

The Political Economy of Nation Formation in Modern Tanzania

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26 September 2009

Abstract:

Dual sets of literature have in recent years attempted to understand the origins of state failure and political instability in the developing world and nationalism in the developed world. While obviously related, these analyses have, however, largely failed to overlap. As a result I develop here a theory which can explain both state failure and nation formation. I argue that different factor endowments, both at the national and sub-national levels, can explain success and failure in state and nation-building. While the literature on political instability has acknowledged the role of labour and capital/natural resource endowments on conflict, its role in similarly promoting stability and nation formation in countries like Tanzania has yet to draw much attention. I thus develop an analytical narrative of modern Tanzanian nation formation which suggests that Tanzania's low and equitable endowments of labour and capital have greatly aided her subsequent political stability and nation formation. I also examine and find lacking three other arguments for Tanzanian stability, especially in light of the counterfactual case of Zanzibar.

¹ This paper is based on research funded by the Crisis States Research Centre. I would like to thank James Brennan, John Breuilly, Tim Kelsall, Roger Peterson, Aili Tripp, Ashutosh Varshney, Matthias vom Hau, Chris Wendt, Crawford Young, the staff of the Tanzanian National Library and participants at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, the LSE and MIT for comments, suggestions and assistance. All errors, however, are my own.

1. Introduction

While economic development has long been a focus for scholars of the developing world, only in recent years have scholars given similar attention to the sources of political stability, partially because the two phenomena have become increasingly linked together. Political disorder and state failure are now seen as perhaps the most important and significant barrier to economic development for developing countries, especially in Africa (Bates, 2008; Collier, 2007). Thus recent research has begun to return to the focus of an older set of literature on the sources of political stability or 'political integration' in the developing world, including the formation of national identities as a prerequisite for economic development (Greenfeld, 2003; Kohli, 2004; Miguel, 2004).

Indeed, this focus on state failure follows a similar such upsurge on the topic of nationalism in the 1980s and 1990s, with a focus on the origins of nationalism as an ideology and a political movement (Gellner, 2006 [1983]; Greenfeld, 1992; Hastings, 1997; Hobsbawm, 1992; Smith, 1986). However, while the studies of state failure and nationalism are naturally related, these two literatures have largely failed to cross-breed. More specifically, while the literature on nationalism has unfortunately remained stubbornly Eurocentric in focus, the recent spate of work on political instability has similarly neglected any discussion of nationalism.²

In this paper I suggest a new theory of nationalism which can account for cases of both state failure and successful nation formation. I suggest that factor endowments, specifically a given country's endowment of land, labour and capital, play a major role in the success or failure of nation formation. Specifically, I argue that both high amounts of capital and labour and inter-regional imbalances in labour, land and capital can contribute to political instability and conflict. Conversely, low amounts of capital and labour, combined with an equitable distribution of all three factor endowments, can encourage political stability and nation formation.

I examine the empirical evidence for this theory as regards both political instability and stability, with a focus on the most conflict-prone region of the world, namely Sub-Saharan Africa. Evidence for the role of factor endowments in promoting instability is abundant, with literature suggesting a strong role for labour migration, financial capital and natural resources in sparking Africa's numerous civil wars and

² A recent and notable exception here is (Laitin, 2007).

political conflicts. There has been much less focus, however, on explaining the few African countries that have not suffered from conflict, especially the exceptional case of Tanzania where a strong and durable sense of national identity has developed since independence. I develop an analytical narrative of modern Tanzanian economic and political development which demonstrates the role of low and equitable population densities and capital endowments in Tanzanian nation formation. In my examination of Tanzania alongside other African cases I thus suggest that factor endowments have played a much bigger role in African conflicts that has heretofore been recognized.

This paper is organized as follows. First, I develop a factor endowment theory of nationalism and demonstrate how it helps to explain political instability across various African conflicts. Second, I introduce the Tanzanian case study and show how my theory explains political stability in modern Tanzania. I then critique three alternative theories of Tanzanian exceptionalism, which I all find lacking, before examining the counterfactual case study of Zanzibar which provides further strength to my argument. Finally, I conclude.

2. A Factor Endowment Theory of Nationalism

While the theoretical literature on nationalism is vast, its focus has largely been on explaining the rise of nationalism, especially in Europe. Scholars like (Gellner, 2006 [1983]; Greenfeld, 1992; Hobsbawm, 1992; Kedourie, 1960; Smith, 1986) have debated the roles of capitalism, ethnicity, ideology, industrialization, institutions and war in the rise of European nationalism with very little attention both to non-European regions and to regions where nationalism has failed to transform states into nation-states. While there have been some significant analyses of nationalism in Asia and the Americas, most notably from (Anderson, 1991), Africa thus remains largely unexamined in the literature. In large part this lacuna is easy to explain, in that a continent with highly ethnicized politics, large amounts of civil war and low levels of national identity does not fit into explanations of how 'nationalism pervades the modern world' (Roshwald, 2006, p. 1).

However, if Africa is seen as prime example of the failure of nationalism to build nation-states, then its relative absence from major works on nationalism is a serious problem for theories which claim to have universal application. More specifically, theories which fail to specify and examine counterfactual cases – where a change in the

key explanatory or independent variable is accompanied by a similar change in the dependent variable – open themselves to the charge that they have failed to identify causality accurately (Levy, 2008). In other words, not only is it important to examine the fate of nationalism in Africa for its own sake, but also for the sake of the study of nationalism more generally. In the rest of this section I thus develop a theory of nationalism that can help to explain why national identities have largely failed to develop in Africa.

One thing that becomes clear in a perusal of the literature on nationalism is, that while many authors have focussed on the role of capitalism and industrialization (Gellner, 2006 [1983]; Hechter, 1975; Nairn, 1977), relatively few have focussed on the role of factor endowments. This classic concept, which dates back to Smith and Ricardo, states that the economy is composed of key factors of production, especially land, labour and capital. Recent economic literature has resurrected its importance by suggesting that differing ratios between factor endowments can lead to differing levels of inequality, modes of production and patterns of migration that themselves can have significant long-term effects on economic growth (Austin, 2008; Easterly & Levine, 2003; Engerman & Sokoloff, 1997).

