

The Authoritarian Turn in Tanzania

Dan Paget is a PhD candidate at the University of Oxford, where he is writing his thesis on election campaigning in sub-Saharan Africa, and in particular the uses of the rally. While living in Tanzania in 2015, he witnessed the general election campaign and the beginning of Magufuli's presidency first-hand.

Abstract

Since 2015, Tanzania has taken a severe authoritarian turn, accompanied by rising civil disobedience. In the process, it has become a focal point in debates about development and dictatorship. This article unpicks what is happening in contemporary Tanzania. It contends that Tanzania is beset by a struggle over its democratic institutions, which is rooted in rising party system competition. However, this struggle is altered by past experience in Zanzibar. The lessons that both government and opposition have drawn from Zanzibar make the struggle in mainland Tanzania more authoritarian still. These dynamics amount to a new party system trajectory in Tanzania

The Tanzanian general election of 2015 seemed like a moment of great democratic promise. Opposition parties formed a pre-electoral coalition, which held. They were joined by a string of high-profile defectors from the ruling CCM (Chama cha Mapinduzi, or the Party of the Revolution). The defector-in-chief, Edward Lowassa, became the opposition coalition's presidential candidate and he won 40 per cent of the vote, the strongest showing that an opposition candidate has ever achieved in Tanzania. The emergence of a strong opposition in Tanzania is not only a blow to the ruling party, but in many ways a symbolic development. CCM was formed by the amalgamation of two political parties. First, Tanganyika and Zanzibar, a nearby archipelago of islands in the Indian Ocean, joined to form the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964. Then TANU (the Tanganyika African National Union) on the mainland and ASP (the Afro-Shirazi Party) in Zanzibar merged to form CCM in 1977. Whether you count from the time that TANU came to power in 1961, or the year that the ASP came to power in 1964, CCM is the longest-ruling party in sub-Saharan Africa. Together, CCM and its predecessors outlasted their sister socialist parties in Zambia and Uganda. Equally, they assumed power before other self-identifying African liberation movements which still rule today, such as in South Africa and neighbouring Mozambique. Tanzania is an enduring bastion of single-party dominance in the region, and not only by virtue of its longevity; in 2005, CCM's presidential candidate garnered 80 per cent of the vote, and as recently as 2009, Barack Hoffman and Lindsay Robinson decried the 'missing opposition' in these pages.¹ CCM should be lauded for its many achievements, but it has also become an emblematic case of ruling party hegemony. In this context, the consolidation of the opposition in Tanzania was potentially transformative. It presented the possibility of a more democratic polity.

Over a year later, there are few signs that the 2015 general election was part of a process of 'democratization by elections',² at least not part of a straightforward route to that end.

Instead, 2015 was a turning point for Tanzania, during which the country was set on a different path and since which it has become not more democratic, but less so. The first strand of this new trajectory in Tanzania to emerge is a concerted attempt to reign-in government rent-seeking and to relaunch state-led industrialization led by newly-elected President John Pombe Magufuli. While some of Magufuli's actions smack of public performance, such as on-the-spot dismissals and executive orders, the signs indicate that CCM is genuinely embarking upon a new program. The second and more disturbing strand of Tanzania's new trajectory is a sharp authoritarian turn. CCM has overseen a raft of laws and regulations that narrow political space and constrict the opposition. While infringements on democratic norms are not uncommon either in sub-Saharan Africa or in Tanzania, the new measures go further than most in shrinking political space. Increasingly, the new CCM administration is associated not only with the promise of development, but the threat of dictatorship.

Understanding the origins of Tanzania's new political course and the destination that has been charted is important not only for Tanzania, but for the region. East Africa is in a moment of democratic recession. Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Congo are all electoral authoritarian regimes of one breed or another on Tanzania's borders. While it is important not to exaggerate their similarities, each of these regimes benefits from the presence of regimes in the region that champion authoritarian development. Tanzania's new administration has become a flashpoint in an international debate about democracy and development in sub-Saharan Africa, and proponents and opponents of developmental authoritarianism alike have a stake in its fate.

