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## East Africa: cycles of violence, and the paradox of peace

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Stefan Blum

Number **107** East Africa:  
Cycles of Violence, and the  
Paradox of Peace

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## Abstract

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This paper contributes to explaining variation in violence in post-independence East Africa. By focussing on Tanzania and Uganda, our comparative ‘most-similar-cases’ research design ensures significant across- and within-case variation in violence against relatively similar background conditions. As a conceptual starting point the World Bank’s Collier/Hoeffler model and theory are applied to both countries. It is argued that while the model’s fit is relatively good, Collier/Hoeffler’s main theoretical proposition that civil war onset is best predicted by the existence of opportunities (or financing availability through resource extortion) for rebellion does not correspond as well with the East African context. We propose a modified rational-choice framework focusing on micro-level economic motivations for state capture, which is argued to help explain cycles of violence in Uganda until the 1980s, as well as the ‘paradox of peace’, i.e. the puzzle why East Africa has experienced sustained periods of absolute (Tanzania) and relative (Uganda nationally after 1986, Zanzibar since the 1970s) peace despite identity fragmentation. From this perspective, peace followed from successful elite strategies to co-opt opponents through a mixture of rent-sharing and non-violent authority, leading to identity-encompassing, hierarchical one-party structures able to overcome collective action problems of state capture and defence.



# 1 Introduction

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The starting point of this research<sup>1</sup> is regional variation in violence, i.e. the puzzle why, despite relatively similarly starting conditions upon independence, Tanzania and Uganda have since taken fundamentally different development paths: Uganda has seen some of the most, and Tanzania some of the least political violence in Africa. In addition, Uganda is characterized by substantial within-case variation over time, as from 1986 onwards the country experienced a remarkable transition towards peace and development – at least on a national level. A comparison of Tanzania and Uganda as well as within Uganda thus ensures significant variation in the dependent variable while reducing the risk of background variables potentially interfering with the analysis – facilitating a ‘most-similar-cases’ research design. Building upon this methodological advantage, the principal objective of the present paper is to improve the understanding of determinants of violence and non-violence in East Africa.

The present study may however also be of interest to a broader range of scholars and policy-makers dealing with the determinants of violent conflict beyond East Africa. This is because related to the variation in violence, Tanzania since independence and Uganda since 1986 have been described as deviant cases – Tanzania as an ‘oasis of peace’ in Sub-Sahara Africa (Hofmeier 1997), and Uganda from 1988 as “the main model of successful postconflict recovery in Africa” (Reinikka/Collier 2001:15). An analysis of deviant cases – by revealing previously unrecognized conditions under which deviant outcomes can be explained and/or different causal mechanisms leading to deviant outcomes – may contribute to advancing theory (van Evera 1997; George/Bennett 2005; Ebbinghaus 2005). The present case comparison may thus help to heuristically identify new variables and causal mechanisms having been overlooked in existing explanations of political violence and its avoidance.

A widely discussed rationalist theory of civil war developed within a World Bank project on the economics of violence and based upon a statistical model by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler at the University of Oxford (the ‘Collier/Hoeffler model’) is chosen as a starting point to explain the variation in violence observed. Based on their statistical findings, Collier/Hoeffler essentially argue that the best predictor for civil war onset is the existence of an *opportunity*, or financing availability, for violence. Collier/Hoeffler’s findings and interpretations had a substantial influence on the current discussion about the sources of violence. But at the same time, this and related theories have also been criticized for remaining, as theories, abstract and in particular need of complementary case-study research to establish intervening causal mechanism and take account of decision-making processes (Cramer 2002; compare also Bates et al. 1998).

Taking this critique seriously, the present research assesses the fit the Collier/Hoeffler model and main theoretical propositions in the specific regional context of Tanzania and Uganda in order to substantiate findings and conclusions derived from large-n quantitative studies. On this basis, a modified theoretical framework argued to be superior in explaining East African variation in violence is proposed. Also based upon rational choice theory, in contrast to Collier/Hoeffler (2004) this framework focuses upon economic motivations and meso-level incentive structures (e.g. through institutions and organizations) instead of opportunities, and is extended beyond rebels to state actors. It is argued that this framework contributes to explaining cycles of violence in Uganda during the 1960s to 1980s, as well as what from the perspective of economic theory may be called the ‘paradox of peace’, i.e. the puzzle why during sustained periods of time a remarkable level of absolute (Tanzania) and relative (Uganda after 1986 and post-revolution Zanzibar) peace could be achieved despite the basic proneness to violent conflict.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows: In section 2, the methodological rationale for choosing Tanzania and Uganda is explained and the post-independence histories of conflict and violence in Uganda and Tanzania are briefly presented. Section 3 introduces the CH model/theory and assesses the fit of the CH model and main theoretical propositions for explaining the variation in violence in both countries. Section 4 presents a modified theoretical framework based upon an analytical narrative of how economic theory may contribute to explaining cycles of violence and the paradox of peace in post-independence East Africa. Section 5 summarizes and concludes with a brief outlook on the future.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is part of the author’s ongoing doctoral research project supported by ZEF, Bonn, and FAZIT-Foundation, Frankfurt.

## 2 Post-independence experiences of conflict and violence in East Africa

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### 2.1 Case Selection

A comparison of Tanzania and Uganda is methodologically advantageous because both countries' values on the dependent variable violent conflict vary substantially across space and time. Tanzania and Uganda have also been argued to be relatively well comparable because they exhibited similar background conditions upon independence, which together facilitate the identification of a co-variation between independent and dependent variables, and reduces the risk of perturbing third variables interfering with the analysis.

Regarding the variation in violence, it has been argued that case selection on the dependent variable is a legitimate alternative to selection on the independent variable given that sufficient variation in the values of the dependent variable is ensured (King, Keohane and Verba 1994; van Evera 1997; Geddes 2003; Ragin 2004). Tanzania and Uganda fit this condition almost ideally: Not only is the across-case variation in violence substantial; Uganda also shows a significant extent of within-case variation, having passed through what was described as a 'fundamental transformation' following the victory of Museveni in 1986 (as noted in section 2.2 below, serious doubts may be raised on the quality and sustainability of this transformation, though). Both countries further exhibit sub-national variation on the dependent variable, as civil war since 1986 continues on a smaller scale mainly in Northern Uganda and violence levels on the Zanzibar islands contrast with peace and stability on the Tanzanian mainland. This variation in violent conflict not only facilitates the identification of a co-variation between dependent and potential explanatory variables (George/Bennet 2005), it also increases the number of observations to be observed and thus the validity of results (King, Keohane and Verba 1994).

With regard to the control of potentially perturbing third variables, it has been argued that background conditions (e.g. climate, regional/neighbourhood effects or the political and economic legacy of colonial rule) are relatively similar across East African countries (Berg-Schlosser/Siegler 1990; Klugman et al. 1999).<sup>2</sup> As it is practically impossible in social science accounts of political violence to work experimentally, similar background conditions may be valuable because they facilitate – within the limits of this approach – a 'most-similar-cases' research design (Przeworski/Teune 1970, following Mill's method of difference). Such a design

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<sup>2</sup> Given time and resource constraints, the third country included in classical definitions of East Africa, Kenya, is left out in this comparison, as (i) its level of violence is somewhere in between Tanzania and Uganda and (ii) more research has already been conducted on Kenya (compare for example Kimenyi/Ndung'u 2005 for a public-choice based analysis of Kenya)

is argued to be particularly well suited to develop theories and infer new variables or antecedent conditions (van Evera 1997). From this perspective, Tanzania provides a ‘control case’ for Uganda, and vice versa, thus increasing the determinacy of the research design (if some variables are already controlled for through research design, fewer observations are needed to achieve a given level of determinacy) and facilitating counterfactual reasoning.<sup>3</sup>