Yet there is also evidence that factor endowments can have a major influence on long-term political stability as well. (Engerman & Sokoloff, 1997) suggest that the presence of natural resources and soil suitable for large-scale plantation agriculture in many parts of the New World led to gross economic inequalities, which, recent literature suggests, is highly unfavourable to the maintenance of democracy (Przeworski, 2005). The presence of natural resources and high amounts of capital in the form of foreign aid has also led to what has been styled as the ‘natural resource curse,’ where political leaders squabble over the control over these resources rather than adhere to the demands of their citizens (Brautigam & Knack, 2004; Collier, 2007). Disproportionately high amounts of labour relative to land and capital can lead to political instability and conflict over scarce resources (Kahl, 2006), while high amounts of land relative to labour and capital can lead to slavery, serfdom and the creation of weak states unable control their territory (Domar, 1970; Herbst, 2000).

However, despite attention to the role of national-level income inequalities, one element that has been largely underdeveloped in these analyses is the effect of differing ratios between factor endowments at the sub-national level. The literature on nationalism, conflict and civil war has, in contrast, greatly emphasized the importance of

regional inequalities as a motivating force for political instability, with Ernest Gellner's theory of nationalism perhaps the most famous example here. Gellner's theory is best illustrated with his model of the peasant society of Ruritania, a poor constituent part of the Empire of Megalomania whose inhabitants spoke a different language, or groups of languages, from the imperial court dialect. According to Gellner, when 'a population explosion occurred at the same time as certain other areas of the Empire of Megalomania – but not Ruritania – rapidly industrialized' (Gellner, 2006 [1983], p. 58), some Ruritarians then migrated to these newly industrialized areas. The contrast between the poor Ruritarians and the richer citizens of Megalomania that this migration brought to the surface both encouraged Ruritanian intellectuals to develop a common ideology of nationalism among the Ruritarians and helped to emphasize their distinctiveness from other Megalomanians, with the political independence of Ruritania as the end result.

Gellner's theory thus implicitly emphasizes the importance of different regional factor endowments in explaining ethnic conflict in Megalomania, where Ruritania is relatively rich in labour while the industrial areas to which Ruritarians migrate is rich in capital (and possibly natural resources as well). Moreover, Gellner's theory explains the role of factor endowments in ethnic identity formation, whereby migration encourages the development of a Ruritanian identity due to income inequalities between them and other citizens of Megalomania. While quite clearly based on the development of nationalism in 19th century Eastern Europe, what is striking about his model is how it also applies to modern Africa. If we substitute the African state for Megalomania and a peripheral ethnic group for Ruritania, then the model fits well, with language differences between Ruritarians and the state language of Megalomania (usually the former colonial language) and a simultaneous population explosion and focus on large-scale industrialization (after World War I through the 1970s).

This integrated theory of nationalism, which integrates the concept of factor endowments and Gellner's theory, goes far in explaining the emergence of secessionist movements and civil wars in post-colonial Africa, where the emergence of interregional or 'horizontal' inequalities have played a major role in the breakdown of stability and the outbreak of violent conflict (Østby, Nordås, & Rød, 2009; Stewart, 2000). Indeed, the empirical evidence supporting this theory is rich, especially as regards the role of unequally distributed mineral resources like oil and diamonds in such countries as

Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Liberia and Sierra Leone (Bates, 2008).

Yet the role of labour migration has also played an important but relatively neglected role in African civil wars, and has often interacted with the presence of natural resources to create large-scale conflict. In Sudan, the economic and political peripheral status of the South, whose peoples had historically been used as slaves and a labour reserve, was a major factor behind the outbreak of civil war in 1955. The discovery of oil in southern Sudan in 1970s thus increased inter-regional factor endowment inequalities and helped push Sudan into a second civil war in 1983 (Johnson, 2003). Similarly, south-eastern Nigeria enjoyed a disproportionately high population density in the colonial period, thereby leading to migration and the subsequent formation of an Igbo ethnic identity (Van den Bersselaar, 2005, p. 55). The subsequent discovery of oil in the region, alongside a series of massacres of thousands of Igbo migrants in Northern Nigeria in 1966, thus led to the outbreak of the Biafra civil war in 1967.

There are, moreover, numerous examples in Africa of the role of unequally distributed capital and labour in the breakdown of political stability that have little to do with mineral resources. In colonial Uganda capital investment took place in the south, whose economy was focused on the production of cotton and coffee for export markets, while the north became used as a labour reservoir for planters and the Ugandan army (Richards, 1954). As a result the north-south divide became the major fault line of Ugandan politics, with the civil wars in central Uganda in the early 1980s and in northern Uganda since the late 1980s thus born out of the perception that one half of the country had access to power at the expense of the other half. Another example comes from Côte d'Ivoire, which was considered up through the 1980s one of the most successful cases of industrialization in Africa based on the strength of its southern cocoa and coffee producers. However, this industrialization was built on large-scale labour migration from both northern Côte d'Ivoire and surrounding countries, and the dual factors of a declining economy and the death of President Houphouët-Boigny put paid to the ability of rulers in Abidjan to ease regional tensions, which led both to the creation of new ethnic/regional identities – *Ivoirité* in the South and a new concept of a 'Grand North' – and the outbreak of civil war in 2002 (Boone, 2007).

Finally, we should note as well that the same dynamics account for ethnic politics in the large parts of Africa which have not fallen into civil war but have nonetheless experienced sporadic violence, political instability and ongoing perceptions of ethnic

inequalities. The most obvious example here is Kenya, where clashes between groups of internal migrants and locally native or indigenous residents have taken place periodically but perhaps most prominently after the national elections in 2007. These clashes have been most prominent in areas to which some ethnic groups, especially Luos and Kikuyus, have migrated and bought land or been allocated it by government (Kimenyi & Ndung'u, 2005). On the other end of the continent Mauritania has a long history of enslavement and forced labour migration which helped to sharpen and define ethnic differences between Moorish 'Beydanes' and the black 'Haratines' they had enslaved. Despite the official abolishment of slavery in 1981, persistent inequalities between these groups have in part been responsible for Mauritania's ongoing political conflicts, including coup d'etats in 2005 and 2008 (N'Diaye, 2009).

