



Discussion Paper

**NATION BUILDING IN AFRICA:
LESSONS FROM TANZANIA FOR SOUTH SUDAN**

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ABSTRACT

Despite the comparability of ethnic heterogeneity and complexity of most African societies, there are variations in nation building outcomes in countries with similar heterogeneity. The paucity of comparative reflections on these variations limits our understanding of, and practical engagement with, the concept and practice of nation building. Using comparative desk research methodology, this paper interrogates the ideals, objectives, and the methodologies by which post-independence-era nation building was attempted. It draws lessons from Tanzania, a country that gained independence relatively early, for the more recently independent South Sudan. The inquiry reveals that a country's nation-building success depends on the effectiveness with which the leadership develops and implements a language policy, and depoliticises ethnicity and the military. Despite her ethno-linguistic and religious heterogeneity, Tanzania is an outlier when compared to most other heterogeneous African countries. She successfully built a Nation with minimum ethno-political conflicts by: (i) depoliticising ethnicity, which reduced the propensity for the emergence of divisive ethno-political cleavages; (ii) undertaking a language policy that facilitated communication between different sociolinguistic nationalities and races; and (iii) crafting party-military fusion to achieve concordance between the ruling party and armed forces while also ensuring civilian control over the military. In contrast, South Sudan started off with ethno-military conflicts, which threaten to stymie national integration: these fissures stand in the way of a unifying national language policy, are militarising politics, politicising the military, and have engendered unbearable political competition between South Sudan's different sociolinguistic nationalities. These observations have important implications for forging nationhood in heterogeneous African societies.

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List of Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
APSA	African Union Peace and Security Architecture
AU	African Union
CCM	Chama cha Mapinduzi
DP	Democratic Party
EAC	East African Community
EASF	East African Standby Force
ESR	Education for Self-Reliance
GoSS	Government of [the Republic of] South Sudan
KAR	Kings African Rifles
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
SANU	Sudan African National Union
SPLM/A	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army
TANU	Tanzania African National Union
TPDF	Tanzania People's Defence Forces
UN	United Nations
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
UTP	United Tanganyika Party
UwWT	Umoja wa Wanawake wa Tanzania

NATION BUILDING IN TANZANIA AND SOUTH SUDAN

1.0 Introduction

“A nation is not defined by its borders or the boundaries of its land mass. Rather, a nation is defined by a diverse people who have been unified by a cause and a value system and who are committed to a vision for the type of society they wish to live in and give to the future generations to come.”

— Fela Durotoye

1.1 The Puzzle of Nation Building

Nation building is a remarkable political challenge which historically nerve-racks leaders of heterogeneous countries. These are countries wherein citizens identify themselves more with their ethnic (religious, ethno-linguistic, regional) groups than with their country. In such societies ethnic citizenship is stronger than Nation-State citizenship. Different sociolinguistic identities jostle for power, prestige, influence, and available opportunities, thus impeding possibilities of evolving a common national interest. Identity differences, whether based on race, ethnicity, or religion, have stifled the formulation and implementation of truly national programs due to intergroup suspicion, competition, and prejudice in many countries. Struggles involving ethnic minorities are more than “ephemeral nuisance” traceable only to underdeveloped societies but a living and growing norm throughout the world.¹ Different ethno-religious, ethno-linguistic or regional groups pull and push against one another in an attempt to exert each group’s recognition and secure priority, making ethnic competition and conflicts antithetical to national progress in today’s world.² Ethno-populist movements emerged in areas like Romania and Hungary, where political groups sought to exploit ethnic tensions to secure power. Inter-ethnic relations, both within and between states sharing transnational ethnicities, remain prone to mutual suspicions, as “conflicting historical myths, prejudices, and negative stereotypes have survived unaltered and continue to characterize the collective identity discourses.”³

Yet, in some societies different social groups have been fused into a single national community. Common symbols, a national culture, and more self-identification with their country than with their ethnic groups, typify cases of successful national cohesion, indicating variations in nation-building outcomes. Tanzania, unlike most other African countries, has successfully built a postcolonial nation, hence becoming a Nation-State. Newly independent countries, such as Eritrea, South Sudan, and to some extent South Africa, have yet to experience Tanzania-like national

¹ Walker Conner, Walker Connor, 1972. ‘Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?’, *World Politics*, 24 (3):319-355, at p. 319; Paul Robert Magocsi, 1990. ‘Nation-Building or Nation Destroying?: Lemkos, Poles, and Ukrainians in Contemporary Poland’, *The Polish Review*, 35 (3/4):197-209

² Donald L. Horowitz. 1985. *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley and LA: University of California Press

³ Balázs Trencsényi, Dragos Petrescu, Cristina Petrescu, Constantin Iordachi, and Zoltán Kántor, 2001. *Nation-Building and Contested Identities: Romanian & Hungarian Case Studies*, Bucharest: Regio Books, p. 9

cohesion. What explains this phenomenon, and what vital lessons can be drawn for countries striving to build national cohesion from successful cases? Why and how did Tanzania achieve this mileage, and how would countries like South Sudan learn from Tanzania's experience to avoid the mistakes made by countries like Uganda, Kenya or Nigeria?

Underlying the foregoing question is the puzzling variation in nation-building outcomes in the contemporary world, among different but similarly heterogeneous countries. Differences in nation building experiments, experiences, outcomes, and trajectories among different African countries are of particular importance here. Addressing this poser provides useful lessons from Africa's nation-building attempts for countries like South Sudan which presently suffer ethno-political fissures that threaten the country's nationhood. Scholarship on Africa does pay attention to the antitheses of nation building and their consequences. One argument is that kleptocratic leadership, ethno-political rivalries, and lack of national languages result in nation-building deficits demonstrated by recurrent and persistent ethnic conflicts in Africa.⁴ Comparisons between younger and older countries that provide learning-points for newer countries remain less well articulated. Drawing theoretical and practical lessons from some countries' nation-building experiences settles the question of how adaptable and transferable nation-building experiments are across different African countries. This study unravels why and how Tanzania's nation-building approach led to observed national unity and cohesion, and underscores the applicability of Tanzania's experience to South Sudan's ethno-political crisis that threatens to stymie the young country's nation building and state consolidation.

1.2 Methods

Based on desk research, the paper makes an in-depth examination of Tanzania's nation building ideals, objectives, and methods, then analyses South Sudan's recent experience of ethno-political conflicts and nation building programs to draw lessons for forging national cohesion. By comparing a country that gained independence relatively early and a more recently independent state, the inquiry serves both scholarly and policy purposes: namely, it deepens understanding of variations in nation-building successes in Africa; and it informs practical solutions to South Sudan's nation-building challenge. There are significant similarities between Tanzania and South Sudan—*postcoloniality, ethnic heterogeneity, identity conflicts*—which allow us to compare their nation-building trajectories. While the dynamics of foreign control vary, both countries experienced colonial control. They both attempted to unify different ethno-regional communities as both are *heterogeneous* societies. The two countries faced post-independence *identity conflicts* of some kind or another. Their experiences indicate tensions between identity groups, including intra-military fissures, which threatened to escalate dangerously and plunge the polity in disarray: a bloody eruption in Zanzibar in 1960 and the 1964 army mutiny indicated Tanzania's challenge

⁴ Alex de Waal, 2014. 'When Kleptocracy Becomes Insolvent: Brute Causes of the Civil War in South Sudan', *African Affairs* 113 (452):347-369; Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*.

of nation building and civil-military relations⁵ as did the December 2013 eruption in South Sudan. Both countries' conflicts drew in external actors. Both were fuelled by elements of identity: the Tanzania munity indicated the desire for Africanisation of postcolonial armed forces while South Sudan indicates ethnic conflicts between Dinka (seemingly led by President Salva Kiir Mayardit) and Nuer (apparently under Vice President Dr. Riek Machar Teny Dhurgon).

Nation building is a complex process. It is underpinned by myriad factors, actors with differing interests, multiple pressures and innumerable experiences, undecipherable socialisation and personal capabilities acquired over time, and multipart local, regional, and global circumstances. Thus, one cannot assume sameness between these countries but can consider difference in nation-building outcomes to result from a variable extant in one country and absent in another, particularly nation building strategies.⁶ Thus, emphasis on why and how Tanzania's nation building strategy worked allows one to explain South Sudan's current challenge, and to examine the applicability and adaptation of such experience to South Sudan.

1.3 Findings and Argument

The findings indicate that the success, or lack thereof, of nation building is dependent upon the degree to which a country's leadership develops and implements an Ethno-Political Strategy. An ethno-political strategy is a set of deliberate policy interventions that are intended to reduce people's attachments to their different identities in order that they may identity with the new Nation-State. The strategy involves popularisation of loyalty to the Nation-State concurrent with disparagement of loyalty to one's ethnic identity, be it religion, race, or ethno-linguistic attachment. The strategy includes: (a) language policy; (b) de-politicisation of ethnicity; and (c) demilitarisation of society and politics. Leaders who successfully make and implement these policy choices are more likely to succeed in building national cohesion and identity than those who ignore or fail in their linguistic, politico-military, and social engineering programs. This process is not as sophisticated as Deutsch's conception of the relationship between social mobilisation and political development, but it does have elements of engineered psychosocial change, especially "the need for new patterns of group affiliation and new images of personal identity."⁷ The strategy is a deliberate, leadership-initiated set of interventions.

A country which fails to develop and implement these interventions retains ethnicity as the rallying point for politics, which then seeps through key political institutions. Ethnically-divided and allegiant institutions stymie the evolution of national consciousness and common identity, hence

⁵ Anthony Clayton, 2003. 'The 1964 Army Mutinies and the Making of Modern East Africa (review)', *The Journal of Military History*, 68 (4):1313-1314; Mark Baynham, 1989. 'The East African mutinies of 1964', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 8 (1):153-180; de Waal.

⁶ Mill's *method of difference* assumes the existence of a phenomenon in one circumstance and not another, yet the instances are common in other respects. John S. Mill, 1843. *A System of Logic*, Vol. 1, p. 455

⁷ Karl W. Deutsch, 1961. 'Social Mobilisation and Political Development', *The American Political Science Review*, 55 (3):493-514, at p. 493

nation building failure. Tanzania effectively denigrated attachment to ethno-linguistic and racial identity, demilitarised society, and undertook a Swahilisation program, in part out of the “passionate desire of Tanzanians to build a nation which in every particular is a truly African nation.”⁸ Julius Nyerere had made this commitment before independence. He had suggested that Swahili be adopted as Tanganyika’s national language. He addressed several political meetings in Swahili to underscore his decidedness.⁹ South Sudan needs to embark on these programs it is to outlive ethnic tensions that have penetrated the state’s political and military infrastructure and informed recent conflicts which threaten to tear the young country apart.¹⁰ Without a hegemonic national consciousness and a language that subsume sub-national/ethnic consciousness and dialects, the country’s nation-building success should remain dismal.