## 2.2 Conflict and violence in post-independence Uganda and Tanzania<sup>4</sup>

The Republic of Uganda, a landlocked country encompassing 236 thousand square kilometres and inhabited by about 27 million people, has experienced some of the worst post-independence violent conflict<sup>5</sup> in Africa. Violence was not new to the area today called Uganda when it became a protectorate of Great Britain in 1894. Around that time and during the first decades of colonial rule, wars were fought between and among Christians and Muslims, as well as between and among Bantu-speaking kingdoms of Southern Uganda (in particular Buganda<sup>6</sup> whose population was used as native agent in the British indirect rule strategy) and northern groups.<sup>7</sup> After the turn of the century, the British managed, not least through extensive use of violence, to gain more control of the protectorate. The post-independence period in 1962 then started relatively smoothly, with the first years being characterized by non-violent struggles mainly between the Buganda elite and the central government – manifested politically as a conflict between the Baganda ‘Kabaka Yekka’ (‘The King Alone’) party and the Uganda People’s Congress (UPC). The conflict escalated into violence during the ‘Buganda crisis’ in 1966/67: Apolo Milton Obote, prime minister from Lango in northern Uganda, had main opponents arrested, introduced a new constitution over night and employed government troops to attack the palace of the Ugandan president, the ‘Kabaka’ (king) of Buganda.<sup>8</sup> Dividing lines for

<sup>3</sup> Substantial critique has been voiced on the employment of Mill’s methods (e.g. Lieberson 1996). However, most of this critique does not apply to the present study, where these methods are not employed in isolation but in combination with qualitative methods of within-case comparison (George/Bennett 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Important sources that this description relies upon are Jorgensen (1981) and Sathyamurthy (1986) for Uganda; Pratt (1976), Iliffe (1979), Yeager (1989) and Temu (2002) for Tanzania; and Lofchie (1965) as well as Othman (1993) for Zanzibar.

<sup>5</sup> A note on the definition of the dependent variable: In this paper the terms ‘violent conflict’ or ‘political instability’ encompass different forms of political violence. This assumes that political or group violence can in principle be analyzed as an aggregate category, which is in contrast to e.g. most large-n studies including Collier/Hoeffler fundamentally distinguishing rebel from state and large- from small-scale violence. A variation in the dependent variable violent conflict, i.e. ‘peace’ or ‘stability’, does not refer to the absence of *conflict* but rather the absence of *violence*, which means conflicts are conceptualized as intrinsic to any society.

<sup>6</sup> ‘Buganda’ refers to the kingdom and ‘Baganda’ to the people.

<sup>7</sup> Uganda is usually described as being divided ethno-linguistically into a Bantu-speaking ‘South’ including among others the Buganda and Ankole ethnic groups in the centre and west, respectively, and a linguistically heterogeneous ‘north’, with Sudanic languages dominating the far west, Nilotic languages being spoken by the Acholi and Langi in the centre and the ‘Nilo-Hamitic’ speakers mainly among the Karamojong and Iteso in the east.

<sup>8</sup> Some more detail on this is helpful as the Buganda crisis’ coding in quantitative studies is questionable: In February 1966, Obote claimed that a coup d’état had been planned against his government, which he used as a pretext to imprison his long-time Baganda opponents. In April, Obote also secured control of the state through introduction of a new constitution giving him all executive powers and abolishing Buganda federalism. The Buganda regional parliament refused to sign that constitution and in May passed a motion that the central government should remove itself from Buganda soil (accompanied by demonstrations against the central

subsequent large-scale violence in Uganda were thus already formed during the 1960s, and following the Buganda crisis violence levels gradually increased (at that time still largely in the form of armed robbery by sometimes state-sponsored bandits).

A wholly different level of violence (compare table 1 for an overview of death levels) occurred following the 1971 coup by army general Idi Amin Dada from north-western Uganda. Immediately after the coup, Amin sought full control over the military through large-scale systematic murder and imprisonment of officers from the Acholi and Langi regions perceived to support Obote. In the following 8 years of his presidency, an ‘economic war’ against the Asians and British was launched and enormous atrocities were committed against the Ugandan population by the army, the state and others who used the state machinery to pursue their own interests. Following Amin’s invasion of Tanzania, an alliance of Tanzanian troops and Ugandan exile fighters launched an attack on Amin, taking over Kampala in 1979. Amidst instability, divided political leadership and chaos on the ground, two Buganda presidents were installed and dismissed until the December 1980 elections. UPC (with presidential candidate Obote who had returned from exile in Tanzania) was declared winner and Obote once again installed as president. During his almost 5 years in office he was relatively successful at gaining confidence of international aid givers, but failed to improve the living conditions of the poor majority of Ugandans. Most importantly, he was caught in a large-scale civil war against different insurgent groups, during which the army committed massive killings and human rights violations (particularly against the Baganda).

In 1986, Yoweri Museveni from Ankole<sup>9</sup> in south-western Uganda, who had been active in the liberation war against Amin, since 1981 had fought Obote in the guerrilla war and by the mid-1980s controlled large parts of western and southern Uganda, violently took over Kampala. His National Resistance Movement (NRM) came to be supported by a relatively broad multi-ethnic, -religious and -regional coalition. In the 20 years of his presidency, during which a new constitution has been enacted and Museveni was re-elected twice, Uganda on a national level was relatively stable and peaceful and has also recovered economically. However, Museveni’s good track-record is strongly overshadowed by various violent conflicts at the periphery of the country, which continued or (re-)emerged even despite a number of peace agreements signed between the NRM and different factions of the former Obote and Amin armies. The longest and most deadly of them has been in the Acholiland region of northern Uganda between the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and Ugandan army forces, having led to several ten thousand deaths, thousands of abducted children and more than 1.4 million internally displaced persons (Gershony

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government by mobs on the streets of Kampala). This gave Obote the pretext he had provoked to take more serious steps against the Baganda elite, employing the Ugandan army against the Kabaka palace (compare Sathyamurthy 1986 and Kasozi 1994). Provoked by the prime minister and characterized by military aggression, this event should thus be interpreted as a case of state violence which however is in contrast to most large-n datasets which code it as a case of rebellion. Moreover, Kasozi (1994:4) notes that the number of deaths from political violence during the *entire* 9-year Obote I period did not exceed 1000, so it is also doubtful that this event meets the widely used definition for large-scale rebellion (usually being based about 1000 combat-related deaths per year).

<sup>9</sup> ‘Ankole’ refers to the kingdom, while ‘Banyankole’ refers to the people.

1997, Lomo/Hovil 2004, World Food Programme 2004). During the last few years, Museveni's government is being more and more criticized by national and international observers for its incapacity and/or unwillingness to end this conflict. In addition, election violence, government intimidation and arrest of opposition members as well as constitutional changes to allow Museveni to win another presidential term in the February 2006 elections have increased the severity of political conflicts also on the national level, without however leading to large-scale violence (so far).

By contrast, the United Republic of Tanzania for the most part of its post-independence history was characterized by a large extent of political stability and peace (while showing sub-national variation in violence, as described below). The country is comprised of the former Tanganyika and the Zanzibar islands, together measuring 945 thousand square kilometres and inhabited by around 38 million people (of which 1 million live on Zanzibar). Tanganyika from 1885 was a German protectorate, during that time experiencing the bloody 'Maji-Maji' uprising against the colonial administration which led to around 250 thousand deaths. In 1920, Tanganyika became a British-administered territory under a League of Nations mandate. Following the emergence of a broad-based nationalist movement under the leadership of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) formed in 1954 by Julius Nyerere, the Tanganyika transition to independence in 1961 went relatively smoothly – although during the first years after independence stability was not well entrenched, as demonstrated by a 1964 army mutiny suppressed with the help of the British.