3. Nation Formation in Modern Tanzania

This factor endowment theory of nationalism thus helps to explain why so many African states have had so much internal strife and conflict. Counterfactually, moreover, it would thus suggest that a relatively equal distribution of factor endowments would encourage political stability and the development of a common national identity. Having already examined cases where the presence of interregional inequalities promote conflict, in the rest of the paper I thus examine a counterfactual case study well known for its political stability and common sense of national identity, namely Tanzania.

Tanzania's political stability is legendary within Africa. Indeed, it has never suffered any civil wars, coup d'etats or violent national elections, and has had regular presidential and parliamentary elections every five years since independence. Tanzania has thus failed to succumb to the violent conflict that has affected five of its eight neighbours – namely Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the DRC and Mozambique – with a six, Kenya, no stranger to electoral violence and ethnic riots as already noted.³

Perhaps more markedly, however, Tanzania also differs from most African states in the way it has arguably developed a coherent sense of national identity, perhaps uniquely in Africa. Already by 1976 (Young, 1976, pp. 11, 216) could write of Tanzania's 'remarkable success in molding from its diversity an integrative national culture' and 'the

³ Tanzania's two other neighbors, Malawi and Zambia, have both had highly ethnicized politics (Posner, 2004). Among African states, only the DRC and Mali have had more neighbors (seven each) fall into civil war than Tanzania.

high order of affective attachment to the Tanzanian polity.’ More recently (Hastings, 1997, p. 165) has argued that ‘Tanzania may well present the best model for a healthy merging of small ethnicities into something fairly describable as a nation,’ while (Miguel, 2004) has argued with micro-quantitative data that nation-building has been demonstrably more successful in bringing together ethnically diverse communities in Tanzania than in Kenya. Moreover, evidence suggests that the political and economic liberalization of the 1980s and 1990s, far from disintegrating the Tanzanian nation-state as in other parts of Africa (Bates, 2008; Boone, 2007), might even have strengthened Tanzanian national identity along citizen/foreigner lines (Aminzade, 2003). Indeed, when asked the survey question of ‘which specific group do you feel you belong to first and foremost’ by the Afrobarometer group in 2001, only 3% of Tanzanians answered with their ethnic group, compared to 31% in Nigeria, 40% in Mali, 42% in South Africa and 62% in Namibia (Eifert, Miguel, & Posner, 2008).

There has been a good deal of debate about why Tanzania has been so exceptional, with many explanations centred on ethnicity, ideology and language (to which we return below). Attention to factor endowments, however, suggests that Tanzania’s lack of capital and labour, alongside equitable regional distributions of land, labour and capital have greatly contributed to its political development and national integration. In the rest of this section I thus provide a brief analytical narrative of Tanzanian national development with attention to the role of factor endowments.

3.1. Colonial Tanzania⁴

Tanzania on the eve of colonization was marked by low levels of capital and labour. As in the rest of Africa, population density and capital investment were very low (Austin, 2008), with the two certainly linked inasmuch as farmers would practice extensive rather than intensive agriculture and thus generally avoid creating fixed capital. Capital in the form of natural capital or mineral wealth existed in the form of iron and gold, but was in both cases dispersed throughout Tanzania and not present in unusually large quantities (Iliffe, 1978; Roberts, 1986).

As regards population density, even within Africa Tanzania had one of the lowest population densities per square kilometre of potentially arable land in 1900, as can be seen in Table 1. The origins of this unusually low population density are most likely due

⁴ For the sake of simplicity I refer here to colonial Tanganyika as Tanzania.

to three factors, namely slavery, disease prevalence and violence. As regards slavery, Tanzania was at the heart of the Indian Ocean slave trade in the mid-19th century, to which it lost more than 500,000 inhabitants or more than twice as much as any other country (Nunn, 2008). Following the slave traders were the Europeans, who helped spread cholera, smallpox, sleeping sickness and other diseases in the inland areas which had previously had no contact with non-Africans. In particular the German colonialists who established the colony of German East Africa in 1885 also directly contributed to a declining population, both by disrupting patronage and trade patterns that led to population dispersion and by killing off some one-third of the local population in suppressing the Maji-Maji uprising in southern Tanzania in 1905 (Giblin, 1992; Iliffe, 1978). Venereal disease, several major famines and other similar events meant that colonial Tanganyika probably reached a population nadir around 1930, and possibly even later (Berry, 1994).

[Insert Table 1 here]

Within Tanzania there was also an unusually even population dispersion compared to other large African states. This even spread of population was probably due in part to geographical factors such as a relatively even spread of arable land throughout the territory alongside historical factors, particularly efforts to avoid both slave traders in the pre-colonial period and German taxes and labour demands in the colonial period by dispersing away from villages and towns, despite German efforts to establish minimum population sizes per village (Iliffe, 1978, p. 166; Turshen, 1987). Perhaps the most important factor, however, was the profound impact of Germany's loss in World War I and the subsequent division of German East Africa between Belgium, which received Rwanda and Burundi, and the UK, which received the rest of the territory. Table 2 makes clear Tanzania's unusually even population dispersion by examining the sub-national variation in population density across other large African states; a large standard deviation in sub-national population densities (SDPD) thus indicates an uneven population dispersion.⁵ It also lists a reconstituted hypothetical state of German East Africa, which would have had an unusually large concentration of population in its north-west and thus a higher SDPD than most other states.

⁵ This table thus replicates numerically the computer-generated maps of sub-national African population densities in (Herbst, 2000), Chapter 5.