This approach—theoretical and empirical emphasis on the relationship between ethno-political strategy and nation-building—is useful for three reasons: First, African politics has evolved over the past half a century. Analyses that underscore the changing contours of Africa’s politico-governance landscape, especially the ethnic dimension of nation building, are useful for drawing lessons from these decades of political experimentation to inform solutions to problems facing similar heterogeneous societies. This study builds on five decades of nation building in Tanzania to draw important lessons for South Sudan. Second, the uniqueness of the subject and cases chosen is vital. The subject relates to Africa’s challenge of political development through the construction of viable Nation-States. While European states emerged from violence, the violence was mainly between different nascent Nation-States.¹¹ In Africa colonial violence and subterfuge exacerbated pre-existing nation building and state control challenges, and the legacy of colonial subterfuge complicates the historical failures of state control in Africa.¹² Political violence in Africa indicates nation building failures because greedy politicians can instrumentalise ethnicity for selfish interests.¹³ Tanzania, unlike most other African states, has avoided ethno-political violence partly because its national consciousness and cohesion render it difficult for politicians to organise along ethnic lines. Finally, the approach allows one to engage audiences in policy and scholarly circles about the politics of nation building. The extant scholarship, on civil war, political economy, and civil-military relations in Africa, contends with a struggle between situating analysis in Africa-specific realities, on the one hand, and overemphasis on inadequate one-garment-fits all approach

⁸ Lyndon Harries, 1969. ‘Language Policy in Tanzania’, *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 39 (3):275-280, at p. 275

⁹ Harries, p. 275

¹⁰ Jok Madut Jok, 2011. *Diversity, Unity, and Nation Building in South Sudan: Special Report*, United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC: USIP; de Waal, ‘When Kleptocracy Becomes Insolvent’.

¹¹ Charles Tilly, 1990. *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1990*, London: Basil Blackwell

¹² Jeffrey Herbst, 2000. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press

¹³ Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, 2002. *Greed and Grievance in Civil War*, Oxford: Centre for the Study of African Economies

on the other. The solution to this dilemma is an analytic framework that fuses theory and practice in understanding nation building.¹⁴

1.4 Organisation of the Paper

The rest of the paper proceeds as follows: The next section develops a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between an Ethno-Political Strategy and Nation-Building Outcomes. It pays attention to how each of the elements of the strategy leads to specific nation-building outcomes. The third section examines Tanzania's experiment with nation building, underlining the role of the different strategic choices in politically unifying a heterogeneous society. The fourth section examines South Sudan's nation-building trajectory since 2011. The fifth section draws lessons for South Sudan from Tanzania's experiment and experience. The concluding section sums up the main arguments and draws implications for theory and research.

2.0 Conceptual Issues

2.1 The Concept of Nation Building

Nation building is about: (i) construction of a *Nation* where one hardly or loosely exists; as opposed to (ii) the evolutionary emergence of a nation where one hardly existed.¹⁵ Both (i) and (ii) lead to the development of a Nation. Nation building is overtly top-down and political. National evolution is bottom-up, with unsystematic political agency. The former requires state power and resources to enforce, a reality that demands leadership agency. National evolution is bottom-up, results from spontaneous actions by populations. Complementarity between top-down and bottom-up processes is useful for entrenching national identity.¹⁶ But the two need not be mutually inclusive or concurrent. The former is always rationalist, instrumental, more rapid, occurring in about a generation. The latter is evolutionary and gradual. It may take even centuries for a nation, that is, a people with shared identity and culture, to evolve. An example of the latter is the evolution of a Jewish consciousness before the building of a Jewish Nation-State in post-1948 Middle East. Pre-colonial Rwandan can also be said to have been an evolved nation for it is difficult to tell when both the Tutsi and Hutu adopted the same language and cultural institutions despite their occupational/status differences. National building is a deliberate, domestic process at the centre of which is political-leadership agency. National evolution may have political agency, but is gradual, less systematic, sometimes spontaneous and possibly slow. Nation building is undertaken by a nascent state; national evolution may give rise to a nation state. When a state precedes a nation, it may undertake a process of building national cohesion.

¹⁴ By drawing lessons from a successful case of nation building to learn about a nascent one, this study positions itself at the intersection between academic and policy research whose overall aim and intent is to help solve Africa's problems of nation building specifically and political development generally.

¹⁵ Karl W. Deutsch and William J. Foltz, eds., 1963. *Nation-Building*, New York: Atherton

¹⁶ Fukuyama, p. 192

During the nation building process, the country's population is integrated and assimilated into the emerging state apparatus wherein a common national identity is claimed.¹⁷ This fusion of social identities constructs a common identity. In post-World War II world, the state needs a “cohesive group possessing ‘independence’ within the confines of the international order, as provided by the United Nations”, and a government that rules over such a unified group. The government, in turn, receives from that cohesive group “the acclamation which legitimizes the government as part of the world order.”¹⁸ Such a “cohesive group” constitutes a nation is built. In a nation, identity conflicts wane but sub-national identity differences may remain. The eruption of identity-based violence in post-colonial Africa is indicative of the political consequences of elusive national cohesion and consciousness under conditions of ethnic heterogeneity. Political violence featuring identity conflicts has been attributed to nation-building failures.¹⁹

It is argued that unless “loyalty to the ethnic group is self-evidently compatible with loyalty to the state” or ethnic self-identification and attachment becomes short-lived and withers “away as modernisation progresses”, then the disharmony between loyalty to the ethnic group and loyalty to the state leads to ethno-political conflicts.²⁰ The world has experienced grim scenarios of destructive ethnic antagonism, which cloud our instances and experiences of ethnic cooperation, accommodation, reciprocity, negotiation, transformation, and fusion. Many times these instances of ethnic amity result from political interaction and negotiation between political and ethnic leaders. These processes reduce social cleavages and previously injurious encounters become transformed.²¹ These different observations indicate that variations in nation-building approaches taken by different African countries have led to dissimilar outcomes. The ethnic conflict normalcy, seems [to be] intellectually overwhelming but instances of ethnic cooperation and fusion in countries like Tanzania challenge analyses that stress ethnic conflicts in post-colonial Africa while paying less attention to variations in nation building success.²²

Nation building is neither synonymous with state building nor specific to postcolonial situations. It is not equivalent to political democratisation. The three political projects differ. Where state

¹⁷ Brownlee, p. 316

¹⁸ Carl Friedrich, Carl J. Friedrich, 1963. ‘Nation-Building?’, in Karl W. Deutsch and William J. Foltz, eds., *Nation-Building* (New York: Atherton, 1963), 31. quoted in Brownlee, p. 316

¹⁹ Donald S. Rothchild, ed., 1997. *Managing Ethnic Conflict in Africa: Pressures and Incentives for Cooperation*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution; Rama Venkatasawmy, 2015. ‘Ethnic Conflict in Africa: A Short Critical Discussion’, *Transcience* 6 (2):26-37; Rodolfo Stavenhagen, 1996, *Ethnic Conflicts and the Nation-State*, Basingtoke: Palgrave; Robert Picciotto, 2010. ‘Conflict prevention and development co-operation in Africa: an introduction’, *Conflict, Security & Development* 10 (1):1-25.

²⁰ Connor, ‘Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?’, p. 320

²¹ Chester A. Crocker, 1997. ‘African State Management of Ethnic Conflict’, in Rothchild, *Managing Ethnic Conflict in Africa*, pp. 1-24

²² See Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*; James Fearon and David Laitin, 2003. ‘Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War.’ *American Political Science Review*, 97 (1):75-90; Adebayo Adedeji, 1999. *Comprehending and Mastering African Conflicts: The Search for Sustainable Peace and Good Governance*, London and New York: Zed Books; African Development Bank (AfDB), 2009. *Africa Development Report 2008/2009: Conflict Resolution, Peace and Reconstruction in Africa*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

building refers to the establishment of state institutions, that is, institutions of political rule and control over societal affairs, nation building is about identity formation, and one can evolve independent of the other.²³ State building results in control; nation building begets unity and loyalty to a common identity. The two processes can, but need not be, concurrent. State building entails “the creation of sovereign capacities of which the fundamental one is the successful and generally undisputed *claim to a ‘monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force’*, and the resulting “concentration and expression of collective power without the need to exercise coercion.”²⁴ Nation building, which targets the emergence of a common identity and national consciousness, produces a sense of national unity and collective identity. It is aimed at preventing discord along ethnic lines—hence its tendency to *focus on citizens themselves*. State building, conversely, focuses on the construction or strengthening institutional structures of governance for socioeconomic transformation, infrastructure development, fiscal and monetary policy making and implementation, and strengthening the security apparatus.

Though the two are mutually reinforcing²⁵, nation building can precede state building. Where this obtains, the nation legitimises, and speeds up, the state building process, leading to a Nation-State. Nation building, therefore, is the “process of collective identity formation with a view to legitimizing public power within a given territory”, by drawing upon existing, or developing and popularising new, acceptable, traditions, institutions, and customs.²⁶ Democratic processes, such as negotiations and consensus building between contending groups, and constitutionalism, may build national cohesion, by creating a culture of tolerance and reconciliation between ethnically and culturally different groups. Still, nation building need not follow, even result from, democratic processes as problems of national integration can stifle democratisation processes.²⁷ Nation building is not antithetical to broad ideological conceptions, such as Pan-Africanism, communism, capitalism, but constitutes a building block for such high-level self-conceptions and convictions. Thus, it neither erases lower level identities nor blinds out higher ones.

A key element of nation building is identity fusion and loyalty to a common identity despite the micro-identities that people may retain within a country. Indicators of successful nation building, therefore, include: (i) the attainment of shared cultural resources and symbols, mainly a language with a political and social status high enough to make it acceptable as a form of communication countrywide; (ii) loyalty to the same geo-political unit or country as opposed to one’s identity group; and (iii) elimination or subjugation of ethnic dominance over political institutions.

23 Armin von Bogdandy, Stefan Häußler, Felix Hanschmann, and Raphael Utz, 2005. ‘State-Building, Nation-Building, and Constitutional Politics in Post-Conflict Situations: Conceptual Clarifications and an Appraisal of Different Approaches’, *Max Planck UNYB* 9: 579-613

24 *Ibid*, p. 584

25 *Jok*, p. 4

26 von Bogdandy *et al*, p. 586

27 Nic Rhodie and Ian Liebenberg, eds., 1994. *Democratic nation building in South Africa*, Pretoria: HSRC Publishers; George W. Shepherd Jr., 1966, ‘National Integration and the Southern Sudan’, *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 4 (2):193-212

Failed nation building is observable in a country with competing ethnic loyalties and groups; communication difficulties across the country because of lack of a common language; people's loyalty and self-identification that is more to their sub-national and cultural identities than to the Nation-State; and instances of ethnic dominance of, or competition over, state institutions. Where a nation has been successfully built state institutions serve a national duty; where it is still struggling or has failed, state institutions are torn between national and ethnic allegiance. Cities within a nation become cosmopolitan, avoiding "social distrust, economic envy, political friction, and violent confrontation" urban contexts; cities in divided societies retain ethnic urban cleavages and become centres of ethno-political tension: Bryceson draws a distinction between Dar es Salaam on one hand, and Kampala, Kigali, Bujumbura, Mogadishu on another, in East Africa.²⁸ A common language or set of languages, acceptable to and used throughout the country indicates a nation; competing languages and language dialects, as well as communication difficulties across different sociolinguistic groups, indicate nation building failures.

