party system attributes on political-system functioning, the consequences of party system change—and the related notions of party system stability and instability—have drawn relatively little attention. We attempt to investigate exactly this problem in the context of the Tanzanian party system. Such an investigation contributes to the (still) small agenda of research on the consequences of party system change. Furthermore, because only a few studies have explored the pattern of inter-party competition in Tanzania (Nyirabu, 2002; Shaba, 2009), we hope that this research can contribute more generally to a better understanding of the Tanzanian party system.

The Tanzanian party system has seldom been investigated and the few studies have been somewhat limited in important respects. For instance, scholars have been less than consistent regarding how the Tanzanian party system should be categorized and uncertain as to whether (or not) the observed pattern of interparty competition was consistent with democratic practice.

Regarding the question of how the Tanzanian party system should be most appropriately categorized, party system scholars have taken various positions. Writing in the wake of the transition to multipartyism,[2] van Cranenburg (1995) argued that the Tanzanian party system could have evolved into a dominant-party system while Sanbrook (1996) suggested that it was too early to draw conclusions about how the Tanzanian party system had evolved. Nyirobu (2002) described the party system as being characterized by the presence of a dominant party and a plethora of irrelevant ones without however proposing a proper categorization, while Shaba (2009: 2) defined Tanzania as a "one party-state with a multiparty democracy."

The confusion as to how the Tanzania party system should be conceptualized was coupled with a confusion as to whether it should be regarded as democratic or not. In this respect, in fact,

[2] Tanzania adopted multiparty system in 1992 following recommendations from a presidential commission popularly referred to as the Justice Nyalali Commission in 1990. This resulted from the general consensus at the time that the then economic reforms stood no chance of succeeding unless robust political reforms were put in place. The commission was tasked to ask Tanzanians whether they wanted a single party or multiparty system. Ironically, despite the fact that 80% of respondents rejected a multiparty system, the Nyalali Commission went on to recommend a multiparty system. The decision was based on three main reasons: i) respondents who wanted single party system to continue, demanded reforms which could only work under multiparty system ii) the decision by the 80% respondent was driven by fear of the unknown having lived under single party system for so long and iii) 20% was a sizable amount of population whose voices needed to be heard (Rehani, 2012; Baregu, 2000).

Bogaards (2004) showed that depending on how democracy was conceptualized and measured the Tanzanian political system could be simultaneously regarded as democratic and non-democratic.

While scholars debated the democratic nature of the Tanzanian party system and how it could be categorized, they paid little attention to whether the pattern of inter-party competition in Tanzania was sufficiently stable to be regarded as a proper party system or whether it displayed the kind of instability that was associated with what Sartori (1976) considered 'fluid polities'. And, unsurprisingly given the little attention the Tanzanian party system has received, no attention was paid to assessing its stability/instability or to exploring the possible consequences of party system stability and instability for the Tanzanian polity as a whole.

From Party System Change to Party System Changeability

There are two plausible reasons why very few studies have explored the political consequences of party system change in Tanzania. The first reason is that the Tanzanian party system has, with a few exceptions, been largely neglected by party system analysts. Contributing to this is a second reason: that party system scholars have not had efficient and effective tools for measuring party system change. Studies customarily equated party system change with electoral change, party change, or changes in the cleavage structure, despite the fact that such changes could occur without altering the fundamental pattern of competition among parties—or the "functioning" of the party system.

The appearance or disappearance of what Sartori (1976) considered "irrelevant" parties represents a clear instance of party change, but precisely because these parties are deemed irrelevant their appearance/disappearance does not alter in any way the overall mechanics and functioning of a party system. Electoral change occurs of course whenever a party system changes. However, electoral changes do not necessarily produce party system change. Indeed, in most structured party system, elections where electoral change leads to party-systemic change are regarded as relatively exceptional events. Finally, while there is no doubt that a transformation of the cleavage structure and voter alignments is inextricably connected with the socio-political dimension of party system change, such societal changes can occur without transforming the format, mechanics and functioning of a party system. The point can easily be illustrated by the fact that a party system (e.g., the UK) in which a Conservative party competes against a Liberal party can remain solidly "two-party" if a new Labour party replaces the Liberal party as the major rival of the Conservative party.