In sharp contrast, on the Zanzibar islands (comprising Unguja and Pemba) tensions had built up as the black majority of the population was suppressed under Arab/British rule (Zanzibar had become a British protectorate in 1890). In pre-independence elections, Africans had won the majority of votes on Zanzibar but were prevented by the Arabs/British from forming the government (Lofchie 1965). Through the Zanzibar revolution one month after the December 1963 independence of Zanzibar, the Sultan was dethroned by a small force led by a Ugandan national, John Okello, who handed over power to a revolutionary government under the leadership of the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP). Following the change of power, several thousand Arabs lost their lives, and large parts of the economy were nationalized. Shortly after the revolution, Tanganyika and Zanzibar merged to form the United Republic of Tanzania (with both territories being governed relatively autonomously).

The decades following the 1967 'Arusha declaration' were characterized by a remarkable extent of absolute peace on the mainland and relative peace (compared to the centuries before) on Zanzibar. The former Tanganyika was transformed into a socialist society, tightly managed by TANU (which was soon given single-party status and in the new 1977 constitution was declared 'supreme' over government). This transformation rested upon the nationalization of private businesses/education system and the formation of socialist villages out of the dominant subsistence farm holdings. In implementing these policies, some force was used by the state, mainly against the owners of cash-crop producing land in Northern Tanzania (Hofmeier 1997,

Temu 2002), but violence was rare. Following the 1973 oil price shock, the transformation to socialism came to a halt, and the beginning of the 1980s saw a severe economic crisis and general deterioration in living conditions, as well as some minor instances of violence against 'economic saboteurs' and an attempted coup d'état (Hirschler 2000). In the meantime, on Zanzibar detention, imprisonment and execution of political dissent continued (Othman 1995), but the situation improved step-by-step after the assassination of president Karume in 1972, the 1977 merger of ASP and TANU to form Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), and the 1984 change of the Zanzibar presidency to Ali Hassan Mwinyi (Oloka-Onyango and Nassali 2003:12).

When Nyerere handed over the national presidency to Mwinyi in 1985, Tanzania experienced a series of fundamental changes. Economically, a series of structural adjustment programmes were signed with the IMF and World Bank while politically, a multi-party system was introduced in 1992. However, opposition parties remain fundamentally weak vis-à-vis CCM, which won the 1995, 2000 and 2005 elections on the mainland by a comfortable margin – Benjamin Mkapa and Jakaya Kikwete being subsequently elected presidents. Although political conflicts have since then been fought fiercely, on the mainland these have largely remained non-violent (minor violence was reported between and among Christian and Muslim communities). On Zanzibar, however, the introduction of the multi-party system was associated with a severe deterioration of the political situation, including vote-rigging and violent suppression of opposition parties (Civic United Front, CUF, is widely believed to have won the majority of votes in the 1995 elections, in which CCM was declared winner). Some violence had already been reported around the 1995 elections, but following the 2000 elections, it reached an in united Tanzania previously unknown level, when over 30 persons were killed by Zanzibari police during a January 2001 CUF rally. Following the signing of an agreement between CUF and CCM later that year, and no similar-level violence during the 2005 elections, the situation seems to have calmed down a little bit – while the fundamental conflicts remain.

Table 1: Overview of conflict and violence in post-independence Uganda and Tanzania

	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s and beyond
<b>Uganda</b>	<i>1962-71</i> Severe group conflicts. State violence (< 1,000 deaths) <sup>10</sup> , large-scale organized criminality.	<i>1971-79</i> Massive state/ army violence (several 100,000 deaths) <sup>11</sup> , large-scale organized criminality.	<i>1979-86</i> Civil war + massive state/ army violence (several 100,000 deaths) <sup>12</sup> .	<i>1986-present</i> National-level stability; guerrilla wars at periphery (Acholiland: several 10,000 deaths) <sup>13</sup>
<b>Tanzania</b>				
<b>Mainland</b>	<i>1961-67</i> Group conflicts, but little violence.	<i>1967-1992</i> Political stability, but conflicts over state policies. During 1980s severe economic problems associated with some instability.		<i>1992-present</i> Severe non-violent conflicts; minor violence along religious lines.
<b>Zanzibar</b>	<i>1963-64</i> Revolution (4,000-15,000 mainly Arab deaths) <sup>14</sup> .	<i>1964-1992</i> Severe human rights violations by the state (improving from 1972/1977), relative stability.		<i>1992-present</i> Severe CCM-CUF conflicts over vote rigging, some violence.

<sup>10</sup> Kasozi (1994:4).

<sup>11</sup> Estimates for the number of deaths in this period vary widely: A figure of 500,000 was first mentioned by a 1977 report of the International Commission of Jurists, and since then was reproduced repeatedly (compare citations in Khiddu-Makubuya 1994). The lowest figure is of 12-30 thousand state plus another 16 to 20 thousand 'ordinary' murders (Jorgensen 1981:3,14-16), which however recognizes that the number of indirect deaths (caused e.g. by lack of food and hygiene) by far exceeds this figure.

<sup>12</sup> Kasozi (1994), Klugman et al. (1999).

<sup>13</sup> Gershony (1997:48), Lomo/Hovil (2004:10), World Food Programme (2004).

<sup>14</sup> Hofmeier (1997:153), Minorities at Risk Project (2004).



### 3 The Collier/Hoeffler model and East Africa

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#### 3.1 The Collier/Hoeffler model and theory

As part of a recent World Bank research project on the economics of violence, a statistical model of civil war onset, the Collier/Hoeffler (CH) model<sup>15</sup> has been developed and empirically tested. Underlying this model is a theory of civil war originally advanced by Tullock (1971, 1974) and more recently developed by Grossman (1991) and Hirshleifer (1995), in which violence onset follows a micro-economic logic. The basic proposition is that individuals make a rational decision for or against participating in rebellion based upon cost-benefit calculi. Collier (2000a, 2000b) distinguishes theoretically between ‘grievance’-motivated and ‘greed’-motivated rebellions: Grievance rebellions are public goods in that successful rebellion leads to a relief from grievance for all, while an individual’s participation in rebellion leads to high private costs (i.e. risk of death). The public good character of a grievance rebellion means it is subject to severe collective action problems (Collier 2000b distinguishes free-rider, coordination and time-consistency problems) and thus is likely to be rare. On the other hand, if participants are able to generate material benefits at all stages of the rebellion and exclude outsiders from these payoffs, their cost-benefit calculi are more likely to be in favour of participation. Such greed rebellions can thus be expected to be more common, leading Collier (2000a) to describe rebels as ‘quasi-criminal’ war entrepreneurs.<sup>16</sup>

In their CH model of civil war onset, the authors aim to present empirical evidence for this theoretical proposition: They contrast a model of a grievance rebellion where macro-level variables such as inequality, democracy or ethnic and religious fractionalization are argued to proxy for grievances with a model of a greed rebellion where macro-level economic and geographical variables such as the share of primary commodity exports in GDP, GDP/capita and population dispersion are presented as proxies for greed. Based upon an expanded and updated Correlates of War (COW) dataset which covers 161 countries over the period of 1960-99 (thereby identifying 79 civil wars), CH’s econometric analysis shows that the greed model is much more strongly correlated with civil war onset than the grievance model.

More recently, CH have considerably re-interpreted their results. They recently (2004) contrast ‘economic’ approaches explaining conflict in terms of opportunities with ‘political’ approaches explaining conflict in terms of motivations. Greed and grievance variables which in

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<sup>15</sup> The most recent version of the CH model focused upon here is CH (2004). Earlier versions include CH (1998, 2000, 2002).

their earlier contributions were argued to proxy for different motivations are now interpreted to measure opportunities versus motivations. CH on this basis argue that the incidence of rebellion can be explained by the existence of opportunities for rebel organizations to start and sustain violence, with these opportunities mainly related to financing availability through resource extortion.