[Insert Table 2 here]

The loss of more than 1/3 of Tanzania's population to the Belgians obviously only made an already scarce labour supply even scarcer.⁶ As noted by (Buell, 1928, p. 429) at the time, 'probably the most important international effect of the establishment of the Belgian mandate over the territory is that the British settlers and planters in Tanganyika are unable to recruit from what otherwise might prove to be a great reservoir of labour.' This was a particular problem for the sisal industry, which was introduced by the Germans in 1893 in and around the coastal city of Tanga and was the world's largest producer from the 1920s until the rise of synthetic fibres in the 1960s. However, throughout this entire period the industry was hampered by labour shortages: in Tanga alone in the 1920s the industry had 25,000 labourers but needed 400,000, with the Labour Commissioner noting that 'demand is, and is likely to remain, in excess of the supply' (Buell, 1928, p. 506). Yet efforts to get additional labour from Rwanda and Burundi were stymied by Belgian limits on labour recruitment in Tanzania due to their efforts to encourage migration to the Belgian Congo (Baker, 1970). In fact, other infant industries like gold mining and the post-World War II groundnut scheme in south-eastern Tanzania also had problems in recruiting workers (Rizzo, 2006), with the Labour Commissioner writing at the time that 'the system of supply and distribution of labour hitherto in force is in danger of breaking down and there is a real risk of direct competition developing between the various labour employing industries' (East African Sisal Industry, 1948, p. 29). In the end, the presence of large amounts of good arable land gave little incentive for Tanzanians to leave their farms for wage employment, except during periods of famines and food crises.

The colonial partition also only accentuated a lack of capital investment in Tanzania, for two reasons. First, the League of Nations established Tanzania as a League of Nations Mandate Territory rather than a colony, which meant that the UK did not have as free a hand as it did in its other colonies. Specifically, the mandate was clear that the job of the trustee was prepare its territory for self-government, thus preventing the UK from developing the territory along Kenyan lines. Secondly, Tanzania's late entry into the British Empire meant that it was doomed in attempting to

⁶ Censuses in the 1930s record a combined population of 2.9 million people in Rwanda and Burundi and 5.0 million in Tanzania.

attract capital investment from London. Indeed, not only had the UK already invested a good deal of capital into Kenya and its other African colonies, but expenditure on World War I left it with very little capital for any of its colonies (Brett, 1973).

The result of a lack of labour and capital and their relatively even dispersion was evident on the development of anti-colonial politics in Tanzania after World War II. In colonies with unequally distributed capital and labour the late colonial period foreshadowed Africa's future conflicts by pitting those areas with more capital investment and people against other areas. Insipient anti-colonial political parties like ABAKO (Belgian Congo), NCNC (Nigeria), NUP (Sudan), PDCI (Côte d'Ivoire) and UNC (Uganda), among others, coalesced around high-density populations with high levels of human capital, leading other political parties to form in opposition to the previous ones. Divisions over centralism vs. federalism, industrial/urban vs. agricultural/rural investment, and the nationalization vs. privatization of land ownership all grew out of the differing sources of support for these parties. However, Tanzania, with its relatively even dispersal of labour and capital, saw no such divisions, and the common threat of European settler appropriation alongside constant British efforts to improve agricultural productivity united Tanzanian farmers in support of the colony's first political party, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), and its leader, Julius Nyerere. Indeed, Tanzania's lack of 'regional separatist movements and only rudimentary class and political divisions... permitted a rather unusually cohesive and integrated leadership to come to the fore' (Hoskyns, 1968, p. 449).

3.2. Independent Tanzania

TANU and its leader, Julius Nyerere, therefore emerged as the dominant political party by the time of independence in 1961, with very little electoral competition; as a result there was considerably little protest upon Nyerere's decision to make Tanzania a one-party state in 1963. This lack of opposition allowed Nyerere to implement such policies as the abolition of tribal chieftainships and the nationalization of land ownership, before the political union with Zanzibar in 1965 drove Nyerere and TANU even further to the left ideologically. In 1967 Nyerere released his Arusha Declaration of 1967, which announced a new focus on *ujamaa* (Swahili for 'familyhood') and 'African socialism.' Concretely this shift meant the nationalization of property, including foreign corporations, and the creation of collective villages along Soviet lines. As regards the former, the

result of a lack of capital investment over the colonial and immediate post-colonial periods meant that 'there was not that much foreign capital to nationalize in the first place' (Hydén, 1980, p. 97), certainly compared to other African economies. The latter was essentially an effort to improve the low levels of agricultural productivity that were a result of Tanzania's low population density. Yet even forced villagization in the mid-1970s failed to 'capture' the peasantry in the new *ujamaa* villages, in large part because there remained enough arable land to which farmers could escape. Indeed, as (Hydén, 1980, p. 25) wrote at the time, 'as long as labour rather than land is the real scarce resource, officials will have difficulty in exercising power over the peasants.'

The failures of villagization to increase or even maintain agricultural production combined with a serious drought in 1974, increases in global oil prices and a brief war with Uganda to send Tanzania into dire economic straits by the early 1980s. In response Nyerere thus abandoned his socialist development policies by liberalizing trade, cutting food subsidies, lifting import restrictions and either privatizing or liquidating wasteful parastatals. The effect of these reforms has been to bring in a large increase in foreign investment and a slight decrease in the percentage of people living in poverty, but it has failed to halt an increase in the absolute number of poor households as well as a decline in Tanzania's absolute and relative position in the Human Development Index (HDI) since 1990, when the HDI was first compiled.⁷

Yet, unlike other African countries where economic crisis has led to violence and conflict, responses in Tanzania have been muted. Despite encouragement from Nyerere to open up political space, the strong presence of the CCM in rural areas led 80% of Tanzanian Mainlanders to voice support for the one-party system in the late 1980s (Presidential Commission on Single-Party or Multi-Party System in Tanzania, 1992), and the subsequent return to multi-party rule in 1995 has seen no change in CCM dominance on the mainland. One of the main reasons for this stability is the persistence of Tanzania's factor endowment ratios, specifically its continued abundance of land despite high population growth rates until the 1990s. Indeed, with only 5.2% of its potentially arable land in use (FAO, 2000), Tanzania still has considerable amounts of potentially arable land. Thus, inasmuch as population growth and migration have led to conflicts over land in such areas as Darfur and the eastern DRC (Mamdani, 2009;

⁷ In 1990 Tanzania was ranked 95th out of 130 states (73rd percentile), while in 2008 it was 159th out of 177 states (89th percentile).