While the party system literature has long explored the political consequences of party system attributes and party system "types," which are a function of specific attributes, following Nwokora and Pelizzo (2015) we are interested in the consequences of party system change understood as the change that occurs between party system types. This way we can explore not only whether democratic qualities (and possibly the stability of the democratic order) are sensitive to the presence (or absence) of specific party system types, but also how they relate to party system change.

In order to assess the changeability of the Tanzanian party system and to explore the relationship between the changeability of the party system and various qualities of democracy, we adopt a measure of party system changeability recently developed by Nwokora and Pelizzo (2015). This measure, called Index of fluidity, uses party system change over time to estimate the changeability of a party system. In doing so, the authors suggested that the index should capture

two distinct aspects of party system change, namely the frequency of change and its scope. The authors explained that the frequency of party system change can simply be measured by dividing the number of party system changes in the electoral history of a given country by the number of elections held in that country. The scope of change was assessed instead on the basis of two indicators, namely the number of different types which can be observed in a real-world party system during its historical development and the extent to which the mechanics (or functioning) of these types differed across these types. By combining the scope and frequency of change, Nwokora and Pelizzo (2015) created an index of fluidity to capture these salient aspects of party system change and changeability.

We plan to compute this index for Tanzania in order to assess the extent to which the Tanzanian party system has been stable over time, and on this basis whether this party system should properly be regarded as "fluid" or "structured." Most importantly, our fluidity computations provide a basis for assessing whether and to what extent there is any association between party system change in Tanzania and the changeability and qualities of the country's democracy.

Testing the Case

The most direct evidence regarding the structuring of the Tanzanian party system—evidence that is highly consistent with Sartori's conceptualization of fluid and structured polities—is the observation that the Tanzania party system has historically displayed very little fluidity.[3] The party system that emerged in the country as a result of the 1962 elections was a hegemonic-party system, in view of the high electoral returns of the ruling power and the very marginal role that other actors were able to play in the political/electoral arena. It was a "one-party" system, following Sartori's definition, for six consecutive elections as this was the period during which a plurality of parties was not legally allowed and multi-party competition was prevented from occurring; these are precisely the condition under which a party system with one relevant party qualifies as one-party. And it became a predominant-party system with the first multiparty elections held in 1995 and it has remained predominant until 2010.

The longevity of the party in power provides an indication of the stability of a party system that for about 50 years has remained stably centred on a single relevant party. However, the enduring incumbency of one party has occurred alongside change in broader constitutional arrangements. The 1965-1995 period of one-party rule can only properly be viewed as a dominant authoritarian system, using Sartori's categories, for the same party remained in power *as the sole legal party*. The party system remained solidly one-party for as long as this constitutional situation persisted, which was until 1992 when reforms to reintroduce multiparty competition were enacted. Even after this transition the party system has been very resilient to change. Thus, since 1965, there have been two systemic changes: a transformation from a hegemonic-party system to a one-party system in 1965 and from the latter to a predominant-party system in the wake of the 1992 reforms. It is precisely because of such 'resilience,' 'stickiness,' and 'stability'—to use Sartori's

[3] For instance, Shaba (2009) spoke of a one party system in spite of the fact that he acknowledged the existence of at least four institutionalized parties. In a similar vein, Basedau and Stroh (2008), who measured party institutonalization on the basis fo roots in society, congruence, autonomy and level of organization, showed that the Tanzanian ruling party (CCM) was the single most institutonalized party in their sample and that Tanzania had the highest score in terms of party institutionalization.

terminology—that it cannot not be considered a fluid polity in either its nondemocratic or democratic phases.

The stability of the Tanzanian party system emerges quite clearly from computing its fluidity score with the index of fluidity—see Table 1.