This paper argues that nation building success depends on a country's "Ethno-Political Strategy". This is a set of deliberate, calculated, and targeted policy interventions aimed at replacing people's attachments to different identities with new attachments to a broader identity, a National Identity. The *national identity* in no way completely erases other forms of sub-national identity, but is superimposed upon, and takes pre-eminence over, them in everyday life. As an aggregate identity, *national identity* emerges from popularisation of new symbols, attachments, and loyalty to the Nation-State. Loyalty to one's ethnic identity, culture, and symbols be it religion, race, or ethno-linguistic attachment, is downplayed and emphasis placed on a collective identity.

2.2 Ethno-Political Strategy and Nation Building

As the name suggests, an ethno-political strategy is a political scheme. The scheme involves reconstitution and reconstruction of ethnicity's role in national politics. It is an innovative approach to politics that is rooted in a pragmatic appreciation of a country's ethnic problem. Through this strategy, leaders seek to obtain a specific political objective: a Nation State with non-ethnicised politics and political institutions. Unlike other political strategies, such as silence, smear campaign, censorship, heroes-worship, obstruction, co-optation, and denial, an ethno-political strategy may encompass these strategies as its tactics, but has long-term goals. Leaders' choice of this strategy, therefore, is greatly influenced by the nature, extent, and geospatial distribution of ethnic identities within a country. Co-optation, for instance, becomes an effective political strategy when certain social groups are included in political spaces they otherwise would not belong to. An example is the co-optation of the armed forces in legislatures, which are considered civilian political institutions, to appease politically-interested military officers.²⁹ Silence can be a political

²⁸ Deborah Fahy Bryceson, 2010. 'Dar es Salaam as a 'harbour of peace' in East Africa: Tracing the role of creolized urban ethnicity in nationstate Formation', World Institute for Development Economics Research, No.19, p. 1

²⁹ Sabastiano Rwengabo, 2013. 'Regime Stability in Post-1986 Uganda: Counting the Benefits of Coup-Proofing', *Armed Forces and Society* 39 (3):531-559

strategy when leaders unexpectedly choose to refuse to speak about serious events, processes or circumstances in order to evoke mystery, uncertainty, passivity, and relinquishment about the issue in question.³⁰ The depth and breadth of an ethno-political strategy is shaped by intensity and extensity of potential ethnic cleavages and competition, which, in the leadership's judgment, threaten national cohesion and possibly the polity's survival as well. This forces leaders to design ways and means of attenuating the influence of these identities and social cleavages in political and socioeconomic relations within a given polity.

The strategy may be constitutionally developed and implemented; it can also be violently imposed. In extreme instances, genocide and ethnic cleansing can become an ethno-political strategy aimed at erasing a particular ethnic group that is perceived to threaten other groups or even national cohesion.³¹ Other ethno-political extremities include religious and theocratic impositions, racial excesses like apartheid, and forced change of identity. In this specific context, language policy and de-politicisation are key elements of an ethno-political strategy for three reasons: first, they are mutually reinforcing and relatively less costly compared to extreme choices like ethnic cleansing. Second, the strategies resonate with postcolonial ideals, namely national unity, national integration, democratic governance, equitable development, and liberal-democratic notions of military professionalism concurrent with civilian control over the military.³² Third, the strategic choices can be applied to different social groups without creating feelings of animosity and discrimination among some groups. While some groups may strive to retain cultural uniqueness, they are easy to convince that sub-national identities do not negate the broad common identity that results from these nation-building processes as long as the resulting identity is accepted as common to all. This all-embracing nature of the choices makes them simultaneously more defensible and acceptable than other strategies.

Three elements, therefore, constitute an ethno-political strategy: (i) language policy, (ii) de-politicisation of ethnicity, and (iii) demilitarisation of society and politics. Each element acts through a specific mechanism that influences people's attachment to a new political identity. Collectively, these mechanisms lead to nationhood whereby people collectively identify themselves with, and feel strongly attached to, their Nation State. At the heart of the ethno-political strategy is the political leadership which determines the interests, choices, and justifies the intent of interfering with, including denigrating, some of the people's sub-national identity attachments. Thus, straddling all the different mechanisms through which each element of the ethno-political strategy works is leadership communication that informs processes of socio-political mobilisation.³³

³⁰ Barry Brummett, 1980. 'Towards a theory of silence as a political strategy', *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66 (3):289-303

³¹ Scott Straus, 2012. "'Destroy Them to Save Us'": Theories of Genocide and the Logics of Political Violence', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 24 (4):544-560.

³² Samuel P. Huntington, 1957. *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, Cambridge, Mas.: Harvard University. Press

³³ Deutsch, 'Social Mobilisation and Political Development'

2.2.1 Language Policy seeks to evolve “a cultural system establishing collective meaning and identity for all envisaged members of society.”³⁴ Desirable ethnic homogeneity “can be built with education, teaching a *common language* to *facilitate communication*, infrastructure for easier travel, but also by brute force such as prohibiting local cultures.”³⁵ Of these strategies, language policy is a key approach to homogenisation of society. The aim of a language policy is to ease communication: first, of national programs; second, between citizens of different language backgrounds. Selection of a language for national communication, symbolism, and uniqueness can be a difficult process. It involves considerations regarding power and prestige of some language groups over others; imposing minority languages on hesitant majority or central-located groups may be informed by considerations regarding ethno-linguistic pride and power.

Finding a neutral language which fits all groups is the ideal but difficult choice; societies like Singapore and Eritrea were forced to resort to multilingualism³⁶ in recognition of their “ethnic and linguistic pluralism as resources for nation-building.”³⁷ The policy may be chosen for pragmatic reasons—communication between different linguistic groups—or ideological reasons relating to utilisation of indigenous cultural resources to develop national consciousness and pride. Historically, imperial societies imposed their languages on colonised societies, migrant groups adopted indigenous languages, and others fought to preserve their linguistic identities. The process can be contentious, but involves fusion, adaptation, and sometimes separation.

Effective development and implementation of a language policy reduces conflict, competition, between/among different ethnic languages. Leaders who succeed at monolingualism—the promotion of single-language use within a country—achieve the ideal national language objective the Tanzanian case later demonstrates. A common language: (a) facilitates national consensus through the media and education institutions; (b) eases communication among diverse members of political formations; and (c) supplements the propagation of other nation-building cultural programs, such as art, museum, theatre and sport.³⁸ Supplementing language policy is de-politicisation of ethnicity and state institutions.

2.2.2 De-politicisation may become a problematic concept if one takes Aristotle’s political naturalism. In this Aristotelian conception man is “by nature a political animal.”³⁹ Given the distinction between human faculties and those of other creatures, man expresses a never ending

³⁴ von Bogdandy *et al*, p. 586

³⁵ Alberto Alesina and Bryony Reich, 2015. ‘Nation Building’ (online: http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/alesina/files/nation_building_feb_2015_0.pdf?m=1432754790, 16 June 2016), p. 1

³⁶ Chefena Hailemariam, Sjaak Kroon, Sjaak, and Joel Walters, 1999. ‘Multilingualism and nation building’, *Language and education in Eritrea, Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 20 (6):475-493.

³⁷ Nancy H. Hornberger, 2002, *Multilingual Language Policies and the Continua of Biliteracy: An Ecological Approach*, *Language Policy*, 1 (1): 27-51 (at p. 27. From http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1360&context=gse_pubs, 21 June 2016)

³⁸ John Campbell, 1999, ‘Nationalism, ethnicity and religion: fundamental conflicts and the politics of identity in Tanzania’, *Nations and Nationalism* 5 (1):105-25

³⁹ Aristotle, 1999. *Politics*, Translated by Benjamin Jowett, Kitchener: Batoche Books, Book III/VI, p. 5

desire to live together in a political community for the attainment of well-being, maintenance of life, and statehood as self-sufficiency. But *de-politicisation* becomes an analytic category when we consider the elements of society that are targets of discouragement from politics, that is, struggle for power within a given polity. De-politicisation here implies the deliberate process of separating some aspects of society from political competition. Ethnic de-politicisation is the significant reduction of the agency of ethnic grouping and membership from formal politics and assigning ethnic identities a peripheral role in political organisation and competition. This definition does not assume “indirect governing relationships”⁴⁰ between the politicians and the *demos*, but does imply: (i) acceptance that de-politicisation is normatively a “good thing”⁴¹, (ii) fusion of tactics of promoting this acceptance with political choices, and (iii) adoption of specific tools, such as education and employment, for depoliticising the target ethnic group.⁴²

The political rationale for de-politicisation is the detachment of quasi-autonomous non-state bodies, traditional leadership systems, and language groups from influencing decision-making processes. Besides “organisational de-politicisation”⁴³ in which states’ [bureaucratic] agencies are delegated responsibilities of political principles, rule-based (legal-constitutional, control mechanisms) and preference-shaping (communicational, rhetorical, symbolic) de-politicisation⁴⁴ is common. This mainly occurs where multiple agencies and processes are used to significantly reduce the political significance of an identity group.

A key element of de-politicisation in multi-ethnic societies is the discouragement of the use of ethnic identity as the key element in politics. This process may be made through political co-optation of different social groups into a mass party or via constitutional prohibitions. The practice, normally, is more effective than mere legal-constitutional proscriptions. Depoliticising identity facilitates nation building by: (a) precluding the domination of the political arena by dominant or centrally-located ethnic groups singly or in coalition with other strong groups to the marginalisation of minority or peripheral groups; (b) reducing or eliminating ethnicity in state bureaucracies and other institutions; and (c) creating collective identity around shared political symbols, such as national symbols, thus promoting national as opposed to group loyalty. Added to de-politicisation of identity is the demilitarisation of politics.