Vlassenroot & Huggins, 2005), Tanzania's land abundance has meant that her politics have been much more peaceful than elsewhere.

There are, of course, exceptions to this trend on mainland Tanzania, which only add further evidence to our factor endowments theory. Indeed, the most prominent area of opposition support on the mainland and home to the third- and fourth-place candidates in the 2005 presidential election is the Arusha region in northern Tanzania. This is the world's only supply of the tanzanite gemstone and one of the most densely populated rural areas of Tanzania, inasmuch as the land on the slopes of Mounts Kilimanjaro and Meru are highly suitable for coffee production. Due to the high land quality, some European settlement took place in the colonial period, thereby leading to 'land hunger' around Arusha and a subsequent discrimination and disenfranchisement of internal migrants in contrast to other parts of Tanzania where migrants were welcomed by locals (Molohan, 1959). The colonial period also saw the coalescence of a local Chagga identity, especially after the creation of the local coffee marketing board in 1931 (Young, 1976). Over time local land pressure created incentives among the Chagga for higher agricultural productivity, entrepreneurship and investment in education, which in turn led them to be the most represented ethnic group among the economic and political elite after independence (Hydén, 1980). In recent years local conflicts have broken out in the region between residents and local government officials over taxation and the allocation of land, between local miners and a South African mining company over the tanzanite mines and between Chagga farmers and Maasai pastoralists over water rights (Kelsall, 2000; Mbonile, 2005). Thus, the collective action promoted by high population densities, a loss in income due to low global coffee prices, high amounts of human capital and a history of internal migration and political activity have thus all helped to promote conflict and opposition support in the region.

4. Alternative Explanations for Tanzanian Nation Formation

Having explained why the factor endowment theory of nationalism can explain Tanzania's success at nation-building, here I compare my explanation to the three other popular explanations for Tanzanian nation formation, all of which I find wanting.

4.1. Ethnic Diversity

Despite a literature suggesting the drawbacks of ethnic fractionalization, some have noted how extreme ethnic heterogeneity in countries like Tanzania and India might be helpful rather than harmful. More specifically, in their analysis of civil war (Collier & Hoeffler, 1998) show a quadratic or 'inverse-U' relationship between ethnic fractionalization and civil wars, whereby extreme homogeneity and heterogeneity are negatively correlated with the duration of civil war violence. The theoretical explanation for why heterogeneity is so safe – that the existence of multiple ethnic groups poses a barrier to the collective action necessary to form a coherent rebel group – would seem to apply to nation formation as well inasmuch as there would be no one group could dominate the other, either on its own or in a small coalition. Indeed, from outside Africa this is the argument most used for why Papua New Guinea has similarly been able to maintain a functioning democracy despite its extreme heterogeneity (Reilly, 2001). Certainly Tanzania is one of the world's most ethnically fractionalized countries, as noted in Table 4; this argument would thus seem to have some traction here. Indeed, the 1967 census, which was the last to ask Tanzanians their ethnic identity, counted a total of 125 ethnic groups with more than 1000 members (Government of Tanzania, 1969).

[Insert Table 3 here]

However, the evidence for this theory is shaky, with many scholars finding a linear rather than a quadratic relationship between ethnic fractionalization and civil war (Buhaug, 2006; Easterly, 2001). Indeed, a closer examination of the other countries in Table 3 indicates that, with the one exception of India, all of them have had severe political turmoil. The DRC, Liberia, Uganda and the Republic of Congo have all experienced civil wars, military rule and large scale ethnic massacres; Madagascar has twice narrowly avoided civil wars in 1975 and 2002 and has ongoing political conflict; and Cameroon has seen continued political divisions between its Francophone majority and Anglophone minority. In fact, Papua New Guinea, despite its functioning democracy, nonetheless still suffered from a long civil war in its Bougainville province and continues to suffer from large amounts of local-level ethnic conflict (Reilly, 2001). Ethnic fractionalization obviously did not help these countries maintain stability.

Indeed, what the evidence suggests is that ethnic fractionalization may be more of a consequence of Tanzania's factor endowments than a cause of nation formation. There is evidence that diversity in land quality and elevation is significantly and positively

correlated with ethnic fractionalization, a result which could be explained by the propensity for ethnic groups to develop 'location specific human capital [which thus] diminishes population mobility and leads to the creation of localized ethnicities' (Michalopoulos, 2008, pp. 1-2). Moreover, (Michalopoulos, 2008) shows as well a significant inverse correlation between population densities and ethnic fractionalization, possibly because low densities inhibit the large trading networks that can lead to the creation of larger ethnolinguistic groups. Finally, the poor economic growth that was a result of low level of capital and labour may have also prevented the formation of larger ethnic groups in Tanzania, in that 'economic development often creates new tensions and gives rise to organized interest groups which makes explicit demands on government and party; it may also encourage new definitions of tribal identity and thus increase social cleavage' (Bienen, 1967, p. 13).