The results and interpretations of CH and related World Bank contributions have been widely discussed in the scientific community, and have had a significant influence on policies of multilateral and bilateral donors.<sup>17</sup> The influence of this research on the debate around the emergence of civil conflicts cannot be underestimated, as demonstrated e.g. by Fearon's (2005:4) note that "the study's main finding [that primary commodity dependence enables rebellion] and the authors' interpretation of it may be the most widely reported result of any cross-national statistical study of civil conflict, ever." While receiving praise by some for the innovative statistical approach producing measurable results and making policy advice through simulation relatively easy, criticism is also abundant (e.g. Cramer 2002, Klem 2004, Marchal 2004, Nathan 2005). Unfortunately, however, the critical discussion of the CH model generally remains abstract, reflecting fundamental disagreements and lack of communication between proponents and opponents of the use of large-n quantitative studies for explaining civil war as well as between economists and other social scientists. Specific critique on the basis of case applications is rare – with the exception of what has already been done by the World Bank itself.<sup>18</sup> The present application of the CH model to a specific case variation focuses upon improving explanations for violence and its avoidance in the East Africa, but may ultimately also contribute to our understanding of civil war globally.

### 3.2 The model's contribution to explain East African variation in violence

In this section, the CH combined model is applied to explain the post-independence variation in violence between Tanzania and Uganda.<sup>19</sup> Following the dataset of the CH model, this application is confined to the across-and within-case variation in violence on a *national*

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<sup>16</sup> More recently, CH (2004) argue that rebels are not necessarily criminals but may also be motivated by 'misperceived grievances'.

<sup>17</sup> Policy recommendations based on the CH research have been institutionalized in UN-mandated targeted sanctions as well as the Kimberley process on conflict diamonds, and inform the aid policy of a number of bilateral donors (compare Suhrke, Villanger and Woodward 2004).

<sup>18</sup> The World Bank sponsored a project designed to expand the CH model through 21 case studies conducted under supervision of Nicholas Sambanis (Sambanis 2003, 2004a; Collier/Sambanis 2005). Case selection in this project was quite different from the present controlled comparison design, though, the scope being much wider, cases being selected both on the dependent and independent variables and on the basis of the CH model's fit, as well as with a capacity-building rationale in mind (Sambanis 2003:5-7). The two countries studied here were not included (Uganda was initiated but not finished). Other applications of the CH model to cases are scarce: For example, Ballentine/Sherman (2003) refer to a number of non-African case studies, Gutiérrez Sanín (2003) shows that Collier's criminal rebel hypothesis does not explain the Colombian context well.

<sup>19</sup> We thereby focus on the main turning points of violence, usually associated with a change in state power, as described in section 2.2 above. It may be noted that Paul Collier has also applied an earlier version of the CH model to violence in Uganda, thereby focusing on the Amin period (Reinikka/Collier 2001).

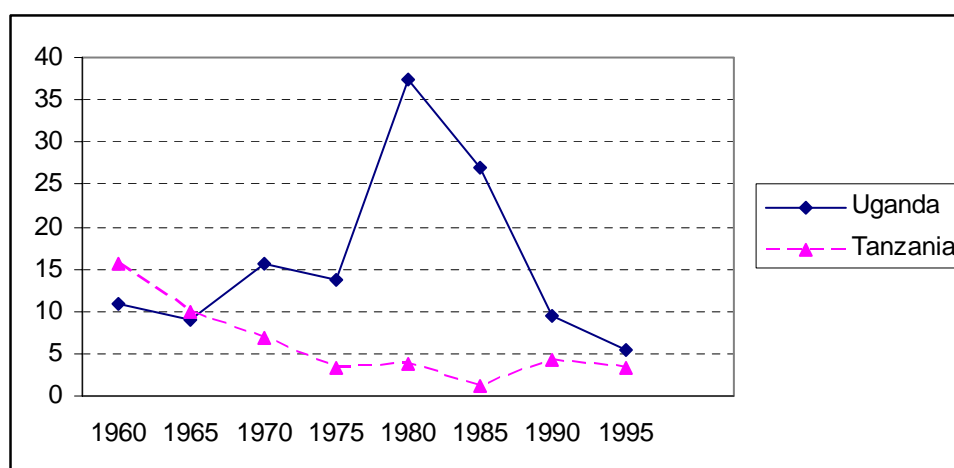
level. The scope of the present paper allows only for an ‘enlightened plausibility check’ of the CH model’s fit to the East African context based on ‘congruence procedures’.<sup>20</sup> We start by looking at civil war predictions from the CH combined model<sup>21</sup> for the post-independence national-level civil war risk in Tanzania and Uganda. These are provided in table 2 and figure 1.

Table 2: Probability of civil war onset in ensuing five years in Collier/Hoeffler’s combined model

	Uganda	Tanzania
1960	10,9%	15,6%
1965	9,0%	10,0%
1970	15,6%	6,8%
1975	13,7%	3,3%
1980	37,4%	3,7%
1985	26,9%	1,3%
1990	9,4%	4,3%
1995	5,4%	3,4%

Source: Calculated by author based upon CH (2004) dataset

Figure 1: Probability of civil war onset in ensuing five years in Collier/Hoeffler’s combined model, in percent



Source: Calculated by author based upon CH (2004) dataset

Before comparing these predictions with the actual history of violence and non-violence, we are interested in which individual variables have most contributed to overall civil war risk and its changes over time. Table 3 approximates this for the year with the largest across-case difference in predicted civil war risk between Tanzania and Uganda, 1980. The table shows the

<sup>20</sup> By using congruence procedures, the researcher identifies gaps between values observed and values predicted in the theory, and then looks for correlations of these gaps with other phenomena within or between the cases (compare van Evera 1997:71-74).

<sup>21</sup> The combined model is used because it is CH’s baseline model upon which all calculations are based. Differences to calculations in the greed model are minor and do not affect relative findings, as post-independence civil war probabilities in Uganda and Tanzania according to the greed model would overall be slightly higher for *both* Uganda and Tanzania.

contribution of individual variables within the CH model to the overall probability of civil war onset in the ensuing five years.

Table 3: Civil war probabilities for Tanzania and Uganda in 1980, calculated from CH's combined model<sup>22</sup>

	Uganda 1980	Tanzania 1980	Coefficient	Contribution to Risk	
				Uganda	Tanzania
Primary commodity exports/GDP	0.273	0.088	18.937	5.169801	1.666456
Primary commodity exports/GDP squared	0.074529	0.007744	-29.443	-2.19435735	-0.22800659
Male secondary school enrolment (% of total in school)	7	4	-0.032	-0.224	-0.128
Annual GDP growth during previous 5 years	-2.922	-1.173	-0.115	0.33603	0.134895
Months of peace since previous civil war	162	412	-0.004	-0.648	-1.648
Geographic dispersion of population index	0.508	0.577	-2.487	-1.263396	-1.434999
Social fractionalization index	5,940	6,975	-0.0002	-1.188	-1.395
Ethnic dominance	0	0	0.67	0	0
Ln Population	12,806,841	18,580,998	0.768	12.5686964	12.8545152
Constant			-13.073	-13.073	-13.073
Total				-0.516226	-3.25113939
<b>Probability of civil war onset (%)</b>				<b>37.4</b>	<b>3.7</b>

Source: Calculated by author based upon CH (2004) dataset

The 'contribution to risk' column provides a feeling for which variable contributes most to the large variation in civil war probability between Tanzania and Uganda in 1980. This suggests that the largest impact on the overall probability of civil war is from the primary commodity exports/GDP<sup>23</sup> and peace duration variables, as shall be demonstrated by estimating the marginal probabilities of civil war for changes in the values of both variables. If for example the level of primary commodity exports in Tanzania in 1980 had been as high as in Uganda, Tanzania's risk of civil war onset would have been 15.3 instead of 3.7 percent. If in addition the peace duration variable in Tanzania would have stood at Uganda's value of 162 months, the risk of civil war onset would even have amounted to 32.9 percent. Both variables together thus explain 87 percent of the difference in civil war risk for Tanzania and Uganda in 1980. Out of the remaining variables, the differences in population size, social fractionalization and the growth of GDP from 1975 to 1979 have been somewhat more important for the calculated civil war probabilities in 1980, but compared to the commodity export dependence and peace duration variables they had a relatively small influence.