2.2.3 De-politicisation of the military implies the deliberate disconnection of the armed forces from key political processes, such as elections, legislation and strategic decisions, and assigning these roles and functions to civilian politicians and political institutions such as political parties, cabinets, and parliaments. Effective de-politicisation of the military requires *demilitarisation of*

⁴⁰ Matthew Flinders and Jim Buller, 2006. ‘Depoliticization, Democracy and Arena Setting’ in Tom Christensen, Per Lægreid, eds., *Autonomy and Regulation: Coping with Agencies in the Modern State*, Cheltenham: Edward Edgar Publishing, pp. 53-73, at p.55

⁴¹ Ibid, p.54

⁴² Flinders and Buller

⁴³ Flinders and Buller, p. 58

⁴⁴ Ibid, pp. 53-73

politics. This is the dilution or reduction of the military's role and influence in domestic politics—through, but not exclusively, neutralisation of politically-biased militaries—in order to achieve civilian control over the military. The process involves removing armed forces from political processes, such as elections, party caucuses, party primaries, and inter-party relations. When the military is prevented from involving in politics—that is, becomes de-politicised—then politics itself stops depending on the military for its expression. When politics, meaning processes and practices of power struggle, acquirement of power, and exercise of such power, does not depend on military force, politics is said to be de-militarised. This is not to say that the military ceases to be an instrument of state policy, especially foreign/defence policy, or that armed forces would be irrelevant in instances of domestic political violence, such as civil war. This is to say that the military, military symbols, and military ethos, are delinked from normal, non-violent political processes, such as elections, political party caucuses, and legislative politics. At the same time ethnic competition within the military is replaced with military loyalty to the Nation-State and made subservient to the civilian political leadership.⁴⁵

Militarised politics can be observed in countries where armed forces are involved in internal policing during peacetime or in electoral processes, or where military officers determine, or are compelled to determine, which candidate/party men [and women] in uniform [should] vote thus denying them secrecy of the ballot. According to Jenkins and Kposowa, ethnic plurality and competition lead to military intervention in politics as ethnic struggles inside the military and within civilian political institutions fail to regulate ethno-political struggles.⁴⁶ A military which interferes in politics through a coup d'état is politicised. When politics, whether domestic or international, heavily relies on the military for its expression, we say it is militarised.

De-politicisation of the military also involves limiting the influence of ethnic politics in military affairs, akin to retention of military autonomy in civil-military relations lingo, so that internal rules of military institutions apply to their officers and men without being prejudiced by ethnic competition and ethnopolitical struggles in society. Once the military is de-politicised, different identity groups accept it as serving a national role, not promoting narrow ethnic/group interests. Even if elite groups and elite competition arise within the military, they are not based, or perceived to be based, on ethnic identity but on such issues as attachment to training institutions and periods. De-politicisation of the military reduces incentives for resorting to militaries, especially ethnically divided militaries, to settle political differences. But when militaries are ethnically divided and politicised, they become centres of ethno-political competition. Each political group seeks allegiance from co-ethnics within the military to augment its competitive position. De Waal reveals this ethnic dimension of civil war in South Sudan.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*

⁴⁶ J. Craig Jenkins and Augustine J. Kposowa, 1992. 'The Political Origins of African Military Coups: Ethnic Competition, Military Centralism, and the Struggle over the Postcolonial State', *International Studies Quarterly*, 36 (3):271-291

⁴⁷ De Waal, 'When Kleptocracy becomes insolvent'. Also Rwengabo, 'Regime Stability in Post-1986 Uganda'.

Both de-politicisation of the military and demilitarisation of politics aid nation building in three ways. First, the national military becomes a symbol of national service, not ethnic group service, competition, or survival. Military institutions become avenues for building national pride and consciousness, not spaces of inter-group competition that might engender coups, counter-coups, and purges as revealed by studies of ethno-political conflicts.⁴⁸ Second, the process ensures professionalism in armed forces, which, whether or not the military has high levels of *war-fighting capabilities* in terms of training and equipment, enhances national patriotism. This makes society proud of their sons and daughters in uniform, making the military a symbol of national unity and pride. Third, distancing the military from politics forces political leaders to fully exploit existing avenues for intergroup cooperation and competition without resorting to militarised responses to political competition, for instance during elections. This builds people's confidence in existing political symbols and institutions, giving national symbols and institutions, including languages, emblems and flags, judiciaries, elections management bodies, and legislatures, prominence over sub-national and ethnic symbols and institutions.

It is difficult for nascent states to build nations. It is better when nationhood precedes statehood. Without a nation, or rather national cohesion, state legitimacy fails to take root as it depends, to a large extent, on a country's success in the creation of intangible things like national traditions, symbols, shared historical memories, common cultural reference points, and language that define a collectivity called a Nation. These commonalities can be created through education, religion and language policy. Francis Fukuyama states that "nation building is critical to the success of state building."⁴⁹ This is because national cohesion impacts state strength: first, by aiding the state's coercive power, through people's willingness to pay the ultimate price for the state—their lives through service in organised violence. Second, nation building also imbeds people's obligation to the state through patriotic attachment and service to the broader national goal instead of narrow ethnic obligations.⁵⁰ Political leaders, such as Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, who stressed ethno-political integration, through various interventions, laid for their countries strong foundations for nation building as successive programs suffered little ethnic pulling. The resulting national ethos stressed identity fusion instead of identity segregation.

3.0 Nation Building in Africa: Tanzania's Ethno-Political Experiment

Most postcolonial African societies were not only nascent states but were confronted with political crises displaying ethnic undertones. They lacked national identity and cohesion. There was overemphasis on social belonging as the basis of political engagement in countries like Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, and Zaire, which stymied nationalist programs. The resulting ethnic competition for resources and power stymied nation building. Ethnic politics stresses narrow bases of self-

⁴⁸ Jenkins and Kposowa; Horowitz

⁴⁹ Francis Fukuyama, 2015. *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, p. 185

⁵⁰ Ibid, pp.185-6

identification and allegiance as opposed Nation-State loyalty. Where a country's leadership failed in its nation building interventions there did erupt convulsive ethnic insecurity, violence, and threats of ethnic cleansing and meltdown, as "collective fears of the future" led to security dilemmas with resulting ethnic raptures.⁵¹ Leaders who failed to reduce ethnicity's role in politics, but instead politicised identities based on social belonging, failed in their nation-building efforts. Their societies were fractured along ethnic lines. Linguistic, politico-military, and socio-cultural mobilisation programs were either ignored or failed in such societies. The result is ethnic tensions, ethno-political corruption, civil wars, in some extremes genocides.⁵²

Tanzania relatively succeeded in building an African Nation. South Sudan, with its current ethno-political conflicts could potentially degenerate into ethnicity-based coups, counter-coups, ethnic purges, and attrition coups that afflicted countries like Nigeria.⁵³ Though heterogeneous, in a few years after independence Tanzania's nation building efforts bore positive results. South Sudan, however, has since 2012 retained and worsened ethnic tensions which have become politicised within the military and in the political landscape. Tanzania faced a mutiny in 1964, two years after independence, and acted fast to first de-militarise its society and then build a professional, national, military that would be allegiant to Tanzania. Simultaneously, the country strove to unify different language groups through a language policy and ethnic depoliticisation processes that forged a nation from different nationalities and races.

3.1 Language Policy and Nation Building in Tanzania

Transitional political systems, such as postcolonial polities, tend to suffer group conflicts. These conflicts create competing demands upon national authorities. One of these demands entails tensions between sociolinguistic loyalties and national loyalty, with the former being treated as antinational. Like any society, "political development requires a rational ordering of goals and a conscious direction of the instruments fashioned for their achievement."⁵⁴ This ordering requires a national political authority. The presence of a national political community—a community of demos and rulers defining themselves as belonging to a particular nation—determines leaders' effectiveness in ordering, promoting, directing, and achieving national goals.⁵⁵ But a political community must be able to communicate not only within itself but also with the wider national community. In other word, a national community begets a political community, which, in turn, begets the national authority: the state. A non-national authority, such as a foreign/imperial state, will hardly be legitimate, hence anti-imperial resistance. To build legitimacy, the state must build

⁵¹ David A Lake and Donald Rothchild, 1996. 'Containing Fears: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict', *International Security* 21 (2):41-75; Horowitz

⁵² Martin Meredith, 2005. *The State of Africa: A History of the Continent Since Independence*, London: Simon & Schuster

⁵³ Horowitz

⁵⁴ Jyotirindra Dasgupta, 1970. *Language Conflict and National Development: Group Politics and National language policy in India*, Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, p. 1-2

⁵⁵ *ibid*

a nation—hence political agency in nation building. To effect communication, the subjection of subnational languages to a national language requires the evolvment, even imposition, of linguistic commonality. This commonality is achieved through an effective language policy.

Scholarly understandings of language policy stress three factors that inform language policy and planning: macro-socio-political, epistemological, and strategic. Macro socio-political factors obtain at national and supranational level. They include concerns over issues like state formation, wars, population migrations, and globalisation of capital. Countries need common languages to effectively manage these issues. Epistemological concerns relate to knowledge and research, and the ways and means by which such knowledge can be imparted and disseminated. A common language is important in this realm as it eases communication. Strategic factors are concerned with the long term ends to which national programs are aimed.⁵⁶ Cutting across these kinds of factors is the centrality of communication. A language policy therefore, is a policy instrument for ascribing and defining nationalist identity and goals, as well as for political and ideological hegemonisation of the state⁵⁷ through communicating as Tanzania did.

Tanzania, upon attaining a relatively peacefully-won independence in 1961, came under the leadership of the unionist Tanzania African National Union (TANU) party whose president, Julius K. Nyerere, was a staunch believer in Pan-Africanism and Afro-socialism. These ideals informed Nyerere's strategy of reversing the mass illiteracy and lack of locally-trained personnel to run the country. Through mass adult literacy campaigns and language education, Tanzania developed and implemented a Swahili language policy hitherto un-attempted elsewhere in Africa. Swahili served three purposes corresponding to the three main ideals that informed Tanzania's language policy after independence: ideological, political, and communicational.

Ideologically, Swahili “stood for independence, Africanhood, self-confidence and freedom”; English (the language of Tanzania's later colonial hegemon after World War I) “was the mark of imperialism, oppression, and neo-colonialism.”⁵⁸ This made English less well acceptable to a decolonising society. Politically, Swahili became a means of neutralising dominant language groups, such as Sukuma, through the creation of a neutral language. This served to eliminate concerns from minority sociolinguistic groups over domination by larger language groups. The language was not claimed by any single African community, which might claim ethno-linguistic pride and influence. Paradoxically, Swahili could simultaneously be claimed as an African language. It would also serve well as the working language of the nationalist TANU which set out to recruit from all corners of the country, from multiple language groups. In terms of communication, Swahili would ease communication across all sociolinguistic groups: between

⁵⁶ Thomas Ricento, 2000. ‘Historical and Theoretical Perspectives in Language Policy and Planning’, *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4 (2):196-213

⁵⁷ Jan Blommaert, 1996. ‘Language and Nationalism: Comparing Flanders and Tanzania’, *Nations and Nationalism* 2 (2):235-256; Jan Blommaert, 2013. ‘State Ideology and Language in Tanzania’, Antwerp: Tilberg Papers in Culture Studies, Paper 80.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p.246

TANU members and leaders; and between Africans and Arabs that constituted the Tanganyika-Zanzibar union. Through Swahili, TANU successfully voiced “an emotional, culturalist appeal to the Tanganyikans by placing a high symbolic value on the medium of their political activities.”⁵⁹ It became a language of independence, national liberation, and restoration of socioeconomic, cultural, and political power to the Africans.