Table 1. Fluidity in Tanzania

Year of elections	Number of elections held to date	Number of party system changes to date	Types of party systems	Extent of change	Fluidity
1962	1	-	1	-	-
1965	2	1	2	1	1
1970	3	1	2	1	.66
1975	4	1	2	1	.50
1980	5	1	2	1	.40
1985	6	1	2	1	.33
1990	7	1	2	1	.28
1995	8	2	3	2	1.5
2000	9	2	3	2	1.33
2005	10	2	3	2	1.2
2010	11	2	3	2	1.09

The Tanzanian party system has traditionally had low fluidity. In the 48 years under consideration, fluidity has varied from a minimum of .28 to a maximum of 1.5 and it is now at 1.09. This is a fairly low value in absolute terms for a country that has held 11 elections. In fact, if no change had occurred the fludity index would have registered a value of 0 (zero). If the Tanzanian party system had changed in 10 of the 11 elections, had embodied all 7 party system types, with an extent of 6 the party system would have had a maximum fluidity score of 38.18.

The fact that Tanzania has a stable party system[4] emerges with some clarity once we compare the estimates of our computation for Tanzania with similar computations for other African nations. In 2012, the index of fluidity registered a value of 2.25 in Cameroon; 3 in Uganda; 3.27 in Benin and Zambia; 3.375 in Cape Verde; 3.6 in Angola, Senegal and Sierra Leone; 4.8 in Kenya, 6 in Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar, Mali; 6.4 in Mauritania; 8 in Sudan; and 10.28 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Tanzanian party system has displayed considerable stability even in comparison with non-

[4] Note that another presidential commission (Judge Kisanga Commission) was formed in 2000 and was tasked to "coordinate views on constitution". While this commission shied away from referring to Justice Nyalali's report, it endorsed a significant number of its recommendations (Rehani, 2012; Baregu, 2000). The Kisanga Commission went on to recommend for independent candidacy something which was and is still fiercely rejected by the ruling CCM. The obvious fear is that independent candidacy would breed party indiscipline which could eventually prove to be the demise of CCM.

African party systems. In fact, with a fluidity score of 1.09 the Tanzanian party system is more stable than the party system in Malaysia (1.16 in 2013), Cambodia (3.6 in 2013), Indonesia (4.8 in 2009), and Thailand (12.22 in 2011).

Party System Stability and its Correlates

Before employing our measure of fludity to investigate the consequences of party system stability in Tanzania, we plan to assess the validity and the reliability of the index of fluidity. With regard to testing the validity of the index, we correlate the index of fluidity with two measures of stability computed by the Center for Systemic Peace. The Center for Systemic Peace produces and regularly updates several datasets. The Polity IV dataset is best known for providing a wealth of information on various characateristics of a political system including its level or quality of democracy – which is tracked by a variable called Polity 2 – and its stability. Stability is measured by a variable called 'durable' which tracks the number of years without a change in the nature of a political system. The Center of Systemic Peace also compiles a dataset on State Fragility. One of the variables included in this dataset is called the State Fragility Index (SFI) which can be used as a proxy of political stability since the fragility of the state and the stability of a political system are two sides of the same coin – see Table 2.

By correlating the index of fluidity with these two measures of stability, we find that our index is strongly and significantly related to both the SFI and to the durability of a political system. Higher levels of state fragility are associated with higher levels of party system fluidity, whereas lower levels of durability (of the political system) are associated with higher levels of party system fluidity – see Table 2 and Figures 1 and 2.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis: Fluidity, Durability and State Fragility (sig.)

	SFI	Durable
Fluidity	.899 (.000)	-.966 (.000)
SFI	1.0	-.913 (.000)

