Tranquility of Tanzania, a Nation Surrounded by Violence

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ABSTRACT

Since the beginning of Africa's decolonization, numerous conflicts have erupted, sparked by ethnic tension. Yet despite the surrounding violence, Tanzania has remained politically stable and peaceful. Through historical, political and anthropological means, Tanzania has been able to achieve peace. Yet, can the peace found in Tanzania be replicated to other regions of the world?

INTRODUCTION

In a continent gripped by the horrors of genocide and civil war, one nation remains free from the chaos. This country, located in southeastern Africa, is situated between the Indian Ocean and eight different countries including Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This nation is Tanzania. Gaining full independence in 1964 from the British Empire (CIA 2007), Tanzania has remained one of Africa's politically stable countries.

Despite economic failures, corruption of high officials and the presence of refugees from neighboring countries, the tranquility found in Tanzania is remarkable. In all, three major factors contributed to the historical and political stability of Tanzania: the political history of the region, the ideology of ujamaa and the diversity found within the region. It was through these factors, Tanzania has been able to remain stable whereas other countries fell into disarray. Supplementing the secondary research, qualitative data was also collected through interviews and discussions with Tanzanian citizens and leaders. Through these observations, new insight was provided guiding the research into different directions.

A major issue which often arises is whether it is possible to replicate the peace found in Tanzania to conflict stricken areas of the world. By examining the secondary and qualitative data acquired, recommendations may be made for political scholars to offer suitable strategies for developing long term peace and stability. However, it is imperative to remember that what may work and succeed in one region may completely fail in another. Although the tranquility of Tanzania is an achievement, the reasons for this peace may be unique to the region.

A LOOK INTO THE PAST

The political history of Tanzania spans nearly three thousand years. This particular history of Tanzania is important due to the external influences over the region for nearly a millennium. In all, there were a total of three major external influences in the region: the Arab slave traders during the early 1000 C.E, the German colonizers of the mid nineteenth century and the British Trusteeship over Tanzania after World War I. Each of the foreign influences over the country impacted Tanzania's culture and the modern political issues that have afflicted the region.

Arabic Influences

For nearly a thousand years, the Arab and Persian merchants have ruled Tanzania's coast and the islands of Zanzibar. Arriving sometime between 0 and 1000 CE (Ofcansky and Yeager), it was not until 1290 CE that a dominate Arabic and Shirazi influence would overtake the coast and the islands. However, Tanzania's mainland would still be predominated by the Bantu, Cushitic and Nilotic people.

The influence of the Arabic people can still be seen today on the islands of Zanzibar and the coast of Tanzania. Much of the exploits implemented by the Arab traders was slavery. This trade became extremely demanding worldwide. For example, in 1776 the sultan of Kilwa, a region on the Tanzanian coast, signed an agreement with France agreeing to supply all French Indian Ocean colonies with a thousand slaves a year (Ofcansky and Yeager). The slave trade would continue late into the nineteenth century where even after the abolition of slavery, the market would continue underground.

The effects of Arabic colonization on modern day Tanzania resulted in a dual parliamentary system within the government. One House represents mainland Tanzania and is comprised of the majority of representatives or about

180 seats; another House represents the islands of Zanzibar and contains approximately fifty seats. This dual system is the outcome of the influence the Arabic settlers had over Tanzania for a nearly a millennia (Ofcansky and Yeager). However, due to this dual governmental system, the islands of Zanzibar tend to struggle with policies and funding for their region.

Germanic Influences

The second major colonizers of Tanzania were the Germans. The German colonization of the region did not commence until the late 1800s CE (Ofcansky and Yeager). Beginning in November of 1884, Germany signed a local treaty with twelve mainland chiefs relinquishing over 2500 square miles of land in the Usagara, Uzigua, Ukami and Nguru region (Ofcansky and Yeager). This treaty would launch a German invasion in Tanzania for the next three decades.

Unlike the Arabic settlers, the Germans had more focus on mainland Tanzania. The Germanic colonization spanned from the boundary between Tanzania and Kenya to the southern coastline. By 1890, the Germans were in control of nearly all of what is now present day Tanzania (Ofcansky and Yeager).