In many ways, the closure of political space is a reminiscent to a familiar past. From 1965 until 1992, Tanzania was a one-party democracy. There were few natural rivals to the party and its government in the early years. Accidents of history left Tanzania with small ethnic

groups concentrated on the periphery, each ill-suited to serve as the basis for political opposition. However, TANU and later CCM took no chances. Each in turn directed a highly successful nation-building program in which a national language, national history, foreign affairs, socialist ideology, government employment and government policy were all pressed into service to foster a sense of country and people. Potential opponents such as the chiefs, the trade unions and the cooperatives, were stripped of their powers and replaced by state bodies. Private accumulation was quelled by nationalization of industry and a leadership code for party and government officials. Rival political parties were proscribed by law. The armed forces and party were institutionally tied. The National Executive Committee of the party enjoyed *de jure* supremacy over the National Assembly. Opponents of the regime were preventatively detained and media houses were brought under public ownership. Tanzania's first president Julius Nyerere assumed a position of saint-like virtue in the popular imagination, and the legitimacy of nation and party alike became intertwined with how he is remembered.³ Through these methods, and others, CCM stifled dissent and quelled its opponents until the transition to democracy in 1992.

Many of those authoritarian measures were carried over into the multiparty era. As Göran Hydén describes in these pages, Tanzania's transition to democracy was led by the CCM leadership in spite of lackluster public appetite for it.⁴ This elite-led transition was administered from a position of strength, and many of the authoritarian laws from the previous regime were retained. As a consequence, CCM remained entrenched in the Tanzanian state. Various authoritarian infractions have been documented since transition: newspaper bans, media bias, constituency-boundary gerrymandering, interrupting opposition campaigns, meddling in civic associations' politics, and harassment by state officials, in particular by security forces, have all been recorded.⁵ In all these respects, state power has been used and abused to preserve CCM's hegemony.

In spite of all these democratic deficits, the consensus was that until at least 2010, CCM's dominance was 'soft', not 'hard' or openly authoritarian. The party repressed, but was careful to repress discretely and sparingly. Over time, CCM developed a dense network of party structures, incorporated associations into the party, and used its state power to endow the party with resources. CCM has not resorted to authoritarian methods to maintain power more because it has not needed to. As Yonatan Morse concludes 'CCM is not an overtly authoritarian party but utilizes a highly effective party structure that has country-wide reach.'⁶ Through these structures, CCM enjoyed a commanding, seemingly unassailable electoral position, unthreatened by ill-organized and unpopular opposition parties. This privilege position sets Tanzania in marked contrast to some of its more authoritarian neighbors. In Richard Whitehead's judgement 'overt repression appears to be less central to the CCM's patterns of incumbency maintenance when compared with nearly every other sub-Saharan transition case with continued party dominance.'⁷

This article documents an interruption and perhaps an end to that era in which CCM relied on party machinery and state largesse more than suppression to preserve its rule. It also analyzes the beginning of another trend: the opposition's adoption of the politics of protest. With the benefit of almost two years' hindsight, it is clear that the 2015 general election in Tanzania brought not only an anti-corruption president. It ushered in a new era of party politics in Tanzania in which authoritarianism and civil disobedience define the relations between government and opposition to degrees that they did not before. While Magufuli has become the face for recent authoritarianism in Tanzania, he should not be mistaken for its cause. The trends that have emerged since October 2015 have their roots in slow changes that were gathering pace in Tanzania for a decade, some of which echo patterns elsewhere, and some of which are uniquely Tanzanian.

The New Authoritarianism

Since the beginning of 2015, CCM has taken a sharp authoritarian turn. An early sign was the Cybercrimes Act, which was introduced to Parliament in February and enacted in May. It makes the online publication of information with intent to insult, abuse, threaten or defame a criminal offense if the publisher knows the information to be false, deceptive, misleading or inaccurate. Under these broadly defined offences, a spate of individuals has been convicted just for insulting Magufuli, in most cases for insults which were published on Whatsapp groups. Under the auspice of Article 31 of the same act, police raided two centers at which civic organizations and opposition parties were parallel-tabulating votes. The act restricts the freedom of speech and thereby narrows online political space for partisan mobilization. The independence of researchers in particular has been curtailed by the Statistics Act, which legislates on the generation and publication of statistics.⁸

Putting that legislation to one side, media suppression has been extended in three ways. Firstly, there has been a new wave of arbitrary suspensions of newspapers, including *Mwananchi* and *Mtanzania* in 2013, *The East African* in 2015 and *Mawio* in 2016. Secondly, the government ended live television coverage of Parliament. In its stead, Parliament now releases selective and vetted material. Thirdly, and most severely the Media Services Act was enacted in November 2016. The act creates two new state-sponsored bodies, one with the authority to issue and revoke licenses to news outlets, and another with the powers to accredit and revoke the accreditation of journalists. Though both bodies are nominally independent, the appointment rules grants the state substantial control over each body. Under the provisions of this act, regulations have been promulgated which restrict foreign ownership of newspapers. Among the media outlets that this will affect are *The Citizen* and *Mwananchi*, both owned by *Nations Media Group*. . The act also reintroduces offenses for defamation and sedition with broad definitions, which have already been used to tie-up opposition leaders,

journalists and media houses in numerous court actions. In all these respects, CCM has sharply narrowed the public sphere in which the government can be criticized, and the ways in which electoral fraud can be reported. Whatever authoritarian methods the party practiced before 2015, it has added the aforementioned instruments to its repertoire since then.