Figure 1. Party System Fluidity and political system durability

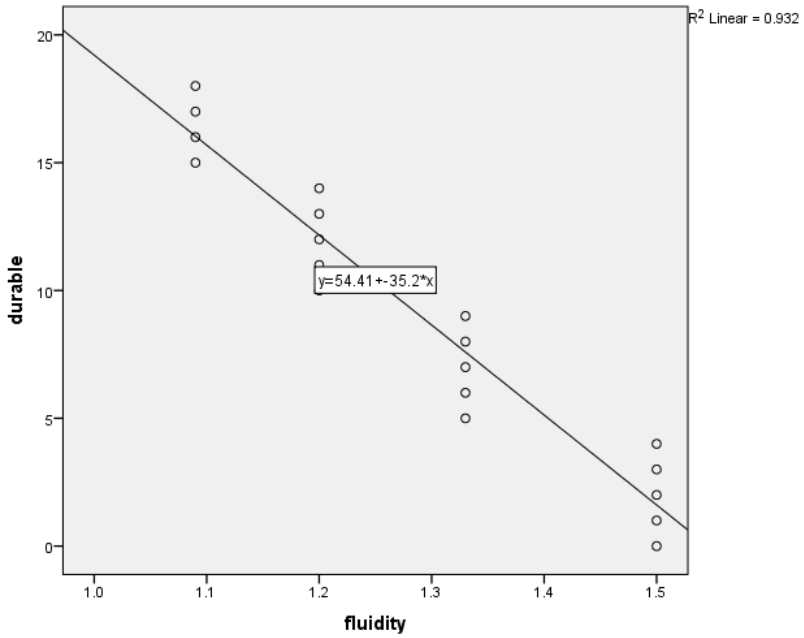
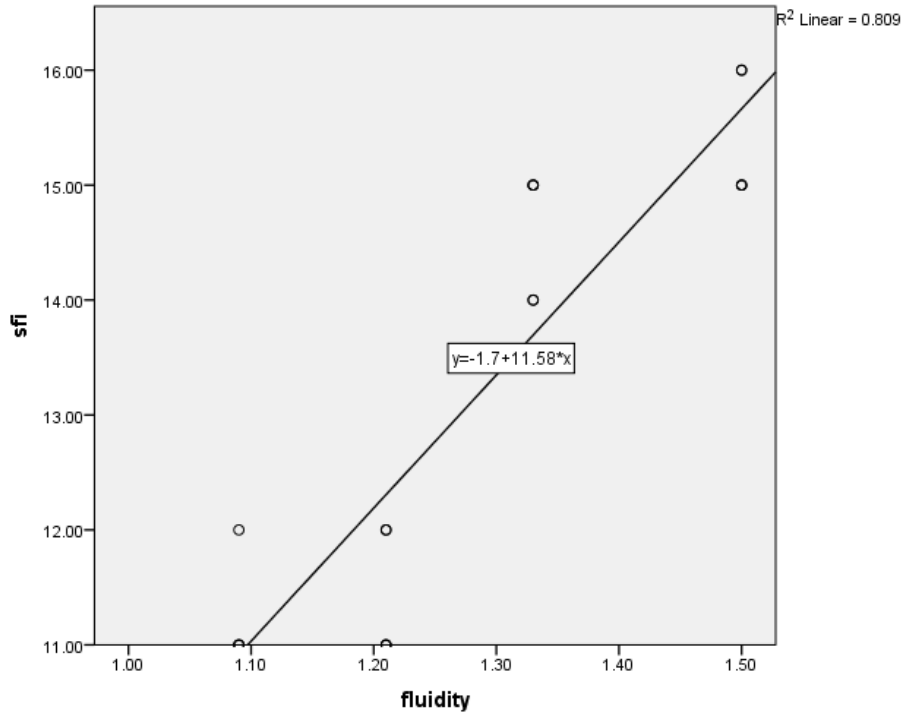


Figure 2. Party System Fluidity and State Fragility



Our estimates of fluidity are fairly stable and consistent over time. In fact, when we correlate the

levels of fluidity recorded for each year in the 1995-2013 period with one another, we find that all correlation coefficients are strong, positive and statistically significant – see Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation: Index of Fluidity (sig.)

	Index of Fluidity	Index of fluidity T-1	Index of fluidity T-2	Index of fluidity T-3	Index of fluidity T-4	Index of Fluidity T-5
Index of fluidity	1	.936 (.000)	.884 (.000)	.855 (.000)	.876 (.000)	.955 (.000)
Index of fluidity T-1		1	.928 (.000)	.870 (.000)	.841 (.000)	.862 (.000)
Index of fluidity T-2			1	.928 (.000)	.870 (.000)	.841 (.000)
Index of fluidity T-3				1	.928 (.000)	.870 (.000)
Index of fluidity T-4					1	.937 (.000)
Index of Fluidity T-5						1

While the evidence presented so far sustains the claim that the index of fluidity is valid and reliable, it provides no indication as to whether party system instability has any detectable impact on the quality or the qualities of Tanzanian democracy.