4.2. Ideology

Many scholars have argued that the formation of the Tanzania nation is a result of Nyerere's commitment to fight tribalism whereby he 'forcefully downplayed the role of ethnic affiliation in public life and instead emphasized a single Tanzanian national identity' (Miguel, 2004, p. 337). Indeed, Nyerere moved the national capital to the more central location of Dodoma, banned tribal unions and the mention of ethnic groups in newspapers and stopped collecting information on ethnic identity in national censuses (Tripp, 1999). Moreover, he promoted national identity through the school curriculum, in particular through his emphasis on *siasa* (political education); in a 1973 Form 6 exam, for example, students were required to answer such questions as 'discipline is a prerequisite of nation building. Comment on this with respect to Tanzania at present.'⁸

However, there are two problems with this argument. First, there is evidence that Nyerere's policies did not promote equality and peace among Tanzania's citizens as much as some have claimed. His educational efforts were stymied by the fact that Tanzanian schools had a larger shortage of *siasa* textbooks than for any other subject (Mosha, 1988). On the islands of Zanzibar, which we discuss in more detail later, repeated conflicts at election time between CCM and the main CUF opposition party

⁸ National Form 6 Examinations 1973, General Paper, page 2.

have been as bloody as any clashes in Kenya or Uganda.⁹ Finally, there have been accusations that Nyerere's regime was biased in hiring too many citizens from his own Lake Zone region and not enough from Tanzania's Muslim plurality, who remain underrepresented across all levels of education and government (Tripp, 1999).

Secondly, Nyerere was not the only leader in post-colonial Africa to embrace nation-building policies. Many leaders targeted ethnic divisions as a problem to the creation of unified African nation-states; for instance President Samora Machel of Mozambique famously proclaimed that, 'for the nation to live, the tribe must die' (Mamdani, 1996, p. 135). All new African governments promoted new national identities through the creation of new national currencies, stamps, flags, passports, national anthems and even football teams (Young, 2004). Other countries like Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Malawi, Nigeria and Rwanda also moved their capital cities, while many altered their primary school curricula to better promote national integration. In Ghana the NRC regime similarly banned the word 'tribe' from all government documents and even advocated eliminating tribal names like 'Asante' as surnames as well as tribal facial markings (Chazan, 1982). Other countries also stopped asking questions about ethnicity on their censuses: by 2000 only 44% of African countries asked about ethnicity in 2000 compared to 65% in Asia and 83% in the Americas (Morning, 2008). Despite its infamous failures subsequent governments in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Rwanda copied Tanzania's villagization policies over the following decades (Van Leeuwen, 2001). Finally, many leaders across Africa banned opposition parties in (what they claimed) were efforts to reduce political factionalism and unite their countries (Coleman & Rosberg, 1966).

In fact, African leaders implemented a great variety of nation-building policies after independence. In Uganda Milton Obote set up national elections which required candidates to secure a minimum percentage of the vote across different parts of the country to ensure that national politicians did not merely have ethnic bases to their support, a plan which was subsequently adopted in Kenya and Nigeria as well. In Guinea President Sékou Touré's government passed a law criminalizing attempts 'to place the interest of one or several men in one specific region of the territory above the imperative of national unity' (Adamolekun, 1976, pp. 127-128), while Houphouët-

⁹ Around 40 people were killed in Zanzibar's election violence in 2000-01, or the equivalent of about 1400 deaths in a country the size of Kenya. Numbers vary, but the typical estimate of Kenya's 2007-08 election violence is around 1000 deaths.

Boigny's government in Côte d'Ivoire rotated the site of the annual *fête de l'indépendance* to demonstrate its concern for 'balanced national development' (Cohen, 1973, p. 239). Finally and perhaps most famously, in the DRC President Mobutu attempted to promote a common sense of national identity through his ideology of *authenticité*, his policy of renaming cities, the country and himself with African names, his creation of the *abacost* national dress¹⁰ and his use of the murdered former Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba as a national hero, among other measures (Dunn, 2001).

Yet these ideological commitments to nation-building often had no serious or long-term effects. Policies promoting ethnic balance led to overstaffing and corruption, while those ethnic groups which had been previously over-represented often revolted against efforts to diminish their power. Other efforts at powersharing did not last long, such that by 1980 *authenticité* in Zaire had become a 'sour joke' due to 'the repressive aspects of the regime, its failure to provide basic services with any regularity and increasing favouritism shown to representatives of the President's home region in the northwest' (MacGaffey, 1998, p. 302). Moreover, some leaders like Gowon and Obote were assassinated or overthrown before completing their reforms, while others like Houphouët-Boigny and Touré survived only to see their countries devolve into political instability and civil war after they left office. In none of these cases did nation-building produce as coherent a sense of national identity as in Tanzania.

4.3. The Enforcement of Swahili Language Policies

The third common argument given in the literature for the development of a common Tanzanian identity is the promotion of the Swahili language (Hastings, 1997; Miguel, 2004; Young, 1976). The pre-colonial slave trade helped to introduce Swahili throughout the territory, while British and German colonial rulers both directly and indirectly promoted Swahili as well (Bienen, 1967). After independence Nyerere's government mandated Swahili as the official language of government and medium of instruction in primary schools in 1967, and created a National Swahili Council to promote its use outside the public sphere; Nyerere also famously translated Shakespeare plays into Swahili himself. As a result Swahili has become one of the few indigenous national languages among Africa's linguistically heterogeneous states.

¹⁰ From the French '*a bas le costume*,' or 'down with suits.'

However, it is not evident that the promotion of Swahili in and of itself created a sense of nationhood in Tanzania, for two reasons. First, it is not clear that a common *lingua franca* is either necessary or sufficient to promote nationhood. In the former case, the examples of Switzerland and Canada, among others, point to the ways in which multi-lingual nations can form as 'civic nations.' As per the latter, a single national language failed to halt the bloody civil wars of Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia. Indeed, in Sierra Leone the local Krio language is now spoken by up to 95% of the population despite being the first language of only 10% of the population and a lack of government recognition (Oyètádé & Luke, 2008, p. 135); yet its ubiquity failed to halt one of Africa's bloodiest civil wars.