Just as seriously, the present administration in Tanzania is advancing the limits of its authority, legal or otherwise, to infringe upon individuals' freedom of expression. In March of this year, Tanzanian rapper Emmanuel Elibariki was arrested for releasing a satirical song which offered a veiled criticism of the president. Fleeting, the song was also banned from radio and television. While alone this incident amounts to little, it is representative of shift in government culture. Tanzania's government has become intolerant of public dissent, and it has frequently responded to criticism with arrests, license revocations and state harassment designed to punish. It has singled out individuals and recurrently hinted that it is willing to curtail debate through censorship, especially in the press. In March of this year, Magufuli declared 'Media owners, let me tell you: 'Be careful. Watch it. If you think you have that kind of freedom - not to that extent'. This remark was not an isolated comment. In late 2016, Magufuli declared that two unnamed newspapers' 'days were numbered'. As the severity of government threats and action have increased, so has self-censorship in Tanzanian.

The same indignant use of authority and the disregard for due process was equally on display when in February this year, a direct presidential appointee Paul Makonda produced an unsubstantiated list of people which he alleged were connected to drug trafficking in Tanzania. The list included the Chairman of Tanzania's leading opposition party, Freeman Mbowe. Various people from this list were then called by the police for questioning, which had the semblance of a public witch hunt.

However, the most repressive new measures concern public assembly. On June 7th 2016, an indefinite police ban was imposed on public meetings. It might not seem obvious why a

ban on rallies is such a severe infringement on political freedom, but in fact, there is no country on the continent in which such a ban would be more politically repressive than in Tanzania. Tanzania has the best attended election campaign rallies in Africa. Data from Round 5 of the Afrobarometer, a cross-national African opinion survey, shows that 72 percent of all respondents in Tanzania reported attending a rally in the 2010 election.⁹ The average rate across the continent is just 37 percent.¹⁰ In a country where 18 and 53 per cent of respondents report getting daily news from television and radio respectively, this rate of attendance make the rally a vital channel of political communication. Presumably, the ban will be lifted for the two month election campaigns of 2020, but regardless, in this context the ban is tantamount to curtailment of the freedom of expression.

At the end of July in 2015, this ban was relaxed to permit rallies held by sitting MPs in their constituencies, but rallies that do not meet these restrictive criteria remain forbidden. However, permitting sitting MPs alone to convene rallies is particularly prejudiced against the opposition. Firstly, CCM hold 252 of the 367 seats in the National Assembly, and so the terms of the ban constrain it less than its opponents. Secondly, it has been inconsistently applied. Police have often permitted CCM officials to convene rallies since the ban was introduced. In fact, Magufuli defended the ban on public meetings while himself addressing a rally. Thirdly, and most importantly, the leading opposition party Chadema relies upon rallies for party-building between elections. Between 2007 and 2015, Chadema's leaders convened public meetings where it had previously been weak outside of the election campaign season. These rallies were part of a program of establishing local party organs; at those gatherings, the party would recruit new members and organize them into local branches. Holding rallies outside of the election campaign period was one of the only ways for Chadema to make enough progress in party-building to rival CCM. Tundu Lissu, a leading member of Chadema's Central Committee, explained that 'the only way you win is if

you start early.’¹¹ The ban on public meetings impedes the efforts of the opposition to develop as institutions, and to spread their messages between election campaigns. CCM has always drawn from the ‘menu of manipulation’, but since 2015 at least, CCM and its new president have drawn more authoritarian measures into service to lengthen their advantages over their opponents.