Party System Changeability and Democratic Qualities

In the South East region, the changeability of the party system had no significant impact on electoral self-determination, levels of political competition, civil liberties, and political rights, but it had a significant impact on physical integrity, levels of corruption, inter-institutional accountability and foreign direct investments.

By analyzing the Tanzanian data for the 1995-2014 period, we find that there are both similarities and differences in the way in which party system changebility affects the various democratic qualities.

Table 4. The Political Consequences of Fluidity (sig.)

	Index of fluidity
Physint	.051 (.846)
Control of corruption	-.507 (.054)
XCONST	*
FHPR	.894 (.000)
FHCL	.816 (.000)
FDI	-.493 (.032)

* cannot be computed because XCONST is constant

With regard to the differences, our data analysis reveals three major differences. First of all, while in the South East Asian region party system changeability was shown to have a statistically significant impact on physical integrity, party system changeability has no impact whatsoever on physical integrity in the Tanzanian case. This means that party system changes and the corresponding increases in party system changeability are not related to citizens' physical integrity. Second, while party system changeability had no impact on the level of political rights and civil liberties in South East Asia, the data analysis conducted in the course of this study reveals a strong, positive, and statistcially significant correlation between party system changeability and the level of rights and liberties. Specifically, higher levels of party system changeability are associated with and possibily responsible for lower levels of civil rights and political liberties. This evidence indicates, therefore, that party system changeability, in addition to not improving democracy (as in the case of physical integrity) and possibly worsening it (as in the case of corruption), significantly damages the quality of democracy in terms of outputs. Third, while the party system changeability was shown to have a strong and significant impact on the level of inter-institutional accountability, as reflected by the XCONST variable included in the Polity IV database, it has no detectable impact in the Tanzanian case. In fact, in the 20 years under consideration there was no change in the level of interinstitutional accountability, despite fluctuations in the level of fluidity.

With regard to the similarities, our data analysis reveals three basic similarities. First, just like in the South East Asian region, the level of competition in the Tanzanian political system is not affected by fluctuations in the level of party system changeability. Second, as in South East Asia, higher levels of party system changeaility are associated with, and possibly are responsible for, a greater inability to control corruption or with higher levels of corruption. Third, just like in South East Asia, the level of Foreign Direct Investments is strongly, negatively and statistically significantly affected by party system changeability. This means that when party system change occurs and the level of party system changeability is high, the amount of FDI flowing into a country tends to decrease. This correlation can be intuitively explained: investors do not like uncertainty and the changeability of the party system is perceived to increase the uncertainty of doing business in a given country and, as a result, investors tend to refrain from investing in places with high changeability/uncertainty.

Drawing together these various observations, an important conclusion emerges: In contrast to South East Asia, where party system changeability was shown to have at least some beneficial impact on some qualities of democracy, in the Tanzanian case the changeability of the party system is consistently detrimental. In terms of procedure it is associated with more corruption, in terms of outputs it is associated with an erosion of rights and liberties, and in terms of outcome it is associated with a decline in international standing, reputation, and credibility as evidenced by the fact that international investors are deterred from investing in countries with a highly changeable party system.

Conclusions

Tanzanians may well be looking forward to ousting CCM after all these years in power, to having a more competitive party system, and to ending what has been a long-standing predominant party system (Nwokora and Pelizzo, 2014). And, quite understandably, they may also hold high expectations for the new government and hope, in particular, that its policies will improve development in the country. However, the data presented here sugget reasons for

caution. In many cases, the few decisive party system changes in the past have not improved democratic qualities. Worse, in some cases the party system change and corresponding increases in party system changeability have been associated with a clear deterioration of democratic qualities.

If the next party system change is going to be as momentous as observers expect it to be, there is a chance that the instability it creates will not improve democratic qualities, and may even lead to a deterioration in such qualities, and perhaps also problems in attracting FDI. In combination, the prospects for development may not necessarily be enhanced by the significant political transformation that observers predict. The sad lesson that one should learn from our data is that stability has merits and that change for the sake of change, and perhaps even change in the hope of a better, more democratic, more prosperous future, may actually pave the way to less prosperity and to a more dysfunctional democratic order.

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