Swahili was promoted through three methods: (a) denunciation of English as the language of the colonialist concurrent with promotion and institutionalisation of Swahili as a national language; (b) mass adult education and literacy programs; and (c) turning Swahili into “a sole medium of instruction at primary [school] level”, such that “the sole language of primary education enhanced the status of Swahili as a language of education and contributed directly to its subsequent rapid expansion.”⁶⁰ Though Rajabu and Ngonyani believe the intent of Swahilisation was to serve narrow interests of political elites⁶¹, clearly the elites appreciated the difficulties of building a nation in a multilingual society. Political elites sought ways and means of promoting Swahili which was ethnically more neutral than other indigenous languages, and politically and ideologically more palatable than English. Subsequently, Swahili did not serve narrow sectional interests of the political elite or any language group but helped to unify the country.

Denunciation of English occurred in the context of decolonisation. It served both political and ideolocial purposes. Politically, it helped to galvanise Tanzanians around the newly-won independence, build TANU’s legitimacy, and create a sense of pride among Tanzanians who, it was stressed, had won their independence and needed to forge their own nation. Ideologically, Swahilisation was an alternative to English language hegemony and also served Pan-African purposes. An African state needed to rebuild itself after colonial subterfuge and subjugation. Swahili served this purpose as an African language, or at least a blend of African languages and Asian (Arabic, Persian, Tamil) words, which had no colonial hegemon claiming it. Language, therefore, served Tanzania’s Africanisation program. It serviced the claim that Tanzanians have a common destiny with other Africans, and needed to build their own visible cultural symbols and systems unadulterated by colonial influences.⁶² Swahili also aided adult literacy programs that postcolonial Tanzania embarked upon.

Adult literacy/education programs were undertaken within *Ujamaa* villages. Constructed within the context of Nyerere’s version of African socialism, *Ujamaa* villages were in their natures collectivisation structures. These *Ujamaa* authority structures served as loci of adult literacy and mass education. Swahili was the best choice as the medium of instruction or adult education. This

⁵⁹ Blommaert, p. 247; Lyndon Harries, 1969. ‘Language Policy in Tanzania’, *Africa* 39 (03):275-280

⁶⁰ Rehema Rajabu and Deo Ngonyani, 1994. ‘Language Policy and the Hidden Agenda’, in Casmir M. Rubagumya, ed., *Teaching and Researching Language in African Classrooms*, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd, pp. 6-14 (at p. 7)

⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 6-7

⁶² Harries.

also facilitated the communication of national programs and allowed interactions between different sociolinguistic groups constituting the Tanzanian citizenry. Swahilisation created an integrated society, which, in addition to sharing a language, developed feelings of unity and solidarity articulated by the national leadership. While this threatened “the traditional elements of each ethnic community”⁶³ within Tanzania, it replaced competing languages and dialects with a common language identity. A Swahili citizenry resulted. The creation of a Swahili citizenry was also achieved via formal education using Swahili as a medium of instruction.

The introduction of Swahili as a compulsory medium of instruction in primary schools ensured that all Tanzanians going through the system knew or understood Swahili, allowing it to cover the whole country in a short period. The policy may not have been new to postcolonial Tanzania (it has been standardised during the British colonial period, 1920-1961, through the works of the Inter-Territorial Language Committee, 1930). But the formation of TANU in 1954 and its subsequent acquisition of power at independence gave impetus to Swahilisation.⁶⁴ Implemented through the Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) policy, Swahilisation of education was a component of Tanzania’s socialist development program, *Ujamaa*. Ujamaa opposed western notions of individualistic wealth accumulation in a capitalist economy. Ujamaa focused on development in rural areas, where majority of the population lived, through increased agriculture production.⁶⁵ It is outside the scope of this study to analyse the effectiveness of *Ujamaa*, let alone compare it with development successes of countries, such as Kenya, which pursued western development models. The Swahilisation of education might have had implications for self-confidence and employment opportunities for Tanzanians living in an English-dominated world.⁶⁶ But it did produce a people with no difficulty communicating with one another throughout the country. This achievement eluded most of Sub-Saharan Africa as communities struggled to make their own languages national languages or rejected states’ language policies.

Tanzania’s success vindicates Wimmer’s argument that “low levels of linguistic diversity enhance nation building because they make it easier to extend networks of political alliances across an entire territory.”⁶⁷ Wimmer positions linguistic homogeneity, together with state capacity to deliver public goods and well developed voluntary organisations, at the centre of nation building. He argues that these long term political development factors trounce political institutions, including democracy, and legacies of imperial rule, in explaining variations in nation-building outcomes. Thus, though Tanzania was a postcolonial polity whose success should be traced from language policy, although it is doubtful that the nascent state had capacity to provide political

⁶³ Wan Norhasniah Wan Husin, 2011. ‘Nation-Building And Malaysia Concept: Ethnic Relations Challenges in the Educational Field’, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 1 (9):228-237, at p.228

⁶⁴ Frances Vavrus, 2002. ‘Postcoloniality and English: Exploring Language Policy and the Politics of Development in Tanzania’, *TESOL Quarterly Journal* 36 (3):373-397

⁶⁵ Ibid, pp. 375-6

⁶⁶ Rajabu and Ngonyani

⁶⁷ Andreas Wimmer, 2014. ‘Nation Building: A Long-Term Perspective and Global Analysis’, *European Sociological Review*, 31 (1):30-47, at p.30

goods or had active voluntary organisations under socialist Tanzania. The leadership must have prioritized nation building through, among others, language policy.

Wimmer's argument underlines inadequacies in arguments that consider democratisation as important in, if synonymous with, nation building, or those that decry colonial legacies. Democracy, which Tanzania embraced in 1992, should be seen as a by-product, not a driver of, the process of nation building.⁶⁸ As Abdu Kasozi has revealed, "the absence of a common language has been a major obstacle to national integration in Uganda", for a nation "cannot develop a strong sense of itself if its people cannot communicate with one another, have little in common, no sense of shared past, and no shared dream of the future enshrined in literature and folklore that everyone can understand."⁶⁹ English, like most other European tongues in Africa, remains a stratifying and alienating tongue that is limited to by-products of western schooling. Swahilisation of the Tanzanian society had three consequences for nation building.

First, it created a lingua franca which made it easy to construct national symbols and articulate national programs in one language across the country's more than 130 ethnic groups. This linguistic achievement was much in sync with pronouncements of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), such as the OAU Charter, 1963; Cultural Charter for Africa, 1976; and the Language Plan of Action for Africa, 1986. These pronouncements stressed the formulation of and implementation of language policies in favour of African languages. One of the priorities identified in the Cultural Charter, for instance, is "the transcription, teaching and development of national languages with a view to using them for the dissemination and the development of science and technology."⁷⁰ Swahili served these pan-African interests.

Second, Swahili did help to build national language and consciousness among a people who could communicate with one another. It leveled valleys and ridges of sociolinguistic difference. Swahili created a single communication instrument and medium. This increased adult literacy in one language, and facilitated universal primary education. Swahili erased problems of linguistic heterogeneity: "Linguistic heterogeneity tends to slow-down the proliferation of network ties across a territory because initiating, coordinating, and stabilizing exchange relationship are more costly and difficult due to misinformation about others' resources, demands, and intentions, which in turn decreases generalized trust in strangers."⁷¹ By implanting linguistic homogeneity, Swahili

⁶⁸ Jason Brownlee, 2007. "Can America Nation-Build?", *World Politics* 59 (2):314-340; Bogdandy, et al.

⁶⁹ Abdu Basajjabaka Kawalya Kasozi, 1994. *The Social Origins of Violence in Uganda, 1964-1985*, Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, pp. 10-11

⁷⁰ Organisation of African Unity (OAU), 1976. *Cultural Charter for Africa*, Art. 6(1)(a), Addis Ababa: OAU. Also see: Herbert Chimhundu, 2002. *Language Policies in Africa: Inter-Governmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa*, Harare: UNESCO; OAU, 1987. *The Language Plan of Action for Africa*, 46th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers, 20-25 July 1987. Res. CM 1123 (XLVI); and OAU, 1969. *Pan-African Cultural Manifesto*, Addis Ababa: OAU

⁷¹ Wimmer, p. 33

speeded up the proliferation of network ties, facilitated coordination between otherwise different language groups throughout the country, and increased generalised trust among people.

Third, Swahili positioned Tanzania in a nonaligned position vis-à-vis the West during the cold war as it became a means of self-reliance. “During the period of *ujamaa*, Swahili was seen as a symbol of nonalignment with the West, adult literacy rates reached the highest levels in Africa, and the achievement of universal primary education was regarded as a sign of success for the new government’s policy of self-reliance.”⁷² English remained a medium of instruction at secondary and tertiary levels, but Swahilisation of primary education ensured countrywide knowledge of a common language through which universal formal education was achievable as a means of transforming society. All these upshots led to national integration, unity, and linguistic self-reliance. Though Tanzania later succumbed to “linguistic imperialism”⁷³ during and after the 1990s, by adopting English, a global language then dominating international affairs, Swahili had played a big role in building the nation into which English would flourish, thus creating a bi-lingual nation free from usurpation by any dominant ethno-linguistic community(ies).

3.2 Depoliticisation of Ethnicity and Integration of Identities

Tanzania is an ethnically heterogeneous society. Composed of more than 130 ethno-linguistic African groups (comprising Bantu, Nilotic, Nilo-Hamite, Ngoni, etc)⁷⁴, about 4 racial-ethnic groups (Asian Arab and Indian, African, Caucasian), and multiple religions, Tanzania is an amalgamation of social identities. These identities, however, were fused into a Nation to a level that staggers the imagination of observers of similar countries like Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria where ethno-political rivalries stymied nation building. While “the literature on ethnicity in Africa regards ethnicity as a central cleavage and associates its politicisation with civil war and deteriorating socio-economic conditions”, Tanzania has not been fractured “by this cleavage, making it an outlier among African states.”⁷⁵ Why Tanzania was able to do this and how it achieved the goal of building a nation relative to other African countries is worth our inquiry if we are to inform the theory and practice of nation building in Africa today.

Malipula advances an ethnic structure argument. He maintains that Tanzania de-politicised ethnicity because the country lacks few and large ethnic groups. Ethnic groups tend to become politicised when they have sufficient demographic sizes to win majorities in elections, at least through ethno-political coalitions. In contrast, small ethnic groups force politicians to seek to win support from a myriad of nationally-spread ethnic groups. This forces politicians to maintain ethnic

⁷² Vavrus, p. 376

⁷³ Robert Phillipson, 1992. *Linguistic imperialism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

⁷⁴ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). 2016. CIA–World Fact Book. Online at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tz.html>, 13 April 2016

⁷⁵ Mrisho Malipula, 2014, ‘Depoliticised ethnicity in Tanzania: a structural and historical narrative’, *Afrika Focus* 27 (2):49-70, at p. 49

inclusiveness in the distribution of the spoils of the state.⁷⁶ This argument, however, may not explain why, in countries like Uganda for instance, political leaders from minority ethnic groups, such as Obote's Langi and Amin's Kakwa-Nubians, also instrumentalise ethnicity. His argument may apply at best to static ethnic structures and well-defined ethnic groupings. But where ethnic identities are dynamic, ethno-politics may be independent of the sizes of ethnic groups. As Malipula admits, Kenya lacks a large ethnic group with clear majority. Yet ethnicity has played a major role in Kenyan politics. Even if the numerical as well as pre-colonial authority structures (decentralised societies) argument were considered, and used to supplement arguments about the geospatial location of these ethno-linguistic groups, emphasis needs to be placed on leaders' commitment to non-ethnicised politics. TANU's, later Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM)'s desire to recruit country-wide instead of regionally, is important. The construction of a mass party and commitment to non-identity politics are two important methods through which ethnicity became de-politicised in Tanzania. Once again leadership agency becomes important.