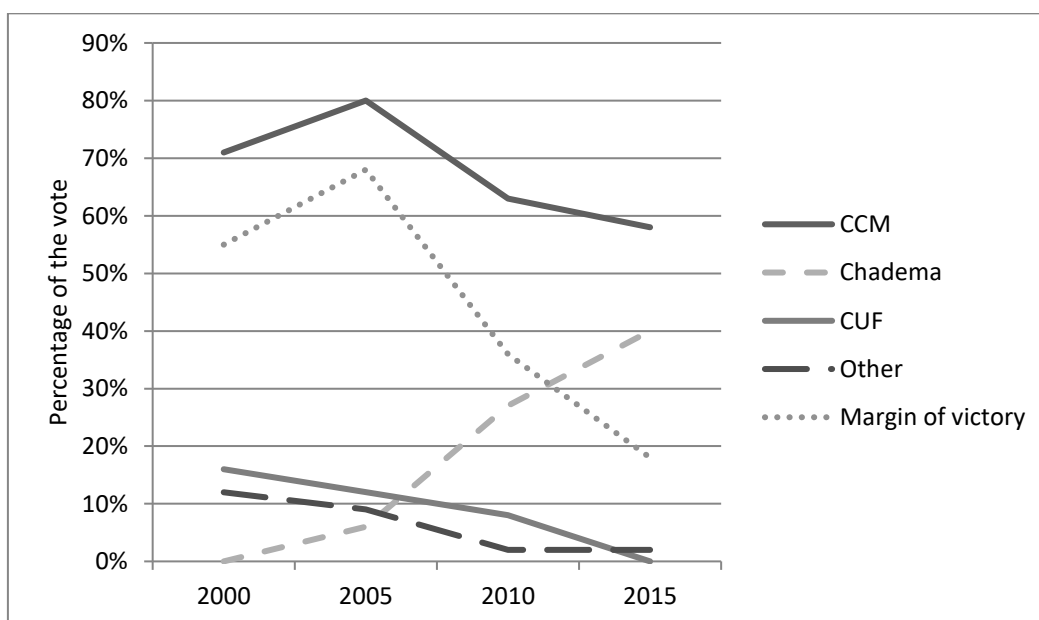
CCM’s New Strategy

The temptation in popular analyses of Tanzania has been to attribute CCM’s new authoritarianism to Magufuli himself. Since his election as president in 2015, many have remarked on his *authoritative* style of leadership. Some have suggested that he is *authoritarian* too.¹² It is true that Magufuli’s administration bears some of the hall-marks of delegative democracy. He makes great use of executive orders, countenances no criticism, undermines judicial independence and overrides horizontal checks and balances. However, while Magufuli is the identifiable symbol of the closure of political space in Tanzania, he is not the primary cause of it. To begin with, the sequence of cause and effect is wrong. A raft of authoritarian measures was being rolled out before Magufuli took office. The Media Services Bill, the Cybercrimes Bill and the Statistics Bill were in the National Assembly more than five months before he was appointed as CCM’s presidential candidate in July 2015. Magufuli could not plausibly have been directing these changes behind the scenes, because his nomination was a surprise outcome. He held little power in CCM himself, and he won his party’s nomination as a compromise candidate between the party’s warring factions most likely orchestrated by former presidents Jakaya Kikwete and Benjamin Mkapa. Instead, Magufuli has embraced an authoritarian agenda that he inherited. In short, it’s not just Magufuli’s new authoritarian direction; it’s CCM’s new authoritarian direction.

CCM narrowed political space in response to recent changes in Tanzania’s party system. CCM’s margin of victory fell steadily from an unassailable 68 percent in 2005 to 18 percent

in 2015, as shown in Figure 1. In short, CCM’s lead has shortened, which makes it vulnerable. Over that period, the opposition in Tanzania has grown and cohered. Most accounts of the opposition’s rise privilege developments at the elite level, not least the defection from CCM and the opposition pre-electoral coalition described above. However, the most important changes in Chadema took place below the surface. Chadema engaged in a major party-building exercise between 2004 and 2015. By its own estimates, Chadema oversaw the elections of committees of 51,947 foundations or neighborhood units and 16,359 branches by 2014.¹³ Those low-level organs endow the party with local presence and mobilizational strength. In parallel, Chadema attracted a wide selection of funders from Tanzanian business. These resources and organizational assets give it durability. While Chadema’s purchase on particular issues and the popularity of its leaders may come and go, Chadema’s organizational strength and funding will anchor the electoral strength of the party.

FIGURE 1: MARGIN OF VICTORY IN TANZANIA



Source: National Electoral Commission of the United Republic of Tanzania

The changing political party landscape in Tanzania means that for the first time since independence, CCM faces a credible and enduring electoral threat. It has become possible, even if not likely that the opposition might win some election in the near future if it were free and fair. Hoffman and Robinson remarked in 2009 that ‘it is an open question how the party [CCM] will react if a nationally competitive opposition party should manage to emerge.’¹⁴ Now, it seems, that question has been answered. CCM has demonstrated that it is willing to drastically narrow political space to reduce the likelihood of opposition victory to an acceptable level. As Ruth Carlitz and Keith Weghorst conclude ‘their [CCM’s] actions are consistent with the behavior of a ruling party willing to hold onto power at any costs.’¹⁵ In doing so, CCM follows in a long tradition of dominant parties in hybrid regimes that turn authoritarian as the threat from the opposition grows. Action is always shaped by a mixture of structure and agency, but the root cause of CCM’s new authoritarianism lies in the changes in the party system, not the leadership or character of Magufuli himself.