A similar picture emerges if we look at marginal probabilities over time, as shall also be demonstrated by some examples: In Uganda, had the primary commodity exports/GDP variable in 1980 remained at its 1975 level, the risk of civil war onset, instead of almost tripling from

<sup>22</sup> The contribution to risk measures the product of the value of the variable and its coefficient. The probability is calculated by multiplying the variable values for Tanzania and Uganda in 1980 with the coefficients for each variable from the global CH model. Entering the sum of these values ('Total' row) into formula A 2.3 appearing in Appendix 2 of CH (2004) provides the probability of civil war onset for each country in 1980.

13.7 percent in 1975 to 37.4 percent in 1980 would have risen only slightly to 14.6 percent. And regarding the previous war variable, had the CH dataset coded the 1966 Buganda crisis as state or small-scale violence and not as rebellion (compare discussion in note 8), this would have significantly influenced results from 1970 to 1980, e.g. more than halving civil war risk in 1980 to 18 percent instead of the 37.4 percent predicted by CH. Similarly, in Tanzania the consistent decrease in predicted civil war risk from 15.6 percent in 1960 to 1.3 percent in 1985 was the result of a decrease in primary commodity exports/GDP from 19 to 3 percent in combination with an increase in the number of months since previous civil war from 172 to 472 (together more than offsetting an increased risk due to population growth). Other variables once again played a relatively minor role for changes in civil war risk, mainly because the only other variables which based on the global model had the potential to similarly influence overall probabilities, population size and male secondary school enrolment, did not vary greatly throughout post-independence Uganda and Tanzania. On the other hand, the dramatic improvement in Ugandan GDP/capita growth between 1975-1980 and 1980-1985 from below -3 percent growth per year to a positive growth rate decreased civil war risk by only 7.7 percent.

Comparing the predictions of the overall CH model to the actual history of (non-)violence as outlined in section 2.2 above, the CH model's predictions fit both countries well.<sup>24</sup> For Tanzania, the average post-independence risk of violence calculated by the CH model is about 6 percent and thus roughly half the risk of 11.5 percent for the mean country. Changes in predictions over time also fit relatively well, as the model predicts a higher instability during the 1960s, which during the consolidation phase of the early years (army mutiny, union with Zanzibar etc.) indeed seems to capture actual risk.<sup>25</sup> It may further be speculated that the increase in tensions during the 1990s on both the mainland and Zanzibar is captured by the slight increase in civil war risk predicted by CH model during the 1990s.

The CH model's fit to post-independence Uganda is also good: Not only is the average risk during the period of about 16 percent almost three times that of Tanzania, it is also significantly above the average risk for the mean country. The changes of predicted probabilities over time moreover fit the actual history of onset and avoidance, as relatively low predicted risks (both by global and Ugandan standards) during the 1960s came together with only minor violence. War probability rose during the 1970s violence and further during the 1980s civil war while it decreased substantially during the 1990s; these predictions broadly fit the increase in stability following Museveni's take-over of power in early 1986, which he managed to consolidate on a national level from the early 1990s. However, if we would take into account

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<sup>23</sup> The primary commodity exports/GDP variable enters the model alone as well as with its squared value because of the non-linear relationship between this variable and civil war onset.

<sup>24</sup> The CH model does not aim to predict the *intensity* of a civil war but only the probability of civil war onset of a given intensity. In comparing the CH model to actual levels of violence, we assume that intensity is closely associated with probability (i.e. that higher civil war probabilities also lead to more intense wars).

<sup>25</sup> The high 1960 value cannot be associated with the 1964 revolution on Zanzibar, though, as Zanzibar in 1960 was a separate state not included in Tanzania figures.

sub-national conflicts mainly in northern Uganda during the 1990s, the fit of the CH model would deteriorate substantially.

This relatively good fit of the CH model to the variation in violence in post-independence East Africa is noteworthy as it goes beyond CH's own objective: The model technically is based upon and thus should explain only rebellion, i.e. conflict between an identifiable rebel organization and the government leading to 1000 combat-related deaths per year, of which at least 5 percent are borne by each side. Given the poor conceptual and empirical basis of the civil war definition, this is not surprising, though. Sambanis (2005:304) for example notes that "the model cannot distinguish between predictions of civil war and predictions of other violence, because the theory underlying the CH model could potentially apply to lower-level insurgencies, terrorism, coups, and other violence, including organized crime".<sup>26</sup> The good fit of CH model in the present context may thus be interpreted to suggest that the model in East Africa captures a broader phenomenon of 'political violence' also including smaller-scale violence (such as in 1960s Tanzania) as well as large-scale state violence (such as in Uganda during the 1970s). Elsewhere, we have found that arbitrary operationalization of the primary commodity exports and peace duration variables in the East African context indeed influences results, but do not fundamentally alter the overall fit of the CH model to East Africa.<sup>27</sup>

To conclude, the CH model – as all large-n statistical models – relies on a set of fairly restrictive assumptions, some of which may be ad hoc and misleading; this is easily overlooked when formulas and figures are presented calculated down to fractions of percentage points. The CH model may further be particularly vulnerable to errors of operationalization and model specification because of the dominance of two variables, primary commodity exports/GDP and peace duration, slight re-specification of which has been argued to potentially alter overall findings significantly (e.g. de Soysa 2002, Ross 2003, Fearon/Laitin 2003, Fearon 2005, Sambanis 2003, 2004a, 2005).<sup>28</sup> Moreover, while such errors in the *global* model may at least partially offset each other, when applying the model to specific cases results are easily biased. One of the main advantages of the CH model, i.e. the possibility to calculate civil war probabilities for specific individual countries and time periods, is at the same time a significant challenge. Calculations based on the application of the CH model to specific countries should thus not be taken at face value and need cross-checking by in-depth case analysis.

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<sup>26</sup> For a more in-depth discussion of this compare also Sambanis (2004a:263 and 2004b:815-816). The poor *empirical* basis of the civil war datasets is exemplified by the coding of Uganda: Besides the doubtful coding of the Buganda crisis as civil war instead of state violence (compare note 8 above), the 1980-85 period is coded as civil war in COW but at the same time is listed in a classical compilation of genocides/politicides by the State Failure Task Force (compare Harff 2003). The 1990s violence on the other hand does not appear as civil war in the CH, while it does in the similar Fearon/Laitin (2003) dataset.

<sup>27</sup> Due to the limited scope of the present paper, we cannot look at these issues here. More on this can be found in the author's ongoing research.

<sup>28</sup> And we have thereby not even covered additional methodological issues such as omitted variable bias or endogeneity which the model may also be prone to (compare e.g. Sambanis 2003:7-8, Nathan 2005).

Having said that, it was found that the CH model does fit the East African post-independence variation in violence relatively well, and that this extends beyond the 1980 across-case variation in civil war between Tanzania and Uganda (as could be expected based upon CH's civil war dataset) to the broader across- and within-case variation in violence since independence. Assuming that this co-variation of CH's independent variables with the level of violence does not derive from errors of operationalization, we may expect a possible fit also of the underlying CH theory.<sup>29</sup> The fit of CH's theory, and particularly causal interpretations related to their two main variables, to East Africa is looked at in more detail in the following section.

### 3.3 The theory's contribution to explain East African variation in violence

In this section, the contribution of CH's theory, as presented in its most recent (2004) version, to explain East African variation in violence is assessed. We thereby confine ourselves to the causal interpretations of their two most important variables as identified above, i.e. the resource extortion hypothesis (related to the primary commodity exports/GDP variable) and the low-cost availability of rebellion-specific capital left over from previous civil war (related to the peace duration variable).