Construction of a mass party, TANU, ensured that almost all ethnic groups had a presence and stake in the struggle for independence. Unlike the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) and Democratic Party (DP) in Uganda, which were formed on ethnic and religious grounds⁷⁷, TANU's "inclusiveness went on to develop a powerful mass-based political party that mobilised thousands of peasants, workers and traders onto the course of national independence."⁷⁸ This approach made TANU too strong for colonialists-sponsored parties, the United Tanganyika Party (UTP) and African National Congress (ANC), to stop TANU from canvassing for countrywide support.⁷⁹ Even though colonialists tried to stifle TANU's countrywide appeal and its attempt to construct a nationalist mass party, they failed due to TANU's emphasis on national integration and unity of purpose. TANU's ideals resonated with anticolonial politics of the time.

Commitment to non-identity politics was one of TANU's independence goals: "TANU was committed to the goal of independence and *proclaimed its opposition to tribal, religious and racial salience in politics*. The organisation of TANU that included elected and appointed leaders and its modus operandi, afforded it space to *forge an inclusive coalition of elites and non-elites that surpassed ethnic, racial, religious and occupational divides* in Tanzania."⁸⁰ This de-ethnicisation program was possible, Malipula argues, because Nyerere "invoked a multi-ethnic approach to incorporate key figures from various ethnic groups into the nationalist movement", including chiefs, elites, and other sections of society.⁸¹ Nyerere encouraged the formation of *Umoja wa Wanawake wa Tanzania* (United Women of Tanzania) in 1962, allowing women to join the National Service Corps in training and nation building efforts. This Umoja wa Wanawake brought

⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷ Kasosi, *The Social Origins of Violence in Uganda*, 1964-1985.

⁷⁸ Malipula, p. 60

⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁰ Malipula, p. 60, my emphasis

⁸¹ ibid

under its fold “every race and creed”⁸² and played a significant role in nation building through cooperative, non-discriminative efforts. Nyerere’s commitment was further articulated and cemented in the Arusha Declaration in which he specified TANU’s Creed and aims. The Declaration stressed, among others, consolidation of Tanzanian independence; democratic socialism; formation of multilevel, multi-ethnic cooperative organisations throughout the country; commitment to African socialism; socioeconomic self-reliance; demystification of money; and principles of socialist governance through a mass, peasants’, party.⁸³

The consequences, for nation building, of the de-ethnicisation of politics should now be clear: first, a new politics evolved in which identification with, and attachment to, Tanzania took precedence over ethnic self-identification and attachment. Second, by appealing to racial and other social solidarities⁸⁴, countrywide integration into a mass party forced the TANU leadership to situate itself not as an urban party but a trans-territorial political organisation seeking to galvanise national efforts to a single purpose: national integration, unification, and development. Third, nationalism, patriotism, and loyalty were galvanised around Tanzania, and not around regional, language, religious or other identities. By erasing the conditions that promote extreme ethnic-group loyalty, Nyerere’s ethnic de-politicisation program reduced feelings of group loyalty, reduced cross-cutting or multiple loyalties, and integrated individual loyalties into national loyalty. Fourth, the program reduced the propensity for inter-group tensions: “Strong, even extreme, attachments to ethnic, religious, national, and clan identities have appeared to push individuals and groups to engage in what often seem to be inhumane and improbable acts toward those perceived to be the enemy.”⁸⁵ This is because strong loyalty to ethnic identities can lead to hostile reactions toward out-groups. It gets translated into stereotypes that are shared across individual members of the group. It shapes groups’ collective behaviour and differentiates among “the multiple groups that define any political environment.”⁸⁶ This erodes the basis of shared political interests a nation ought to have, thus crippling national cohesion.

De-politicisation politics increased pro-social, pro-community, as opposed to individualistic, behaviours; transformed in-group loyalty to out-group loyalty; and created positive feelings and attachment to Tanzanian-ness. Finally, Tanzania’s avoidance of ethno-politics prevented the emergence of a zero-sum game of politics that might afflict single-party or dominant party regimes that, scholars argue, presents violence as the only option to voice political opposition to a dominant

⁸² Joyce Ladner, 1971. ‘Tanzanian Women and Nation Building’, *The Black Scholar*, 3 (4):22-28, at p.22

⁸³ Julius Nyerere, 1967. *The Arusha Declaration and TANU’s Policy on Socialism and Self-Reliance*, Dar es Salaam: TANU (from <http://library.fes.de/fulltext/bibliothek/2-tanzania-s0019634.pdf>, 23 June 2016)

⁸⁴ Robnald Aminzade, 2000. ‘The Politics of Race and Nation: Citizenship and Africanization in Tanganyika’, In Diane E. Davis (ed.) *Political Power and Social Theory (Vol. 14)*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp.53 - 90
Political Power and Social Theory 14: 51-88; Bryceson, ‘Dar es Salaam as a 'harbour of peace' in East Africa’,

⁸⁵ Daniel Druckman, 1994. ‘Nationalism, Patriotism, and Group Loyalty: A Social Psychological Perspective’, *Mershon International Studies Review* 38 (1):43-68, at p.44

⁸⁶ *ibid*

party that TANU/CCM was.⁸⁷ The resulting combination of nationalism, patriotism, and African socialism would define Tanzania's civil-military future as the military also became de-politicised but ideologically conscientised.

3.3 De-politicisation of the Military, De-militarisation of Politics

Tanzania, like many African countries, inherited a colonial security infrastructure. Tanzania's military, the Tanzania People's Defence Forces (TPDF), succeeded the colonial Kings African Rifles (KAR). The TPDF is relatively an apolitical armed force compared to many African militaries. Military interventions in politics became widespread in postcolonial African countries like Nigeria and Uganda. The armed forces acquired a more or less permanent presence in politics. Politics, in turn, retained a penetrative influence on security agencies. Civilian political institutions were relegated to secondary importance as military coups became the means by which political power changed hands. The military was also reluctant to relinquish political power. Civilian leaders also relied on militaries for their stay in power, some resorting to various coup-proofing measures.⁸⁸ Military institutions in these countries became politicised and politics militarised. While some of these experiences may be rooted in colonial legacy and ethno-military politics, Tanzania evolved differently. Kenya's military, unlike its counterparts in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Uganda, has also been able to "preserve its reputation as a highly professional and distinctly apolitical outfit" despite the "continuing silence of ethnicity" in the country's politics that would have pushed the military into intervention in politics.⁸⁹ But Tanzania's military was deliberately de-politicised while also orienting it to nationalist and Pan-African ideals.

To understand Tanzania's de-politicisation of the military, we need to read between the lines of Woodis' comment on militaries in politics: "Political power grows out of the total political alignment of forces including the strength and organisation of the people. It is this which, in the last resort, determines if, when and in what direction the guns are going to be used."⁹⁰ The colonial armed forces were drawn from "seven ethnic groups dispersed countrywide", and were ethnically unbalanced owing to their being drawn from five per cent of Tanzania's ethnic groups.⁹¹ This recruitment, not the military ethos, was a major factor in Tanzania's civil-military relations. There was false confidence that the composition of the inherited military, from diverse ethnic minorities, would offset possibilities of military intervention. The 1964 mutiny shattered Nyerere's confidence. This forced Tanzania to undertake serious reforms that changed her civil-military future. Two interventions suggest that the nature of response a country's leadership chooses in

⁸⁷ Mark Sizwebanzi Mngomezulu, 2016, 'Regime Type and Civil War Susceptibility: The Case of Tanzania and Mozambique', *Journal of Political Inquiry*, Issue 2: 22-34

⁸⁸ Rwengabo, 'Regime Stability in Post-1986 Uganda'; Abillah H. Omari, 'Civil-military relations in Tanzania', Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies (from <https://www.issafrika.org/uploads/OURSELVESOMARI.PDF>, 22 June 2016)

⁸⁹ Thomas Stubbs, 2015. 'Ethnopolitics and the Military in Kenya', in Daniel G. Zirker, Ed., *Forging Military Identity in Culturally Pluralistic Societies: Quasi-Ethnicity*, London: Lexington Books, pp. 69-86, at p.69

⁹⁰ Jack Woodis, 1977. *Armies and Politics*, London: Lawrence and Wishart, p 23, in Omari, p. 91

⁹¹ Omari, p. 93

respect of an initial civil-military problem determines the nature, trajectory, and future of the evolving relations between civilian and military authorities: initial disarmament, and making the military subservient to civilian authority. I elaborate on each of them below.

Following the 1964 army mutiny, which was regional and widespread throughout East Africa⁹², Nyerere sought help from British troops to disarm the mutinying Tanzanian troops. Although a ministerial council of the OAU disapproved of Nyerere's invitation of a former colonial army to rescue him from a domestic civil-military challenge, it did not last long. The mutinying army was disbanded. Plans were made to construct a new army. The new army came from mainly TANU youth who, as already mentioned, were recruited from across the country's ethnic and status groups. Nyerere called upon all members of the TANU Youth League, "wherever they are, to go to the local TANU office and enroll themselves. From this group we shall try to build a nucleus of a new army for the Republic of Tanganyika."⁹³ This had two consequences: first, the new army would depend upon membership to the socialist party, akin to the Communist Party of China. Second, the party ensured that future challenges to its authority from the armed forces were reduced. Simultaneously the ideologically-conscientised military would be allowed to evolve as a professional military in the traditional sense. While this fusion of ideology into the military might create dilemmas of politicising the armed forces without compromising military professionalism, the appointment of political commissars in the military ensured that the military saw and conceived of themselves as citizens of Tanzania like their civilian counterparts.