However, Magufuli’s anti-corruption agenda both relieves and compounds the electoral vulnerability of CCM. In one respect, it helps CCM by redeeming it to the public. Over time, CCM acquired a reputation for embezzlement and self-enrichment, a reputation that opposition parties and their growing local structures were happy to foster. A series of grand corruption scandals crystallized that image of the party in the popular imagination. Extraction from the state is not contrary to CCM’s interests per se; the party’s electoral strength is fortified by its access to state funds both licit and illicit. However, many conclude that the scale and public exposure of CCM rent-seeking had become dysfunctional. Hazel Gray, in particular, argues that by 2015 CCM had lost the ability to constrain rent-seeking in the collective interests of the party.¹⁶ Magufuli’s anti-corruption program should be interpreted as an attempt to exert control over rent-seeking in CCM from the center, to discipline and manage it. His success in publicly searching out conflict with allegedly corrupt forces in the

party and state has somewhat redeemed CCM in the eyes of the public. Magufuli's anti-corruption also endangers CCM's dominance. The more that Magufuli restrains rent-seeking, the more that he will provoke resistance or departure from CCM actors that lose out. Recurrent intra-party conflict and defections to opposition parties would damage CCM's electoral prospects. Magufuli's war on corruption makes CCM's authoritarian turn doubly necessary. By constricting political space, the party sends a clear signal that it intends to win at any cost. In doing so, it depreciates the benefits of defection to the opposition. To speculate, Magufuli's gamble is that by doubling down on authoritarian measures, he gives himself the political space to realize the changes he wishes to make.

In tandem, Magufuli is seeking to restore elite cohesion within CCM by playing to romantic visions of its long-eschewed socialist past. To that end, much effort has been made to connect Magufuli to the revered first president Nyerere. He has overtly embraced the state industrialization strategy embodied in the most recent five year plan. As Magufuli has done so, he has selectively sought out fights with foreign companies and corrupt business interests, real or imagined. He has revived past projects from earlier periods, none the least completing the movement of government offices from the commercial capital to the administrative capital. In all these ways, Magufuli has sought to evoke the memory of Julius Nyerere and implicitly liken the first president's agenda to his own. In doing so, he has sought to win the support of a party in which he had little power before assuming the presidency. All the while, he tries to keep a lid on party elites that his anti-corruption policies recurrently provoke.

The Rise of Civil Disobedience

Just as CCM's attitude towards authoritarianism has changed, so too has the opposition's use of protest. In the past, Chadema campaigned first and foremost on corruption as a valence issue. CCM, it claimed, was systematically corrupt, and this corruption stymied the development that Tanzania needed. Chadema, they promised, would pursue similar

developmental goals, but it would do so with the integrity that CCM lacked. While there are differences in the ideological inheritances of CCM, the African socialist party, and Chadema, a market-liberal party conceived in the exclusive Legion Club,¹⁷ these ideas play at best a secondary role in mass mobilization. Since the election of 2015, there has been a shift in emphasis by Chadema. Issues of democracy and dictatorship have benefited from more attention; anti-corruption has enjoyed less. A resolution passed by Chadema's Central Committee in July 2016 states that 'democracy is in detention while dictatorship has taken its place in our country.'¹⁸ It goes on 'we appeal to all Zanzibaris (Unguja and Pemba) to continue with civic disobedience of the illegitimate Zanzibar Government.' Chadema's leaders use this increasingly evocative language on a daily basis. This change in tone is representative of a change in agenda.