#### *Contribution of CH's resource extortion hypothesis*

As noted above, CH's primary commodity exports/GDP variable is of major importance for predicting civil war risk.<sup>30</sup> In contrast to an earlier (1998) contribution, where they interpreted higher primary commodity exports to measure a higher taxable base of the state (which would increase rebel motivation to capture the state), more recently (2002, 2004) they argue that higher primary commodity exports indicate more opportunities for rebels to start and sustain a rebellion through primary commodity extortion. In this view, variation in civil war results not from a variation in motivations (whether economic or not) but from a variation in (financing) opportunities – in essence CH (2004) argue that rebellion happens when it is financially feasible.<sup>31</sup>

Central to their theoretical argument on the financing feasibility of rebellion is that resources are fungible and appropriable at low cost, because this allows a steady payment of costs such as payment of recruits and arms. Therefore, we take a closer look at the composition of primary commodity exports in order to assess the fit of the resource extortion hypothesis: In Uganda, exports until the end of the 1980 were entirely made up of primary commodities

<sup>29</sup> Although fit of model and fit of theory do not necessarily overlap: Sambanis (2004a:260) for example remarks that the CH model "is often right for the wrong reasons yet also wrong for the wrong reasons."

<sup>30</sup> CH find that the statistical relationship between primary commodity export dependence and civil war is non-linear, i.e. very high amounts of primary commodity exports are associated with fewer civil wars. CH interpret this inverted-u shape relationship as a sign that the government at these levels is able to tax resources more effectively. However, Tanzania and Uganda have not reached a level of primary commodity exports/GDP where the correlation becomes negative, so that this interpretation is not focused upon here. Independently, conceptual doubts are raised, e.g. by Fearon/Laitin (2001:25) who describe the CH explanation of the non-monotonic relationship as 'ad hoc'.

<sup>31</sup> Besides commodity extortion financing from the CH perspective may potentially also derive from diasporas and third governments. Both are discussed in more detail in the author's ongoing research

(Jorgensen 1981:annex A4, World Bank 2002:7, Berg-Schlosser/Siegler 1990:table 30). Following the colonial economic structure the overwhelming majority of these primary commodity exports were cash crops coffee and cotton. Cotton and coffee are high weight, low value resources income generation from which relies on specific knowledge, elaborate refinement facilities and standing distribution channels. They are clearly not useful for resource extortion and the financing a rebellion, and contrast markedly with primary commodities diamonds, cocaine or timber cited by CH as sources for rebel extortion. With regard to such materials, Uganda has been a poor country – the only mineral of note, copper from the Rwenzori region (which amounted to between 5 and 11 percent of exports during the 1960s and 70s), generating hardly appropriable income through wages and purchasing power (Hecklau 1989:504). Some precious woods as well as ivory may indeed have been used for sustaining conflicting parties, but this has either not happened on a larger scale or has not entered export statistics.<sup>32</sup>

Tanzanian exports (Berg-Schlosser/Siegler 1990:table 30, World Bank 2002:7, 17-18) in the 1960s show a similar pattern to those of Uganda, with close to a quarter of GDP being generated by exports. In 1965, 87 percent of these exports were primary commodities, with cotton, cashew nuts, cloves, tea, tobacco and sisal traditionally constituting over half of exports, but minerals also playing an important role (the share of mining in overall GDP was 4 percent and thus close to a quarter of primary commodity exports in 1960). The importance of minerals in export earnings then decreased during the 1970s and 80s, but they are once again becoming more important since the 1990s (with yearly growth rates for mineral exports between 10 and 27 percent). This relative importance of minerals in Tanzania vis-à-vis Uganda is mainly related to diamond and gold mining. In the 1950s and 60s diamond mining in particular was common in Tanzania (Tanzania Statistical Abstract 1973, cited in Hecklau 1989:401ff), and this continues to be so in the 1990s. Moreover, the prospects for gold mining in Tanzania now are estimated to be brighter than in any other Sub-Saharan country with the exception of Ghana, and feasibility studies for other metals such as nickel and cobalt are also promising (World Bank 2002:197).

Thus, although the primary commodity exports/GDP variable fits the East African context well, CH's related resource extortion hypothesis does not: Uganda at no point in time was characterized by any significant extent of easily appropriable resources, which from the CH resource extortion perspective means the country should have been a rather peaceful place, and neither did the availability of such resources change at the turning points of violence. On the other hand, in Tanzania appropriable resources such as gold and diamonds were relatively abundant (particularly in the 1960s and since the 1990s), which would lead the CH theory to predict a high risk of civil war – which we have not seen (especially since Zanzibar where most violence during the 1960s and since the 1990s occurred is not associated with these easily appropriable resources). This leads the resource extortion hypothesis to be confronted with at least two puzzles in the East African context: First, how could rebellions (such as in Zanzibar

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<sup>32</sup> E.g., according to export statistics the income from ivory exports in 1973 (the only year where figures are



1964 and Uganda during the 1980s and 1990s) be successful without appropriable resources being available for financing? And second, why did large-scale civil war *not* break out in post-independence Tanzania despite the availability of easily appropriable resources? These questions are being dealt with below in section 4.

*Contribution of CH hypothesis that previous war lowers costs of violence-specific capital*

Above we have shown that a variable measuring the duration of peace since the previous civil war has a considerable effect on CH's predictions of civil war in East Africa (as well as globally): The longer the period of peace after a previous war, the lower the risk of a renewal. CH interpret this finding as pointing to civil war building up 'violence-specific capital'<sup>33</sup> – including physical (guns etc.), human (e.g., knowledge about how to use them) and organizational (financing sources etc.) capital – decay of which leads to the reduced influence of previous war on renewed war over time (2004:569). Technically, the variable related to this theoretical hypothesis, once corrected for the doubtful coding of the 1966 Buganda crisis (compare note 8 above), does not fit Uganda, and is moreover conceptually questionable (Sambanis 2005:324). We therefore follow Sambanis' suggestion of broadening this CH hypothesis to allow for the possibility that violence-specific capital is available at low cost derived from a broader set of previous violent events (including state and smaller-scale violence).

A broadened theoretical hypothesis that violence tends to re-produce itself because it lowers the costs of further violence fits the East African variation in violence well: In Uganda, virtually all transitions of national power after the 1966 Buganda crisis were brought about by violent means. This was associated on the one hand with high government expenditure on coercion vis-à-vis on health, education or agriculture. Jorgensen (1981: table A2) shows that the share of the former as a percentage of the latter three together rose from 23 percent at independence to almost 100 percent in 1980; in other words, violence-specific capital was built up at the expense of what may be termed 'peace-specific' capital. And this does not yet take into account violence-specific capital built up without the need for financing, as through paramilitary training during the 1970s and 1980s (compare e.g. Khiddu-Makubuya 1989). On the other hand, opposition groups equally seem to have preserved their violence-specific capital in order to use it in subsequent conflicts, as shown e.g. by the Baganda's coalition with Amin in 1971 after having previously been defeated by Obote (Mamdani 1976). Both types of a build-up and preservation of violence-specific capital are also argued to have prevented the emergence of political institutions as peaceful mechanisms of conflict resolution (Mudoola 1989, 1992). A broadened CH interpretation that violence reproduces itself through accumulation of violence-specific capital at the detriment of peace-specific capital also seems to fit non-violence in Tanzania

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available) has constituted only about 0.2 percent of the total export value (Jorgensen 1981:annex A4).

<sup>33</sup> CH speak of 'conflict-specific capital', but this terminology from the perspective of the present paper is misleading because we make a distinction between conflict (which is intrinsic and maybe even necessary to society) and violence (compare note 5 above).

during the 1960s and 1970s, as the state during that time invested heavily in peace-specific developmental (e.g. health and educational) capital.

However, a puzzle for this perspective is that relatively peaceful periods were also associated with high levels of violence-specific capital. For example, although state expenditure in Tanzania from the end of the 1970s shifted towards violence-specific capital (mainly due the war with Uganda), this did not lead to a higher level of internal violence, and was decreased once again when the war was over (Zirker 1992). Another observation remaining unexplained is Uganda after 1986, as Museveni had invested strongly in violence-specific capital such as military and paramilitaries, but following the take-over of Kampala in January 1986, peace in these areas nonetheless occurred almost immediately. Moreover, throughout the following years, there was no divestiture of this capital but rather highly increasing investments in various instruments of coercion, continuing up to the present (van Acker 2003, SIPRI 2005). For example, after almost every peace agreement signed between the NRM and rebels since 1986 the size of the Ugandan military was increased as former rebel soldiers were absorbed into the government army. The puzzle is thus why despite the existence of large amounts of violence-specific capital, (relative) peace could be sustained.