The second strategy, delinked subservience to civilian authority, involved: (a) reorienting politics to desist from using the military as an instrument of domestic political struggles, hence delinking domestic politics from intruding in the military institution; and (b) delinking the military from playing a political role beyond national defence and promotion of the country's foreign policy of positioning Tanzania as a fulcrum around which African liberation struggles revolved. Delinked subservience was also intended to use military service as a nation building exercise. The military became the state's Africanising agent.⁹⁴ This embodied a Pan-African consciousness that TANU espoused. Consistent with Tanzania's regional obligations of helping other liberation movements in Africa, the TPDF would be subject to civilian control to avoid coups then happening throughout Africa but also help liberate areas where intervention served the purpose of total liberation of Africa. An anti-coup message was propagated in the military. The 1971 coup in Uganda was presented as a foreigner-instigated crisis aimed at reversing the independence gains of Africans. For the TPDF to remain a truly national and Pan-African military, it was socialised to desist from intervention in domestic politics: "respect the established code of civil-military relations,

⁹² Ali A. Mazrui and Donald Rothchild, 1967, 'The Soldier and the State in East Africa: Some Theoretical Conclusions on the Army Mutinies of 1964', *The Western Political Quarterly* 20 (1):82-96; Mark Baynham, 1989, 'The East African mutinies of 1964', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 8 (1):153-180

⁹³ Omari, p. 94

⁹⁴ Ali A. Mazrui, 1976. 'Soldiers as Traditionalizers: Military Rule and the Re-Africanization of Africa', *World Politics* 28 (2):246-272

otherwise be a puppet and lose respect among the people.”⁹⁵ One need not ascertain whether TPDF officers and men considered these messages as resonant with military corporate interests, internal military autonomy, or if at all, interest in intervening in politics.

The military’s reaction to these messages, of course, is complex to disentangle. But if outcomes indicate the success of earlier policy choices, it is reasonable to argue that the effective subjection of military to civilian authority concurrent with the ironical political conscientisation to promote its attachment to the ruling party, had the import of engendering national, not corporate, consciousness and identity. The TPDF’s innovative construction served as a stable and effective military exercise. This “nation building exercise” served to position Tanzania beyond and above the scourge of “praetorian militaries and weak national identities that continue to afflict Africa.”⁹⁶ South Sudan’s experience indicates that subjection of the military to national identity and subservience to civilian authority strains Africa’s political conscience.

4.0 South Sudan’s Nascent Experience: Lessons from Tanzania

South Sudan’s bitter history of slave pillage, armed resistance to Turko-Egyptian and Anglo-Egyptian imperialism, racial and religious antagonism, regional marginalisation, and inter-ethnic cleavages present the greatest challenge of nation building.⁹⁷ Unlike Tanzania, South Sudan, Africa’s youngest country, has, like other postcolonial African countries, become enmeshed in ethno-military conflicts which have affected national politics. The country suffered from a failed coup with ethnic undertones. It degenerated into a civil war fought along ethno-linguistic lines. This pitted hitherto comrades-in-arms under the John-Garan-led Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) against one another.⁹⁸ The country has evolved a “militarised, corrupt neo-patrimonial system of governance.”⁹⁹ In this evolving “kleptocracy”, the politico-military patronage system depends on corrupt rewards for allegiance to maintain political and military loyalty. This stifles positive developments and progressive engagement of the numerous problems afflicting newly-independent South Sudan.¹⁰⁰

South Sudan and her development partners have focused more on state building and less on answering the question: “how to turn the young state into a nation in which all South Sudanese can see themselves represented.”¹⁰¹ It lacks, or rather needs, a pragmatic solution to its nation-building problems. Key lessons can be drawn from Tanzania’s language policy, political-military

⁹⁵ Omari, p. 97

⁹⁶ Charles Girard Thomas, 2012. *The Tanzanian People’s Defense Force: an Exercise in Nation-Building*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, p. vi

⁹⁷ Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, M, 2012. *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence*, London: C. Hurst & Co.

⁹⁸ Matthew LeRiche and Matthew Arnold, (2012). *South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence*. New York: Cambridge University Press

⁹⁹ de Waal, p. 347

¹⁰⁰ Ibid

¹⁰¹ Jok, *Diversity, Unity, and Nation Building in Sudan*, p.1

reorientation, and promotion of nation-ness, to create a feeling “that South Sudan belongs to all South Sudanese, and not to any ethnic, religious, or political group.”¹⁰² Hard political choices and compromises have to be made on language policy and ethno-political reconfigurations.

4.1 Language Policy Challenges in South Sudan

South Sudan realises the challenge of national integration. But it has yet to properly embark on the race to nation building. The country lacks a unifying [indigenous] national language. Nuer dominates in Upper Nile region. Dinka dominates the greater Bahr el-Ghazal. In the Equatoria region, Bari, Latuka, and Zande, are spoken by majority of the people.¹⁰³ Swahili has also been learned by many of the country’s young returnees who lived in East Africa as refugees. English is also appearing as equally important especially in government circles. Arabic, which was the official/national language of the united Sudan, is also prevalent. There are other small sociolinguistic groups which can be considered minorities. The choice of a language, or set of languages, which can be used in education, government, and every-day communication between peoples, remains difficult due to ethno-linguistic competition.

Competing language groups are difficult to mobilise to agree on a certain language specific to a particular sociolinguistic group. Yet having a national language would lessen feelings of exclusion, domination by specific group(s), and disproportionate pride and power. As Shepherd argues, the extent to which national consensus and public order are present determines national unity and internal.¹⁰⁴ National consensus is about loyalty to national values, institutions, and policies. It includes loyalty to one political authority system. The development and consolidation of this consensus is achieved via cultural fusion, including language adaptation and the evolvement of a sociocultural infrastructure around it. I address public order later.

Regarding language policy the young country has few options: (i) it can decide to become trilingual by adapting English, Arabic, and Swahili as national languages. (ii) The country can make its major languages—Nuer, Dinka, Bari, Zande, Latuka—national languages taught in all schools at a certain grade. Or (iii) South Sudan can decide, through a national process, like a referendum or parliamentary legislation, to adopt Swahili as its lingua franca in line with its recent interests in joining the East African Community. This should erase racialism and ethnic pride. While racialism, as characterised North-South relations before South Sudan’s secession, “can confound human reason even among those recently freed from western imperialism”, intergroup antagonisms within the South are potentially “the most destructive of consensus.”¹⁰⁵ In the midst of ethnic competition over language, consensus on a national language is difficult.

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 5

¹⁰³ Jok

¹⁰⁴ George W. Shepherd Jr, 1966. ‘National Integration and the Southern Sudan’, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 4 (2):193-212

¹⁰⁵ Shepherd Jr, p. 210

Ethno-linguistic conflicts stymie national consensus on a national language by creating mistrust and suspicion between/among language groups. These fissures create competing demands upon the state to adopt one's language as against others, or to adopt many languages—multilingualism—thus placing greater burdens upon the state to teach as many languages as can serve the purposes of meeting the demands of all sociolinguistic groups. According to one observer,

The lack of a common language does not imply that South Sudan cannot become a unified nation, but a failure to address the issue would certainly hamper its growth. A national language would diminish feelings of exclusion or the perception that one or few ethnic groups dominate. Here, South Sudan may follow the example of other countries with similar problems. A solution could be a hybrid tongue that draws on local languages, similar to the Indonesian model, or the adoption of English as the language of government and education. Others have suggested that five languages from the three main regions should be selected. However, developing a national language or languages does not mean that the smaller languages would disappear; rather it would encourage literacy and their use at a local level. If language policy were linked to education, indigenous languages could be taught at primary school level ... after which English would become the medium of instruction.¹⁰⁶

Jok's above-quoted observations provide vital starting points for understanding the language problem in South Sudan. I, however, consider the adoption of a single national language or very few languages as vital for the rapid national integration in South Sudan. One national language that is also widely spoken in the region lowers costs of language education, especially among adults. Since South Sudan has joined the EAC, Swahili comes out as a promising candidate. English is not only widely spoken in the region but is a global language adoptable if not out of pragmatic necessity then to also ease interactions with EAC partner societies. Whichever choice is made, a common language will ensure the emergence of a common citizenship. As Tanzania's experience demonstrates, language policy, like any other policy, is not unproblematic. Neither it is cheap to teach one language countrywide amidst low levels of literacy nor to convince political nor other ethnic elites to adopt a single language unfamiliar to them or distinct from their mother tongues. But a choice has to be made. Few approaches are worth trying: first, a countrywide survey can be conducted to obtain the people's choice of language. Second, where deemed necessary, a referendum may be held on whether or not to choose a non-indigenous language like Swahili or Arabic. Finally, legal and politico-administrative requirements for deliberate promotion of the chosen language(s) by public and private entities alike can follow.

4.2 Ethnopolitical Integration and De-Politicisation of Ethnicity

South Sudan has multiple ethnic groups. Competition between these groups may be historical, but took on new dimensions after independence. This culminated in an armed confrontation between soldiers loyal to Dr Riek Machar and those loyal to Salvar Kiir in 2013. Observers have claimed

¹⁰⁶ JoK Madut Jok, 2012. 'South Sudan: Building a diverse nation', in Heinrich Böll foundation and Toni Weis, *Sudan after Separation: New Approaches to a New Region*, Berlin: Heinrich Böll Foundation, pp. 58-67, at p. 64-5.

that ethno-politics was at the centre of this confrontation.¹⁰⁷ Historically, South Sudanese have struggled against Arab-Islamic-dominated North, making the long Sudanese conflict assume a racial-religious dimension. “Completely isolated from the North until little more than a century ago, embittered by decades of subsequent hostility, and administered separately until the threshold of independence, the Southerner feels himself to be an African, while the ruling Northerner is proud of his Arab consciousness.”¹⁰⁸ This expression was echoed by Aggrey Jaden, president of the Sudan African National Union (SANU), in 1965. Jaden stated that geographical, racial-ethnic, and cultural differences between north and south Sudan imply that there were no shared beliefs, no common identity, no interest convergence, no local signs of unity, and “above all, the Sudan has failed to compose a single Community.”¹⁰⁹ Today, South Sudan has no common language, no ethnic convergence, and no feeling of national unity and purpose. There are opportunities which a nation-building program can start. Shared historical memories and similarities among South Sudan’s ethnic groups come to mind.

There are significant similarities among South Sudan’s ethnic groups. The groups are racially African. Their modes of production and livelihood are similar. Religious traditions and culture in general, are similar. The different groups also share important historical experiences constituting a shared memory. This is rooted in the experience of protracted struggle against islamisation, slave trade, imperialism, western colonialism, and Arab-northern domination. Over the years of conflict, emphasis has been placed on how different south Sudanese are from their northern neighbours. Many South Sudanese consider themselves different from north Sudan, now under Khartoum, despite southern penetration by Islam and Arabic.¹¹⁰

Tanzania’s experience offers important lessons to South Sudan. First, the political elites need to realise the importance of looking beyond ethnic loyalties and membership when recruiting for national political parties and public offices. Second, ethnic diversity, Juba has already realised, needs to be celebrated as a valuable resource that enriches the country’s cultural, epistemic, and historical landscape.¹¹¹ Programs that are aimed at promoting inter-ethnic dialoguing, ethnic intermarriages, and which mobilise all ethnic groups into single sets of activities, including participation in mass parties as the TANU did, should go a long way in promoting national unity. Finally, the national leadership must come out strongly and be seen to act for the diverse nation not their ethnic groups. The current conflict (as of 2016)¹¹² negates the core intent of South Sudan’s liberation struggles. Its ethnic dimension needs to be publicly denounced, and national cohesion practiced at the highest levels of political and bureaucratic leadership. This de-politicisation of ethnicity needs to spread to all major state institutions, especially the military.