Chadema has not only spoken about state repression, but made it the subject of protest. When Magufuli gave his inaugural address as president to the National Assembly in November 2015, opposition MPs interrupted the session and were forcefully removed from the chamber by police. On the 27th of January, opposition MPs interrupted the session in protest against the end of live television coverage of the Assembly. As police approached the MPs to carry them out, one opposition MP was heard declaring that 'I won't leave this chamber. You can kill me... I'm ready.'¹⁹ While the opposition often has reasonable grounds for protest, it treats these moments as important pieces of political theatre. Speaking about the occasions when police entered the National Assembly, Chadema's Secretary General Vincent Mashinji made plain that 'the standing orders do not allow for police to enter the chamber. So if you bring them [police] in, it becomes a message. It becomes news.'²⁰

Chadema protest has not only been reactionary. There has been opposition agency in the manufacture and stylizing of protest. On the 16th of June 2016, Chadema MPs appeared before cameras outside of the National Assembly with their mouths sealed by gags in a

publicity stunt. Chadema has sought out confrontations with the state. Candidly, Mashinji offered a hypothetical example. ‘If I go home now, I reach the airport. They [the police] want to arrest me. Mrema will tell me “just go [to the police and let them arrest you]” because tomorrow morning, it will be news.’²¹ By luring state agents into confrontations, Chadema draws them into events in which they become the oppressors.

This was an objective that Chadema had in mind when it announced Operation UKUTA (*Umoja wa Kupinga Udikteta Tanzania* in Kiswahili, or Alliance Against Dictatorship in Tanzania). Chadema planned to convene rallies across Tanzania on September 1st 2016 in defiance of the ban on rallies. The decision to defy the state on this particular issue was a deft choice; Chadema argues that this ban, promulgated by the police, is in contradiction with both particular laws and the constitution as well. By proposing to assemble in defiance of the ban, Chadema proposed to disobey the police, but not they argued, the law. Mrema explained that ‘UKUTA was made to mobilize people across the country’.²² While Chadema’s plan was to begin with a ‘Day of Defiance’, UKUTA was conceived of as a program rather than a single event. One of the chief architects of the program, Professor Mwesiga Baregu explained that the Day of Defiance was ‘intended to kick-off a series of varied activities of peaceful resistance against creeping dictatorship in the country.’²³ Through civil disobedience at the elite and mass levels Chadema has sought to shift the subject of political argument in Tanzania.

In part, Chadema changed its emphasis from corruption to protests about democracy in response to the changing pattern of issue-ownership. Chadema ceded the corruption issue to CCM in 2015 when it received Edward Lowassa as he defected from CCM; Lowassa is reputed for his wealth and was implicated in a corruption incident in 2008, the Richmond Scandal. He is a symbol of corrupt elite politics in Tanzania that was included in the

opposition's 'List of Shame' in 2010. Many interpreted his appointment as Chadema's presidential candidate as a sign that they care more about power than principle.

At the same time, CCM has made leaps and bounds in reclaiming the mantle of political morality in Tanzania. Magufuli's anti-corruption drive has been overwhelmingly popular. Government campaigns against public house closing times, the sale of liquor sachets, sheesha smoking, homosexuality and most recently, the drugs trade, have helped to restore moral conviction in CCM's public image. So have the allusions made to the return to the founding president's vision. CCM has sought to weave Magufuli's personal thrift, his intolerance to corruption, his action on conservative issues into a political morality which evokes Nyerere's own.

By focusing on CCM's authoritarianism and how the system is rigged against the opposition, Chadema shifted attention from subjects on which it was fast losing traction to a topic on which it enjoys a popular advantage. However, Chadema's tactics go beyond issue ownership and popularity to resistance. All the signs suggest that Chadema seeks to delegitimize institutional changes that constrict political space. Protest against authoritarian measures is an attempt to impede their imposition. Its protest action at the elite and mass levels constitutes an attempt to contest the alterations that CCM makes to the rules of the game.

At the eleventh hour before UKUTA was to commence on September 1st, Chadema postponed it. The next month, it cancelled it indefinitely. Some speculated that Chadema pulled the protests because it feared that turnout would be low. However, the evidence suggests otherwise. A survey of just over 1,600 people conducted just days before September 1st 2016²⁴ found that 9.2 percent of respondents described themselves as 'likely' to participate.²⁵ While there is a great difference between declaring intent to protest and protesting, the proportions of respondents that planned to attend indicates that turnout would

have been unprecedented. Instead, two strategic concerns probably weighed heavily on Chadema's leaders. First was the possibility that Chadema would confirm the suggestions of CCM for decades that opposition means instability and instability means violence. In a country whose citizens' are proud of their legacy of peace since independence, to be cast as the perpetrators of violence is a sure path to unpopularity. Second was the fear that the government would respond to protest with forceful repression, which would be exploited as an avenue through which to strip the opposition apparatus bare. This is the reason emphasized by Chadema leaders themselves. Days before September 1st, both the police and the army conducted exercises in the streets in a show of strength. Mass arrests might have tied-up many of Chadema's local leaders. In Baregu's words, 'in light of the overreaction of the government including open show of force we prudently decided to avoid confrontation in which loss of lives was almost certain. This could have also been used as a pretext to ban opposition parties altogether.'²⁶ CCM met brinkmanship with brinkmanship, and won.