### 3.4 Summary: Model fits East Africa, theory confronted with puzzles

Overall, we conclude that the CH model fits East African variation in violence relatively well. The fit of the CH 2004 main theoretical interpretations to the East African context is not as good, as the main primary commodity resource extortion hypothesis performs poorly. Fundamental theoretical puzzles thus remain: Why and how could the 1980s rebellion be sustained without primary commodity extortion? Why did Tanzania not experience civil war despite the availability of appropriable resources? And how could Nyerere and Museveni sustain (relative) peace despite a build-up of violence-specific capital? In the next section, we argue that there are additional/intervening variables not taken into account by CH which contribute to explaining these puzzles in East Africa. We present a modified theoretical framework differing from CH's theoretical interpretations in two main respects: First, it conceptualizes rebellion as motivated by the objective of state capture, which means we return to analyse motivations for or against violence (while sticking to the basic behavioural assumptions of economic cost-benefit rationales). Second, the framework overcomes CH's selective focus on rebels, arguing that the same maximization rationales (i.e. 'greed') also apply to state actors.

## 4 A modified framework for explaining East African variation in violence<sup>34</sup>

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### 4.1 Cycles of violence, and the paradox of peace

We begin by describing these puzzles in a collective action framework: From this perspective, both Tanzania and Uganda are in principle conflict-prone, because they are characterized by identity fragmentation, most importantly encompassing ethnic, but also religious and racial (Zanzibar) identities. Strong ethnic identities are seen by political economists as effective instruments for overcoming problems of collective action, because ethnic groups are characterized by life-time membership and a high level of ‘social capital’, providing better instruments of enforcement of reciprocal agreements among members (compare the literature building on Posner 1980 and Greif et al. 1994). An ethnic community’s capacity to overcome collective action problems is also likely to be higher the smaller it is, because more frequent interaction and personal relations provide better ways of observing and punishing anti-social behaviour or ‘moral hazard’ (Olson 1965). While ethnicity thus makes the within-group production of collective goods<sup>35</sup> more, at the same time it makes across-group production of collective goods less likely (Easterly/Levine 1997). Because rebellion is a collective good, smaller and ethnically homogenous rebel groups able to internalize externalities associated with collective action tend to be more successful at rebellion than larger groups and/or coalitions of different ethnic groups.<sup>36</sup>

If in addition to identity fragmentation the means of coercion are asymmetrically distributed and some groups have an information advantage over others – as with British colonial policies in Uganda leading the army to be dominated by ‘northerners’ – small groups with strong ethnic identities may be able to capture the state despite their disadvantages in size. In order to stay in power, elites of these groups rely exclusively on the coercive power provided by the support of their own group members; in order to secure allegiance, they reward these followers at the expense of a more broad-based redistribution of state benefits. Moreover, because of their relatively small size, what they can appropriate from opposition elites or the society as a whole

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<sup>34</sup> At this point, we can only outline main aspects of such a modified framework. More detail is provided in the author’s ongoing research.

<sup>35</sup> To be exact, we should speak of ‘club goods’ (Buchanan 1965), as excludability of consumption is given for those outside the club/ethnic group, but we stick to the more common term ‘public goods’.

<sup>36</sup> This logic is also underlying the CH model (2004:570). However, we see identity as a social construction instead of as primordially defined, making it highly fluid and prone to changes through e.g. elite manipulation. This poses difficulties for large-n analysis, particularly since the measure for ethnic fragmentation most widely employed in large-n studies (including CH’s), the ELF index, is conceptually and methodologically poor, seriously constraining the models’ explanatory power with regard to ethnicity (e.g. Moene 2001, Green 2004).

tends to exceed what they would earn by investing in productive activities (in economies being characterized by easily appropriable rents, the state has a still larger incentive to redistribute instead of to produce). Due to their 'narrow' and short-term instead of 'encompassing interests' (Olson 1982, 1993) in society, elites are thus likely to shift society's activities from (long-term) production to (short-term) redistribution (compare similarly also Collier 2001:140-141).

This has a number of consequences: It leads to a from the societal perspective sub-optimal allocation of states' collective goods (because they are not provided where they are most productive) and to a shift from investment to consumption (by the military); it means the majority of the population have disincentives to engage in production or trade (because what they produce is likely to be appropriated by the state); and because of principal agent problems associated with the fact that anybody with the capacity to mobilize violence gains control over the rent distribution system, state elites face a constant threat of a coup d'état from those on whom they entrust power, leading to a regularly shifting around e.g. of senior military officers (Tullock 1974:274; Amin is a good case in point, as noted by Martin 1978, Mamdani 1983). Together, these policies over time are likely to reduce state efficiency and the amount of resources available for redistribution, and/or to weaken state control over and power of the military. At the same time, the opportunity costs of violence on the part of opposition elites – being left out of the redistribution channels and harmed by the worsening economic performance of society – decrease. With the ruling elite's power to defend the state as well as opportunity costs of violence for opposition groups diminishing, incentives for opposition elites to rebel rise. But once again, because of the logic of collective action elites from small and well-organized groups without encompassing interests are successful in capturing the state, so that the same process starts anew.

Because those who have a comparative advantage in capturing the state at the same time have a comparative disadvantage in consolidating it (and vice versa), ethnically fragmented societies like Tanzania and Uganda are thus prone to frequent and violent changes in control of state power. This contributes to explaining what Sambanis has called 'cycles of violence' between state and rebels, a good example of which is Uganda prior to Museveni. A transition to relative peace such as that under the NRM, or sustainable stability as we have seen in Tanzania and, to a lesser extent, in Zanzibar after 1965, in ethnically fragmented societies in this view is unlikely: Ethnically cross-cutting elite coalitions, which because of a more encompassing interest and longer-term perspective may be able to consolidate the state, due to difficulties in overcoming collective-action problems are unlikely to be successful in capturing and defending it. Therefore, the success of broad-based movements such as NRM, TANU and the Zanzibar revolutionary government in capturing the state in East Africa – associated with relatively (Uganda, Zanzibar) and absolutely (Tanzania) low levels of violence – is a paradox to the economic theory of conflict, we call it the 'paradox of peace'.

In what follows, we present an analytical narrative arguing that an explanation of the paradox of peace in East Africa is related to the organizational structures of these movements:

Provision of jobs in all-encompassing political organizations have co-opted opposition elites and made the non-violent pursuit of interests attractive. Hierarchical organization and tight management on all societal levels have created non-violent authority and enabled the overcoming of collective action problems even across ethnic groups and without easily appropriable financing available.<sup>37</sup> These organizing principles thereby did not hinge on the movements being in control of the state, in fact they were usually implemented while still in opposition to the state (for TANU under the British, for NRM during the guerrilla war). Because collective action problems arise both in state capture and in state defence, the present analysis in contrast to CH is not in principle confined to looking either at state or at rebel violence, but aims to explain these in a common framework (due to the limited scope of the present paper, we focus on rebellion, though). In line with this, state and rebel actors' behaviour is assumed to follow fundamentally the same cost-benefit rationales vis-à-vis choice of violent or non-violent ways of pursuing their interests (although both may face different incentive structures). The present section thereby departs from the national-level perspective of CH to take into account also sub-national violence on Zanzibar and in northern Uganda.<sup>38</sup>

We argue that in order to understand violence, we need to understand what motivated elites<sup>39</sup> to choose violent instead of non-violent ways of pursuing their interests. In contrast to CH, we assume that violence is a high-risk and potentially indefinitely costly (i.e. death) activity and is therefore only likely to be pursued if its payoffs substantial exceed those of a non-violent pursuit of interests. This departs from the CH explanation of violence in terms of feasibility to focus on motivations rather than opportunities and on micro/meso (i.e. institutional or organizational) rather than the macro level. We follow CH in their assumption that elites are unlikely to openly reveal their behavioural rationales, so that we approximate their motivations for violent or non-violent pursuit of interests by looking at the payoffs they did or could have acquired based on the structures they were faced with.<sup>40</sup> Violence is likely if the ratio of expected benefits and costs from violent state capture exceeds that of a non-violent pursuit of interests. This ratio can be seen as having a numerator and denominator, so that lower levels of violence may be due to *reduced payoffs* or to *increased costs* of violent state capture. Expected payoffs and costs of potential rebels and state actors during important observations of violence and its avoidance in East Africa shall now be looked at in turn.