Contrasting from the Arabic settlers, scholars have questioned the magnitude of Germanic colonization over the development of Tanzania. Although the Germans developed roads, railways and introduced modern medicine, law, education and economics to the region, these programs benefited few Tanzanians due to the discontent and oppression of the people (Ofcansky and Yeager). To make matters worse, revolts and outbreaks of diseases spread despondency throughout the region.

The lasting effects of the Germans lay in the foundation set for post-colonial Tanzania. Aside from introducing modern technology and philosophies to the region, numerous reforms were passed to alleviate the discontent of the native Tanzanians. These reforms ranged from encouraging native agricultural developments to expanding educational opportunities. However, Germanic rule would not last long to see the results of these reforms; this work would be continued by another influential foreign power, the British.

British Indirect Rule

Similar to the Germans, the British had consolidated their power over the region at around the same time. However, the British were more focused on the island jewels of Zanzibar, Pemba and the slave trade. At the same time the Germans received nearly all of mainland Tanzania, the British were able to secure their power in the islands as a protectorate. Unlike the Germans, during this time the British were less involved with the political sphere of the region. The British had persuaded the sultan of the islands to abolish all forms of slavery but still viewed Zanzibar as a semi-autonomous Arab settlement rather than an East African colony (Ofcansky and Yeager).

However, with the end of World War I, the situation altered drastically. Under the League of Nations Treaty, the British were mandated a great portion of mainland Tanzania. Under the mandate, the British were loosely instructed to govern the region in the best interests of the natives and to set in course, the path to independence and self governance.

Perhaps the utmost change occurring during this period came under Sir Donald Cameron, the British governor from 1925 to 1931. Earlier in his career, Sir Donald Cameron had developed a system of governing known as "indirect rule" in Nigeria (Ofcansky and Yeager). Under Indirect Rule, the government would encourage the establishment of native political foundations and leaders eventually leading the region into independence while still under ongoing British influence.

The British had hoped to accomplish these goals by creating native leadership positions in lawmaking, local courts and treasuries but the task proved to be more difficult than perceived. Staffing local authorities with traditional leaders was nearly impossible due to cultural conflicts; many societies in Tanzania either lacked a formal system of governing or were destroyed by slavery, warfare, disease or the German colonization (Ofcansky and Yeager). To compensate for these short comings, the British appointed local officials and encouraged the development of cash crops like coffee and cotton to gain revenue.

After World War II, mainland Tanzania changed its legal status from a League of Nations mandate to a United Nations Trusteeship under Britain. Under these new terms, the British were to submit reports to the United Nations about Tanzania's progress towards self government and independence. To complete these tasks, the British government set forth several initiatives aimed at increasing Tanzania's economy through cash crops, oils and exports and created local councils to establish a diversity of reforms (Ofcansky and Yeager). Though the initiatives were at best, marginal in producing the desired effects, these programs did lead to the independence of Tanzania.

The impact of British colonization on modern Tanzania can be considered by most scholars to be significant. Although the majority of the programs implemented did not work to the effect that the colonizers wanted, what these initiatives did achieve was the laying a foundation for governing in the country. By establishing somewhat

legitimate leaders within the native communities, the British were able to create a Tanzania that would become empowered, educated and determined to be independent.

The political history of Tanzania is crucial to the tranquility found in the country in that the colonizers helped create the stage for Tanzania's development. Although each of the foreign influences impacted Tanzania in a different way, these powers were able to set in motion how Tanzania chose to govern its people. It is perhaps due to these lengthy external influences over Tanzania that nationalism rose so quickly during the British Trusteeship era. By examining the history behind Tanzania's political development, a greater understanding of how Tanzania has remained peaceful may one day be able to assist in the development of suitable strategies for peace.

UJAMAA, AFRICAN SOCIALISM

How a nation is governed, especially during the early years of independence, is crucial to the stability of any nation. The basic tenet of Tanzanian political ideology is the concept of ujamaa. This concept was created by Tanzania's first president upon independence in 1964, Julius Nyerere, and continues to this day governing several aspects of the government.