In confrontations between state security and opposition-directed protest, CCM enjoys the advantage of being closely tied to the security apparatus. After independence, the party and the military became institutionally intertwined. To this day, CCM is careful to foster close relations between party and security organs. After his election, Magufuli went to great efforts to promote former military personnel to civil positions and to increase police funding. These cross-institutional ties reduce the possibility of splits between hard-liners and soft-liners that so often precede democratic transition elsewhere²⁷ in Tanzania. This institutional cross-penetration leaves CCM free to deploy its security forces in confrontations with the opposition with little fear that it will alienate the security forces in the process.

Chadema, on the other hand, suffers from a dearth of experience of civil resistance. Its members have seldom participated in disciplined demonstrations in the face of security forces; past membership activity has involved peaceful campaigning and party training has

not imparted the skills or discipline necessary for actions of civil disobedience. However, the signs suggest that Chadema's step back from mass protests in 2016 is not the end of opposition resistance in Tanzania. One senior party official explained that since November 2016, they 'have adopted a new strategy of going down to the grass root.'²⁸ The party has despatched its senior leaders and their delegates to hold meetings with the leaders of each party organ from the regional level down to the branch level. The renewed focus on the party branch is sign of party adaptation; as Chadema cannot lift the ban on rallies, its best remaining avenue to reach voters is by campaigning at indoors meetings at house-to-house. If this continues, CCM repression may have the unintended consequence of further consolidating Chadema's organisation. It is also a tentative sign that Chadema resolves to transform itself into an organization with the discipline and skills to civilly disobey. Suggestively, the same party official said that 'strengthening our base support we can then move to the next step if any as it might be decided by the party organs'.²⁹ Baregu was more prosaic. 'We have so far covered almost 90 percent of all the constituencies in the country, reinforcing leadership where it exists and installing it where it doesn't or is weak. We continue to strengthen the human wall of resistance.'³⁰

The Zanzibar Effect

To some extent, these dynamics described above are familiar. Others have documented how elsewhere ruling parties respond to competition with repression, and that opposition parties resist repression with protest. Some have argued, moreover, that repression and protest are in turn attempts to set and control the rules of the game in which electoral competition takes place.³¹ In this respect, Tanzania is descending into a familiar pattern. However, in the Tanzanian case the interaction between dominant and opposition parties is complicated by a factor that has been omitted from this article until now: Zanzibar.

Zanzibar is the smaller half in the United Republic. While it has a population of just over 2 million, mainland Tanzania boasts a population of 43 million. However, after the unification of 1964, Zanzibar retained substantial political autonomy in an asymmetric union. In addition to electing representatives to national office, it elects a president of Zanzibar and a House of Representatives too. In spite of all this, nationalism runs through the contemporary politics of the isles. Attempts to rewrite the history of unification, the assassination of its first president and misrule of Zanzibar by the mainland eventually bore fruit. By the onset of multiparty elections in 1995, Zanzibar was divided. Approximately half the population supported CCM and half supported the Civic United Front (CUF), which demands greater autonomy, sometimes independence, and espouses Zanzibari nationalism. While both parties' support is demographically diverse, CUF draws upon overlapping and constructed identities of nationality (Zanzibari), race (Omani, African, and Shirazi or Persian), religion (Muslim) and region (from Pemba, one of the two large islands in the archipelago). These divisions grant CUF electoral strength. In fact, extensive evidence strongly suggests, though cannot prove, that there was selective fraud in every election for the presidency and House of Representatives of Zanzibar between 1995 and 2015. The experience of Zanzibar is the notable exception to the restraint in CCM's authoritarianism prior to 2015.

The reason that Zanzibar complicates the dynamics of repression and protest that are now gripping Tanzania at the national level is that those dynamics have already played out in Zanzibar. Zanzibar has been the testing ground for CCM and the opposition alike for 25 years. In the elections for the Presidency of Zanzibar in both 1995 and 2000, there was allegedly clumsy and last-minute electoral fraud. Some have suggested that the results of the 1995 election were fixed to let CCM win by 1,565 votes. In 2000, there were severe irregularities in the electoral process. By the admission of its own Secretary General, CUF was taken by surprise in 1995, but in the year 2000 it coordinated protests in response to