Second, as with ethnicity it is possible that Nyerere's ability to promote Swahili was more a consequence of Tanzania's low population density and other factor endowments than a cause of nation formation. Indeed, Nyerere's promotion of Swahili was largely non-controversial in part because low population densities inhibited collective action among those resistant to Swahili but also because the language was not associated with a rich ethnic group or region. Here is again fruitful to contrast Tanzania with other African countries. In Ethiopia Emperor Haile Selassie promoted Amharic as the sole official language from 1943, even going so far as to ban literature in other languages; yet the end result was merely to promote virulent opposition among non-Amharic speakers (Bulcha, 1997). In contrast, Mobutu failed to promote a single African language in Zaire, despite his obvious preference for Lingala. There is no doubt that, if he had tried to impose Lingala, he would have undoubtedly received strong opposition from Tshiluba and Swahili speakers, the latter of whom 'live in the metal-rich Shaba region, an area which saw a secessionist movement soon after independence and was the scene of rebellion as recently as 1984... If he really promoted unity through a national language he would be inviting his downfall' (Hunt-Johnson, 1986, p. 46).

Thus, as with these other factors, the Swahili language itself does not seem to explain the formation of Tanzania nationhood.

5. Zanzibar

As already noted, examining the counterfactual is a crucial element of any theoretical argument. In establishing that Tanzania provides evidence for the factor endowments theory of nationalism, it is necessary to establish that, *ceteris paribus*,

different sets of factor endowments should lead to different outcomes. An examination of the Indian Ocean islands of Zanzibar, where Tanzanian nationalism and stability has failed to establish itself,¹¹ thus provides further evidence for my theory.

Zanzibar presents an obvious case for comparison to mainland Tanzania for several reasons. Separated by only 25km of ocean, the mainland and Zanzibar have had long historical links, including the establishment of Arab trading sites in both areas in the pre-colonial era. Both were British colonies before being conjoined as the new state of Tanzania in 1964. While Zanzibar was admitted to the Union as a semi-autonomous state, it has been subject to the same sets of laws as the rest of the country and its ruling party, the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), joined TANU to create the CCM party in 1977, which has ruled over both parts of Tanzania since its creation.

However, unlike the rest of Tanzania, Zanzibar has had a tumultuous and violent history with no indication that a coherent and peaceful sense of a common national identity has developed along similar lines as on the mainland. Immediately after independence in January 1964 the Sultan of Zanzibar was overthrown in a revolution which led to the violent deaths of hundreds of Arabs before the country was unified with Tanganyika in April 1964. While Zanzibar has been henceforth ruled by the ASP and CCM, the re-introduction of multi-party politics led to significant support for the opposition Civic United Front (CUF), which refused to recognize the Zanzibari government after winning almost half the vote in the disputed elections of 1995. As noted above, the subsequent election in 2000 led to many deaths and arrests, while accusations by the CUF that the CCM imported voters from the mainland led to further accusations that the 2005 election was rigged. This unrest has been echoed at the national level by tensions between Zanzibar and the mainland, with accusations from the mainland that the guaranteed allocation of either the Presidency or Vice-Presidency to a Zanzibari gives the islands undue influence, and from Zanzibar that the Union government has taken control over such issues as natural resources without any consultation and that the unofficial agreement that the presidency of Tanzania would alternate between a Mainlander and a Zanzibari was broken with the election of the Mainlander Jakaya Kikwete in 2005 (Bretns & Mshigeni, 2004; Rawlence, 2005).

Clearly, then, Zanzibar is not at peace internally or in relation to the mainland, and its high levels of violence does not suggest a strong amount of national identity. Yet many of the alternative hypotheses listed above which claim to explain the development

¹¹ It is notable that most analyses of Tanzanian nation formation have ignored Zanzibar.

of the Tanzanian nation fail to explain Zanzibar's separate development. Most obviously, despite being indigenous to the islands and universally spoken on them, Swahili has not helped to bring Zanzibaris together. Secondly, ideology cannot have played much of a role, considering that it was in part Zanzibar's influence that pushed Nyerere towards the left in the 1960s and led him to develop his *ujamaa* philosophy. Finally, ethnic diversity, while lower than mainland Tanzania, is still higher than other conflict-prone countries like Eritrea and Guinea and is considerably distant from the most dangerous level of 0.38 according to (Collier & Hoeffler, 1998). Indeed, considering its ELF score of 0.671 and a population of around one million, Zanzibar's demographics are remarkably similar to the peaceful island state of Mauritius, which has an ELF of 0.632, a population around one million and a similar history of British colonialism.

Instead, what makes Zanzibar different from mainland Tanzania and Mauritius are its different factor endowment ratios. Whereas in mainland Tanzania labour has been scarce and land has been abundant, the opposite has been true in Zanzibar, due in large part to being the centre of the East African slave trade in the decades before colonization. The Arabs who settled there developed infrastructural capital in the form of large coconut and clove plantations, while capital accumulation came from the intercontinental trade in slavery and agricultural commodities. In other words, unlike Mauritius which was unsettled prior to colonization,¹² politics in Zanzibar developed along 'settler' Arab and 'native' African/Shirazi lines not unlike parts of the Sahel and Saharan regions.¹³ This divide meant that political parties developed in Zanzibar along the lines seen elsewhere in Africa, with the Zanzibar Nationalist Party drawing support from the richer Arab community while the ASP drew more support from the African/Shirazi and trade unionist, peasant and squatter populations. Thus the development of economic inequalities between Arabs and Africans and conflict over the small amount of land available per capita in Zanzibar has been the basis for Zanzibar's long history of ethnic conflict since the colonial period.

¹² Other factor endowments differences between Mauritius and Zanzibar include Mauritius's unusually high initial level of human capital and the lowest population growth rate in post-colonial Africa, which has meant that Mauritius is now labour-scarce rather than land-scarce (Subramanian & Roy, 2003).

¹³ Ironically, the 'indigenous' inhabitants of Zanzibar initially adopted the name of the small number of Persian immigrants – the Shirazi – to distinguish themselves from both mainland African immigrants and Arabs. However, as the economic gulf between land-owning Arabs (and Asians) and landless Africans and Shirazis grew over time, the African and Shirazi groups have merged both politically and culturally (Brents & Mshigeni, 2004).