¹⁰⁷ De Waal

¹⁰⁸ Shepered, Jr., p. 195

¹⁰⁹ *ibid*

¹¹⁰ Jok, p.7

¹¹¹ Jok

¹¹² De Waal

4.3 De-Politicisation of the Military and De-Militarisation of Politics

South Sudan has yet to build a professional national army let alone embark on programs to depoliticise its military and demilitarise its politics. This carryover of militarism is rooted in the many years of struggle during which political objectives were pursued militarily and military activities were fused with political manoeuvres in the day-to-day running of the SPLM and pre-SPLM rebel movements. Since independence, the country retains an ethnically-fractured military. These fractures are based on ethnicity; hence ethnic loyalty has penetrated the military institution and national politics. The resulting tension between mainly the Nuer and Dinka threatens to tear apart the country's hard-won independence as foreign interests became fused in the 2013 armed uprising. Though there were splits within the SPLM since August 1991, reflecting elite competition within the SPLA combined with machinations from Khartoum¹¹³, the "targeted killings in Juba and revenge killings of Dinka by Nuer in Akobo and Bor in Jonglei state"¹¹⁴ seemed to bear the oft-reported claim of ethnic influences in the conflict.

If it be true that the alleged coup begun with a fight between Nuer and Dinka soldiers in the presidential guard, the nature and compositions of defections and loyalties to the president and his opposing vice indicate the triangular intersection between ethnicity, militarism, and politics. Intra-SPLM divisions, militarisation of ethnicity and politics, and lack of elite consensus are responsible for this flare-up. This underlines the challenge upon Juba to include all the diverse ethnic groups, attract the remnants of the militias that had not yet joined the SPLA, and build national cohesion.¹¹⁵ Leaders face other challenges (like boundary problems, oil wealth, and system of government). But national integration and loyalty to the nation remain key to the country's nationhood and cannot be relegated to political chance.¹¹⁶

The nation-building challenge facing South Sudan is a serious leadership issue similar to Tanzania's challenge in 1964. It requires elite consensus on depoliticising both the military and ethnicity. Few options are available. First, professionalisation of the military is an urgent matter. This demands legal restrictions against the military's involvement in politics, recruitment and enlistment based on merit, provision of professional training, and respect for military autonomy. Errant military officers and men need to be disarmed, difficult as this exercise may be, to de-tooth them as Tanzania did in 1964. The AU and UN can support this endeavour. Second, and as an alternative to the foregoing, South Sudan may fuse its national ideology with military training, by:

¹¹³ Sharon E. Hutchinson, 2001, 'A Curse from God? Religious and political dimensions of the post-1991 rise of ethnic violence in South Sudan', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 39 (2): 307-331

¹¹⁴ Douglas H. Johnson, 2014, 'Briefing: The Crisis In South Sudan', *African Affairs* 113 (451):300-309

¹¹⁵ Francis M. Deng and Daniel J Deng, 2015. 'Government of South Sudan.' *Bound by Conflict: Dilemmas of the Two Sudans*, New York: Fordham University Press, pp. 100-19.

¹¹⁶ Lere Amusan, 2014, 'Germinating Seeds of Future Conflicts in South Sudan', *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review* 4 (1):120-133

(i) retiring majority of the country's soldiers and providing them with means of alternative livelihood and then reconstituting the military; and (ii) by making legal prohibitions against elites using the military to settle political differences. Finally, the country needs an elite consensus on the nature and future of the military in the country's grand strategy.

On elite consensus, there are few options. One option is the choice of *declaration of state neutrality*, akin to Costa Rica's and Belgium's neutrality in international relations. The military would then be integrated in the police force or disbanded altogether. The country would then depend on international will for its national defence and security, territorial integrity, and strategic survival. This might have three consequences: (i) it removes opportunities for foreign penetration of the country's armed forces with an aim of internally destabilising the country through such things as engineering coups d'état. (ii) State neutrality erases fears from neighbours of possible military incursions and aggression when leaders of these countries disagree or when there are conflicts over such issues as national borders and transnational armed conflicts. (iii) Finally, neutral status significantly reduces the presence, and potential instrumentalisation, of means and instruments of violence for narrow sectional, including ethno-political, interests that pit ethno-military groups against one another as the current conflict demonstrates.

The second consensual option is the *integration of South Sudan's military with regional military arrangements*. One opportune structure is the East African Standby Force (EASF) under the African Union Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The other, were it fully operational, would be the EAC's security and defence cooperation arrangements.¹¹⁷ It is possible, even desirable for political stability, regional integration, and geostrategic survival, to put command over the country's armed forces under some regional entity for at least few years. Though this may seem to political elites as antithetical to the oft-exaggerated principle and practices of state sovereignty (autonomy, control, legitimacy, security and defence policy)¹¹⁸, it may be informed by considerations of pragmatic necessity and strategic survival. Tanzania relied on the British to disarm its errant army and on the Nigerians for the subsequent reorganisation and reconstitution of the TPDF. The state is now as sovereign as any other in today's world.

5. Conclusion

This paper addresses variations in nation-building outcomes across different countries with similar ethnic heterogeneity by drawing lessons for South Sudan from Tanzania's experiences. Through an assessment of the ideals, objectives, and the methodologies by which Tanzania's nation building

¹¹⁷ Sabastiano Rwengabo, 2015. 'Institutional Design and the APSA'S Implementation in Eastern Africa'. Dakar: CODESRIA. Presentation to the 14th CODESRIA General Assembly, 8-12 June 2016 (accessed 25 July 2016, from: file:///C:/Users/Rwengabo/Downloads/91-sabastiano_rwengabo_instrumental_design_and_the_apsa_s_implementation_in_eastern_africa.pdf). Sabastiano Rwengabo, 2014. *Regional Security Cooperation in the East African Community*. Singapore: National University of Singapore, PhD Thesis (unpub).

¹¹⁸ Rwengabo, *Regional Security Cooperation in the East African Community*.

program was pursued, vital lessons are drawn for South Sudan. The paper demonstrates that a country's national building outcomes depend on the efficacy of its ethno-political strategy through which a language policy, neutralisation of ethno-politics, and de-politicisation of the military determine the success with which a country unifies and integrates its various ethnic identities into a common national identity. Despite Tanzania's complex socio-linguistic, racial, regional, and religious heterogeneity, the country, unlike most of the other heterogeneous African countries, successfully fused its ethnicities into a Nation with minimum ethno-political conflicts. South Sudan, on the other hand, currently faces ethno-military conflicts, which threaten national unity, state consolidation, and post-conflict political stability.

Tanzania's nation building and integration policies are in a sense modernisationist in outlook for a modern language community is by nature what Anderson calls an "imagined community", a community that is aware of its own identity and can articulate such identity through all channels of modern communication facilitated by education and literacy.¹¹⁹ Such experiments may have been experimented elsewhere, such as Philippines where Filipino identity was created through Jose Rizal's novels and the spread of newspapers as reading/literacy facilitated understanding in a common language by a people spread over seven thousand islands.¹²⁰ Yet in Philippines the post-independence ruling coalition did not fully assimilate a majority of the underlying people, and failed to integrate Muslims in the Moro region, hence nation-building failure.¹²¹ Despite the UN's definition of peopled territories under single authorities as "nation states", by guaranteeing the territorial integrity of nation states and protecting states' other rights the UN was surprised by the wave of national fragmentation and conflicts that afflicted many of its member states in the developing world, indicating a disconnect between juridical sovereignty and nationhood.¹²² Like Namibia, which also faced nation-build problems and challenges related to the competition between ethnicity and nationalism, inclusive national symbols were employed in the project.¹²³

The findings from Tanzania lead to several conclusions: first, an all-embracing ethno-political strategy is a necessary and sufficient condition for successful nation building. Second, though many interventions may constitute the ethno-political strategy postcolonial leaders may adopt, a language policy remains an indubitably important constituent of any successful nation-building project. Language policy informs and lays a firm foundation for the successful implementation of other interventions, such as national service that Singapore uses to forge nationhood, social mobilisation through ideological persuasion, and de-politicisation of both identity and state institutions. Third, a country's ethno-political strategy, being a set of coordinated and interlinked

¹¹⁹ Benedict Anderson, 1991. *Imagined communities: Reflection's on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised Edition,. New York: Verso Books

¹²⁰ Fukuyama, p. 187

¹²¹ Kazuya Yamamoto, 2007. 'Nation-Building and Integration Policy in the Philippines', *Journal of Peace Research* 44 (2): 95-21

¹²² Nina Heathcote, 1964/1965. 'United Nations and Nation-Building', *International Journal* 20 (1):20-32

¹²³ Leif John Fosse, 1997. 'Negotiating the nation: ethnicity, nationalism and nation-building in independent Namibia', *Nations and Nationalism* 3 (3):427-50.

policy interventions aimed at reducing people's attachments to their identities in preference for attachment to the Nation-State, need not resonate with liberal democratic ideals, such as respect for human rights, and democratisation. Fourth, successful nation-building interventions need to be concurrent with high-level state capacity as traditionally defined, that is, capacity to provide political goods, which, in some contexts depends upon a country's level of socioeconomic development. Finally, effective nation building demands decisions upon, and acceptance of, certain compromises. Temporary relaxation of the principle and practices of state sovereignty and strong ideological commitments are some of the compromises. Tanzania did this when it invited Britain to disarm its army in 1964 and Nigeria to help it reconstitute its armed forces, contrary to sovereignty claims of self-rule and Pan-African convictions that Africa needs to desist from referring to its former colonisers to solve its internal political problems. Leaders who successfully make and implement these policy choices are more likely to succeed in building national cohesion. Those who ignore or fail in their sociolinguistic reorganisation of society, politico-military realignment, and social engineering programs will hardly create "new patterns of group affiliation and new images of personal identity"¹²⁴ that constitute nationhood.

South Sudan needs to learn these important lessons in order to prevent ethnicity from remaining the fulcrum around which political and military relations revolve. South Sudan's currently ethnically-divided and allegiant polity falls short of the ingredients of national consciousness and common identity. But like Tanzania, the country needs to denigrate people's attachment to ethno-linguistic and racial identity, demilitarise the post-conflict society, and develop and implement a language policy aimed at unification of a people under a single language system. Swahili and English remain relevant to South Sudan due to its East African attachments, historical resistance to Arabic, the place of English in global communication and trade, and the justified desire to prevent the possibility for any sociolinguistic group in the country to claim pride and power as a result of giving its language national importance. As the country has already realised, embarking on these programs is necessary for helping South Sudan to outlive ethnic tensions that have penetrated the state's political and military infrastructure.

¹²⁴ Deutsch, 'Social Mobilisation and Political Development'. P. 493

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