At ujamaa's core belief is an integration of Western ideals and traditional African values such as family hood and communalism (Ibhawoh-Dibua 2003). Ujamaa is based on three essentials for government: freedom, equality, and most importantly, unity. Nyerere argued the ideal society is based on these three basic beliefs. To Nyerere, equality leads to cooperation, freedom to servitude, and unity to peace, security and well being. The theory draws heavily from various philosophies including Fabian socialism, a nineteenth century British philosophy, and Catholic social teachings (Ibhawoh-Dibua 2003).

In contrast to other socialist philosophies, ujamaa was not focused on class struggle (Ibhawoh-Dibua 2003). Instead, ujamaa laid Tanzania's foundation of socialism in the traditional African custom of the extended family system. According to Nyerere, it was through the family unit the citizen would receive their perception of the world which would naturally be more inclined towards socialism.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of ujamaa was the perpetual declaration for self-reliance and autonomy. Although Nyerere was not an economist, he stressed the need for Tanzania to develop through self reliance as a way to alleviate the poor economic situation. Though the Arusha Declaration implemented in 1967, Tanzania was able to enter into its first stage of development and autonomy (Ibhawoh-Dibua 2003).

However, behind the theory of ujamaa was essentially another form of African communism. According to Nyerere, ujamaa is opposed to capitalism which he saw as an exploitation of man. In practice, ujamaa was more similar to Maoist socialism, the form of philosophy found in China, than it was an integration of traditional African values and Western ideals. For example, in an attempt to strengthen the economy, Nyerere placed almost all economic control into the hands of the government, hoping the state controlled industries would produce more efficiently and effectively. Although Tanzania did see improvements within the first years of implementation, foreign investment and suspicion kept the policy from truly succeeding.

Another example which mirrored Maoist socialism was the policy, "Ujamaa Vijijini." This policy, considered central to the theme of ujamaa, made an attempt to rekindle the lost African roots of communalism and village life (Ibhawoh-Dibua 2003). Through Ujamaa Vijijini, Tanzania would place all rural areas under government control and persuade citizens to live on collective ujamaa farms.

Although the first years of Ujamaa Vijijini were considered fairly successful, the citizens of Tanzania began to have doubts. Certain tribes had already established farmland and a peasant way of life; these tribes were the first to be both suspicious and uncooperative with the policy. To Nyerere, this uncooperativeness was unacceptable. Continuing to persuade these tribes, the government offered material incentives to all villagers who moved into these communal farms; many continued to refuse. After several failed attempts, Nyerere went so much as to forcibly move Tanzanian citizens into these special ujamaa farms. For Nyerere, the only path to maximize resources and bring about a closer sense of unity was through these ujamaa farms (Ibhawoh-Dibua 2003).

Political researchers have given ujamaa mixed reviews in its role at establishing nationalism (Ibhawoh-Dibua 2003). Although most would conclude the economic policy of collectivism was a failure, leading to the current high level of poverty, the concept of nationalism formed by Nyerere was able to hold together a nation surrounded by violence and genocide. It was through ujamaa Nyerere was able to unite the diverse population of Tanzanians under a common language, Swahili. Despite drawbacks in the ujamaa farms and other nationalistic reforms, Nyerere was able to make the people of Tanzania see themselves first as a citizen of Tanzania and then a member of their tribe, a nationalistic achievement.

The effects of ujamaa have been long lasting, both politically and economically. The policies implemented during the 1970s such as Ujamaa Vijijini or state controlled industries have continued to impact how Tanzania

conducts its economic policies to this day. Likewise, the image of Nyerere and the political sphere of Tanzania were able to remain positive despite corruption, economic failure and debt. Regardless of the economic failures, Tanzania has been able to retain its peace and serenity through the propaganda of nationalism and statehood. It was through these nationalistic reforms that brought together over a hundred tribes to form a unified nation.

DIVERSITY OF TANZANIA, TRIBES AND RELIGION

In a land as diverse as Tanzania, another reason for the nation's serenity lies within the coexistence of its people. The diversity that can be found within Tanzania has been accumulating and changing for the past two millennia, ever since the slow migration of the Bantu speaking tribes to the Nilotic people from Kenya (Duggan-Civille 1976). In all, two forms of diversity can be seen in Tanzania today, the various tribes and the major religions. It is perhaps, through this historical coexistence in Tanzania that has helped the country remain tranquil for decades.