6. Conclusion

In this paper I have developed a factor endowments theory of nationalism, where interregional imbalances of factor endowments can lead to political instability and conflict. I have shown that the theory fits well with (Gellner, 2006 [1983])'s theory of nationalism and helps to explain the failures of nation-building in most parts of Africa. I then examined the exceptional case of Tanzania, and demonstrated that its low and evenly dispersed population densities and natural resource endowments and low amounts of capital investment explained its unusually strong political stability and national identity. I examined other potential theories for Tanzanian nation formation and found them lacking, especially in light of the political instability and failures of nation building in Zanzibar.

There are three conclusions which can be drawn here. First, the paper helps to resolve a paradox about the Tanzanian state, namely its supposed simultaneous strength and weakness. Specifically, (Hydén, 1980) and others have famously described the inability of the Tanzanian state to reach the vast majority of its own citizens who worked as farmers, captured in the famous phrase 'the uncaptured peasantry.'¹⁴ However, scholars have also praised Nyerere and other Tanzanian leaders for the way they were able to create a strong sense of Tanzanian nationalism through a variety of government policies, including the 'complete overhaul' of local government,' the 'aggressive employment' of the public school curriculum, and the 'forceful downplaying' of ethnicity (Miguel, 2004, pp. 335-337). This ability of the Tanzanian state to be both weak and strong at the same time becomes clearer when we realize that, while the Tanzanian state is no different from other African states in its weakness at promoting economic development, it was able to implement nation-building policies because, unlike elsewhere in Africa, Tanzania never developed any significant inter-regional or inter-ethnic inequalities, while its citizens were uniquely weak at confronting state policies due to the collective action problems inherent in a widely dispersed and poor population. Thus, to paraphrase (Migdal, 1988), Tanzania has a weak state but an even weaker society.

Second, the paper suggests that theories of nationalism would do well to incorporate African failures at nation-building into their analyses. Indeed, inasmuch as

¹⁴ Nyerere famously claimed that 'while other people have gone to the moon, we are still trying to reach the village.'

debates on African politics have benefited from recent discussions of interregional variation in economic and political development (Bates, 2008; Boone, 2003), a greater attention to the variations in inter-regional inequalities may similarly help to better our explanations for the successes and failures of nation formation. More specifically, scholars could do worse than to return to debates from the 1970s on centre-periphery relations as a major explanation for nationalism in the modern world (Hechter, 1975; Nairn, 1977; Weber, 1976).

Third and finally, the paper suggest a strong link between poverty and nation formation. A lack of labour and capital has both contributed to Tanzania's stability and nation formation and hindered its economic development. More specifically, low population densities have failed to spur agricultural productivity gains along Boserupian lines, while a lack of human, financial and natural capital have slowed economic development more generally. This inverse relationship between stability and development is not, however, all that surprising in light of some of Africa's former success stories like Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya, both of which saw significant initial economic development before gradually descending into political chaos and instability more recently for reasons suggested above. In comparison to the successful examples of late development in East Asia, economic development is thus perhaps more likely to lead to a period of ethnic tensions and political disorder in states that are already fragmented and not cohesive, to use (Kohli, 2004)'s terminology. This conclusion suggests that the majority of states in Africa that are both poor and religiously and/or ethnically diverse cannot have it all: they might be able to pursue economic development or national cohesion as a policy goal, but not both.

There is, however, a sliver lining to my analysis here. While Tanzania's strong sense of national identity does not currently seem to play a positive role in its economic development, we should remember that economic development is inherently a long process. For instance, (Acemoglu, Johnson, & Robinson, 2003) have suggested that good institutions in Botswana helped to bring it from one of the world's poorest countries in the 1960s to one of the richest in Africa by the 1990s. Moreover, the literature on factor endowments and institutions has suggested that the former affects economic development through the latter (Easterly & Levine, 2003; Engerman & Sokoloff, 1997). It is thus possible that Tanzania's strong sense of national identity may play a positive role in years to come, an outcome which would be much appreciated by its poor citizens.

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Table 1: Population Density in 1900 (persons/km² on potentially arable land)
(Sources: (FAO, 2000; McEvedy & Jones, 1978))

Zambia	1.3	Malawi	11.1
DRC	3.9	Coastal West Africa*	14.6
Mozambique	4.7	South Africa	18.8
Tanzania	5.9	Uganda	21.2
Sudan	6.9	Kenya	22.0
SS African Average	7.9	Burundi and Rwanda	115.7

* Includes Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal

Table 2: Population Dispersion, 1950-1970

(Sources: Various Country Censuses)

Country	Date	# of Regions	Population Density	SDPD*
Ghana	1970	9	35.9	26.3
Kenya	1969	8	26.9	102.3
Nigeria	1952/53	28	20.6	29.3
Mainland Tanzania	1967	18	13.4	14.1
Uganda	1959	18	33.0	30.4
<i>German East Africa**</i>	<i>1967</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>19.6</i>	<i>35.9</i>

* Standard Deviation of Population Density

** Mainland Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi

To avoid bias from outliers the highest density regions in each country have been eliminated from the SDPD. As data on potentially arable land at the sub-national level does not exist, population density here measures persons per square kilometre.

Table 3: The Most Ethnically Fractionalized Countries in the World

(Taylor & Hudson, 1972) (Fearon, 2003) (Alesina, Devleeshauer, Easterly, Kurlat, & Wacziarg, 2003)

			Mean Ranking	Median Ranking
1 Tanzania	Papua New Guinea	Uganda	Uganda	Tanzania (tie)
2 Uganda (tie: 2)	Tanzania	Liberia	Zaire/DRC	Uganda (tie)
3 Zaire/DRC (tie: 2)	Zaire/DRC	Madagascar	Cameroon (tie: 3)	Zaire/DRC
4 Cameroon (tie: 4)	Uganda	Zaire/DRC (tie)	Liberia (tie: 3)	Liberia
5 India (tie: 4)	Liberia	Rep. of Congo (tie)	Tanzania	Cameroon