electoral interference, which begat violence on the streets, and then it initiated a boycott of the House of Representatives. This was followed by further allegations of rigging and demonstrations in 2005. This cycle of alleged electoral fraud and protest was punctuated by three processes of attempted reconciliation named *Muafaka I*, *Muafaka II* and *Maridhiano*. Despite several break-downs in negotiations, altogether these processes led to major reforms. The opposition was given representation in the governance of the Zanzibar Electoral Commission, electoral rules were changed and power-sharing arrangements were instituted by 2010. This lowered the political temperature, but it involved transfers of resources and alterations in electoral rules that favored CUF. In the 2015 elections, the reforms made to the ZEC as part of *Maridhiano* gave CCM little space to interfere covertly with the electoral process. Even if it had, CUF was parallel-tabulating the results from each polling station. Faced by the prospect of electoral defeat, the Chairman of the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) annulled the election altogether while counting was still on-going. Parallel voter tabulation by the opposition was in line with the results released by the ZEC, and showed that CCM was *en route* to lose.³² The election was re-run in March, but campaigning was banned. In protest, CUF boycotted the re-run and has refused to recognize the outcome since then. In many ways, the iterations of electoral fraud, protest and reform in Zanzibar mirror those described in the literature and exemplified by cases such as Senegal and Mexico in the 1990s. Elsewhere, incumbents have lost power when they have been caught off-guard by the scale of opposition support or the size of protests that have followed fraudulent elections.

On the face of it, the isles seem too small and insignificant to influence mainland politics. However, the contestation of electoral rules in Zanzibar in miniature over 25 years affects how the like struggle is playing out in contemporary Tanzania at the national level. In particular, it affects what issues those struggles are being fought over. The evidence suggests

that CCM has learnt from its experiences in Zanzibar; electoral fraud is costly when it is publicly exposed and when it becomes the subject of protest. It is more costly still when it bounces CCM into reform of electoral institutions that reduce the room for interference in subsequent elections. The process which played out in Zanzibar is one that CCM might well wish to prevent playing out at the national level. CCM's recent authoritarian legislative agenda should be interpreted in this context. The Cybercrimes Act, the Media Services Act and the ban on rallies all tighten political space in ways that prevent opposition parties from passing on their messages to voters. They decrease the likelihood that CCM will lose elections in the future, and therefore they pre-empt the process of fraud, protest and reform that has already played out in Zanzibar. In sum, the signs do not suggest that CCM is preparing to fix elections in the future. CCM's actions are consistent with those of a party that is introducing other measures so that it does not need to interfere with elections. However, the new legislation also enables CCM to stifle news about electoral fraud if it ever turned to rigging as a last resort.

Likewise, Chadema's decision to protest the lack of political space was made in the light of CCM's closure of that space. Therefore, the politics of these islands just 23 miles from the East coast of the mainland have altered the subjects of political struggle in Tanzania at the national level. The particular rules of the game that are being contested in the Tanzanian case do not concern just election process and management, like in such struggles elsewhere. Instead, the struggle between government and opposition has focused on the laws that govern freedom of expression. In this way, the Tanzanian case illustrates how federation between one large state and one small one can complicate the struggle over the rules of the game in electoral authoritarian regimes.

These changes amount to a new trajectory in Tanzania's party politics. Until at least 2010, Tanzanian politics was characterized by ruling party dominance, opposition party-building,

growing rent-seeking and slow political liberalization. Contemporary Tanzania is marked by widespread state authoritarianism and opposition civil disobedience. While it is clear what path Tanzania is on, it is unclear where it will lead. As Schedler noted, in nested games of electoral competition and contestation of institutional rules, there are no equilibria.³³ If the popularity of Magufuli's anti-corruption campaign continues, then he may judge that he can do away with the bans on rallies at least for the time being. In that case, the impetus for oppression, protest and brinkmanship may collapse. If CCM stays the authoritarian course that it has charted, the path of the struggle will hinge on whether CUF and Chadema alike choose to engage in not only elite but mass civil disobedience. If it does, it may unlock processes of polarization and violence that have played out elsewhere on the continent.³⁴ The cancellation of Operation UKUTA may be a sign that Chadema weighed the risks of protest and balked. However, the opposition in Tanzania on both Zanzibar and the mainland has already shown themselves capable of great feats of organization and adaptation. They may undergo the training, acquire the discipline and undertake the reorganization necessary to civilly disobey. Ultimately, if CCM continues to constrict political space, the opposition may feel that they have no alternative but to resort to the politics of protest. Chadema's Secretary General remarked that 'if the political environment was good, you could do rallies, civic education, you could demonstrate, but that space is not there anymore. So, which spaces are remaining? It's blank.'³⁵

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