In all, there are as many as 120 different tribes living in Tanzania (Duggan-Civille 1976). These tribes have been conglomerating from various regions for nearly two thousand years with certain tribes still immigrating from until the nineteenth century (Sutton 1969). Due to the high number of tribes, no one group has been able to obtain a significant majority both politically and numerically. For example, the Sukuma, the largest tribe found near Lake Victoria, make up only thirteen percent of the total population with no other group surpassing five percent (Yeager 1989). Racially, ninety nine percent of the population is African and ninety five percent come from a Bantu speaking background (Yeager 1989). However, the majority of these tribes have not developed a strong sense of unity among themselves.

Historically, the region has been a hot spot for various tribes to settle and farm (Yeager 1989). As the centuries passed, new tribes would enter the region only to be assimilated by the native population one or two generations later. Although the immigrating tribes retained their sense of identity, eventually leading to the 120 different ethnic groups, the allegiance to their particular tribe was either weak or non existent. As centuries passed, it would become more difficult to discern one tribe from another as these tribes would continue to share a similar language, dress and diet.

Further, the country is split almost into thirds in regards to religion with approximately 30% Christian, 35% Muslim and 35% Indigenous beliefs (CIA 2007). Unlike tribal diversity, little research has been done in regards to the religious diversity of Tanzania. From the qualitative research, Christianity seems to be growing larger with Indigenous beliefs waning or being pushed into more rural areas. Contrasting mainland Tanzania, the islands of Zanzibar have a ninety nine percent Muslim demographic. However, this majority has not affected the government of Tanzania significantly.

Past researchers have explored the theory that because of the large amount of diversity within Tanzania, no one tribe was able to become the dominant force behind any political, spiritual or military movement (Duggan-Civille 1976). Since there is no clear majority, the people of Tanzania had to work together in order to remain stable and peaceful. It was through cooperation Tanzania has not yet undergone a civil war or genocide.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The qualitative data gathered for this research was completed in Tanzania from January 6th to the 20th. The trip was funded partially from an undergraduate research grant, an Office of International Education Academic Stipend and government loans. Through the qualitative research, I hoped to confirm and expand on my hypotheses about the peace found in Tanzania. The qualitative research would explore the effects of ujamaa, the impact of the diversity found in Tanzania and the influence of the surrounding violence on the region.

Questions and Hypothesis

Though there were many questions asked, I focused my research on two questions: how is Tanzania a peaceful country amidst surrounding violence and if policy can be created to replicate the peace found in Tanzania. The background research completed before the trip allowed me to hypothesize two major contributions to the peace found in Tanzania: the African concept of ujamaa and the diversity found in Tanzania. These factors are the reason Tanzania has been able to remain peaceful.

Research Methods and Data Collection

For my research methods, I used both qualitative and quantitative data. Prior to traveling to Tanzania, I gathered data from secondary sources on:
1. The racial, ethnic, religious and tribal diversity in the region.
2. The political systems of Tanzania over the last 75-100 years.

3.   Any major civil conflicts Tanzania has undergone over this period.

During my time in Tanzania, I traveled with a group of students and my faculty sponsor. The areas we were able to visit included the Monduli District, Enguiki, Arusha, Zanzibar and the Siwandeti Computer Centers located in rural villages. In each of these different locations, I had the opportunity to interview and discuss major issues with a variety of individuals to gain better insight as to why Tanzania was able to avoid conflict and remain politically stable. These people varied in their age, gender, region and occupation.

How I gathered my information was primarily through set interview questions in which I wrote down what each individual said. Other ways I was able to obtain my data was through informal discussions and observations with various people. To help with the interviews, I was able to use the Terrawatu staff with interpreting and translating the interviews and discussions. Terrawatu is a non-governmental organization created in 2000 to develop better relations with Western nations and promote sustainable and environmental projects in the community.

As for the demographics of the individuals I interviewed and discussed with, the majority were men. In all, I formally interviewed eight individuals, two of which were women and had informal discussions with various individuals such as Maasai leaders and young adults, various school teachers, businessmen and Terrawatu staff. Through these interviews and discussions, I was able to provide the secondary research with much greater texture.

Analysis

Through the interviews and discussions I had with various individuals, I was able to confirm the validity of my hypotheses and expand on the topic as well. For example, through an interview with the hotel manager in the Arusha district, I was able to learn more about the historical and colonial aspect which helped Tanzania into peace and eventual independence. I was also given a book by the interviewee discussing the conflicts in Rwanda and the origins of this country's genocide. The interviews, while fairly short with each lasting no more than a half hour, allowed me to gather more quantitative data regarding the demographics of Tanzania; however due to time commitments I was unable to gather a representative group of individuals.

From the interviews, I was able to conclude the nationalistic effects of ujamaa and the positive image of the Tanzanian government on its people. Each of the individuals emphasized the constructive nature of ujamaa at creating nationalism within Tanzania and despite the economic drawbacks, the majority of the individuals still found their government officials to be politically effective. A repeated example used by many individuals was the image of Julius Nyerere and his impact on the country. Although Nyerere may have worsened the economic conditions of Tanzania, this President was still considered by many to be an "Uncle" or "Grandpa" figure; one who can do no wrong.

The discussions, although informal, were able to provide me with an observation of the current state of Tanzania and the effects a neighboring country may have. For example, on the day my group entered the region, the riots and protest began in Kenya, a country north of Tanzania; as such I was able to experience first hand the effects the surrounding violence had on Tanzania and its citizens. One observation I noted was the rise in gas prices and the lack of lodging due to wealthy Kenyans and tourists seeking refuge in Tanzania.

The violence in Kenya also placed tension within many of the Terrawatu staff. Adam, a tour guide of Terrawatu explains, "*Refugees come from the neighboring countries and with them come firearms and weapons. This creates a lot of tension for Tanzania. People change because of the refugees.*" This tension was fairly apparent on the trip. For example, while on our way to a primary school, the head tour guide Sululu was speaking to the group, laughing and joking merrily. Since the day was hot, all of our windows were open as we passed by several local merchants and townsfolk. Suddenly, a man from the streets yells something in Swahili at Sululu and immediately his demeanors changes from joyful to gloomy; his smile went flat and he fell silent.

From the results gathered by the trip to Tanzania, I would conclude the validity and veracity of my hypotheses but would also expand my original hypothesis to include the historical and colonial background of Tanzania. The secondary research supplemented with the qualitative data completed in Tanzania all point to these three reasons for the peace found in Tanzania: the colonial background, the formation and implementation of ujamaa and the diversity found within the region. Each of these three reasons impacted the peace in Tanzania in some way or form.

CONCLUSION, FUTURE RESEARCH

The peace found in Tanzania is rather unique both historically and politically. One of the major issues about this research was whether or not the peace in Tanzania may be replicated in other regions of the world; from the data gathered from the secondary sources and the qualitative research done in Tanzania, the answer unfortunately is that the peace found in Tanzania is matchless. The Tanzanian peace was only able form under three conditions: history,

diversity and policy. Of the three conditions, only one may be applicable at providing a sense of peace through nationalism. What I may draw from the research is that if Tanzania did not have one of these conditions, the peace found in the region may not exist today.

Further research may yield more answers in regards to the impact of each condition. One aspect I would further look into would be the influence of the Germanic and British colonial rule on Tanzania. Since both Germany and Britain colonized other parts of Africa and implemented similar reforms and policies, a comparative research may be done within those colonies. This comparative research may provide additional insight as to how influential the colonial powers were at creating peace.

In conclusion, the peace of Tanzania may be attributed to three major factors: the history, the socialist concept of ujamaa and the diversity. Each of these factors influenced Tanzania and the peace which can be found in the country. For nearly fifty years, Tanzania has not undergone civil war or genocide despite being surrounded by nations whose histories have been plagued by ethnic cleansing, internal strife and corruption. This accomplishment is remarkable given the poor economic conditions of Tanzania and the constant presence of refugees and war victims. Truly, Tanzania is an island in a sea of chaos.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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