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<sup>37</sup> This idea builds upon the contributions of Coase (1937) and Williamson (1975) who argue, though in a different context, that institutions and hierarchies may lower the costs of coordination vis-à-vis spontaneous interaction.

<sup>38</sup> More detail on this sub-national perspective is provided in the author's ongoing research.

<sup>39</sup> We have an elite-focused perspective. This recognizes that elites must be able to mobilize followers in order to pursue their appropriation interests but we argue that follower mobilization in East Africa was in principle made possible by identity characteristics (as discussed above), justifying an elite perspective.

<sup>40</sup> We assume a 'bounded rationality' (Simon) which recognizes that behaviour is based upon perceived payoffs, and individuals are subject to incomplete information and transaction costs of information gathering. Rebellion may therefore in principle also be the result of misperceived payoffs or costs (compare also Hirshleifer 2001). In this paper, however, we assume that perceptions broadly reflect reality.

## 4.2 The payoffs from violent state capture

The payoff from violent state capture (or defence) from an economic perspective is the control over rents which are in the domain of state appropriation. ‘Rents’ are defined as income based on political decisions leading to redistribution enforced by coercion. Besides primary commodity exports, rents may also include taxes, aid money, tariffs and duties, or monopoly rents from parastatal companies.<sup>41</sup> The domain of the state vis-à-vis other appropriators or the productive sector in East Africa, which in this respects resembles typical developing countries, was thus very large. This may be important for violence because the higher the state’s worth, the larger the payoffs for rebels from capturing the state.

There are empirical as well as conceptual reasons to interpret CH’s primary commodity exports variable to measure this state worth (i.e. potential rebels’ payoff from violent state capture): First, this variable in East Africa includes mainly revenues from cash crop exports, which the state was able to appropriate on a large scale and at low costs (compare section 3.3 above, Mamdani 1983 for Amin period, Lofchie 1965 for Zanzibar prior to the revolution). Second, this variable is unlikely to measure rebels’ resource extortion because revenues from commodity appropriation (being generated by smuggling etc.) would hardly appear in the official export data this variable is based upon. Moreover, for rebel elites state capture is an alternative behavioural strategy to production, so the CH’s variable operationalization as a share of GDP can be interpreted well as capturing the *relative* payoff from state capture compared to that from production.<sup>42</sup> While Sambanis (2005:309) notes that the CH model “cannot distinguish between looting as motive and looting as a means to sustain rebellion” (i.e. an opportunity), we thus argue that the motive-interpretation in the East African context provides a better fit than the opportunity-interpretation.

While interpreting the primary commodity exports variable as state worth increases its fit to Uganda, the high levels of primary commodity exports in Tanzania still do not correspond with the absence of violence, pointing to intervening variables. In the rest of this section, it is argued that in East Africa such an intervening variable may have been the amount of rents under the control of the state which were shared with potential rebels. The underlying logic is that in societies with an underdeveloped private sector, payoffs from non-violent ways of pursuing interests are directly linked to what the state or parastatal companies offer in redistribution policies (Azam 1995): The more state actors share, the less worth the state becomes and thus the worse the cost-benefit ratio of violent state capture (because transfers are provided to rebels without their having to invest in violence). Such rent sharing with potential rebels can take many forms; as argued below, particularly important in the East African context was rent-sharing through provision of party or government jobs which secured influence over

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<sup>41</sup> Because the state is often in the position to make decisions about divestments of a society’s assets, such as privatisation of publicly owned companies or sale of the rights to natural resources, it may effectively appropriate not only a society’s present but also parts of its future revenue potential.

appropriation decisions (compare Azam 2001 for a conceptualization of government jobs as resource transfers).<sup>43</sup>

Turning to payoffs from state capture in East Africa, governments in the region indeed differed extremely in the extent to which rents or jobs were allocated between the state and potential rebels. In line with our expectations, observations of violence were characterized by low levels of sharing: Export income and top government jobs until the Zanzibar revolution remained largely within the tiny Arab minority owning the large clove and coconut plantations (Lofchie 1965:220), influencing cost-benefit rationales among the African elite in favour of rebellion.<sup>44</sup> In Uganda, the first observation of large-scale violence, the 1966/67 Buganda crisis was closely related to competition between the Obote central government and the Buganda king over rent distribution, it was about “who would control the economic surplus in Buganda” (Mamdani 1976:245). The Baganda reluctance to increase the central government’s share of the rents they had acquired following preferential treatment by the British throughout colonial times was at the heart of the Obote violence.<sup>45</sup> And during the 1970s, substantial government revenue increases from the rise in world prices for coffee in the mid 1970s (Jorgensen 1981:annex A4) were fully absorbed by the Amin regime to be selectively distributed among pro-Amin factions within the military (Hansen 1977, Mamdani 1983).

With regard to the 1980s civil war, the context was slightly different, as in December 1980 there had been elections which at least partly took over the state role of allocating top jobs in parliament. Given the difficulties of carrying them out in the midst of military struggles and chaos after 10 years of violence, these elections seem to have been conducted relatively well (Commonwealth Observer Group 1980, Sathyamurthy 1986). Obote’s UPC won 72 and the opposition Democratic Party 51 seats in parliament, while Museveni’s party (having been formed only 6 months earlier) won only 1 seat. It has been argued that Museveni’s claim that the elections were rigged which he used as a pretext to start rebellion “seems to be based on

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<sup>42</sup> As already noted above, the proposition of this variable to measure the state’s worth was even advanced by CH themselves prior to their appropriable financing interpretation, in an earlier paper (CH 1998) arguing that the primary commodity exports variable measures the ‘state’s taxable base’.

<sup>43</sup> CH’s most recent contribution (2004:567) recognizes a similar argument, i.e. that “potentially, any increase in conflict risk may be due to rebel responses to such poor governance [referring to the state’s poor public service provision, corruption and economic mismanagement] rather than to financial opportunities.” CH however reject this alternative interpretation of their primary commodity exports variable on the grounds that they find no effect of political rights and economic performance on civil war, and because of “plenty of case study evidence supporting the extortion interpretation” (2004:588). CH’s rejection of the governance interpretation is however questioned based on findings from case studies conducted under the umbrella of the World Bank suggesting that state responses to opposition claims on natural resources indeed play an important role for rebellion (Sambanis 2005:308-310).

<sup>44</sup> Today, the Zanzibar government’s rent generation by forcing parts of its population (mainly on Pemba island) to sell agricultural products at below-market prices to so-called ‘Marketing Boards’ similarly may be interpreted to have contributed to the violent tensions between CUF, with their stronghold in Pemba, and CCM, with their stronghold in Unguja.

<sup>45</sup> What should be interpreted mainly as a case of state violence (compare note 8 above) thus equally fits the economic perspective advanced here: The status of Buganda within Uganda was unique in that following colonial economic policies it was far wealthier than the central government but militarily weak (e.g. Omara-Otunnu 1987, Lwanga-Lunyiigo 1989), providing a strong incentive for Obote to let the conflict escalate to a point where he could justify the use of violence.

Museveni's personal disappointment at not being elected himself" (Omara-Otunnu 1987:155). He at the time had been vice-chairman of the military commission supervising the elections (and was thus in a key position to ensure the elections were not rigged) and lost his constituency to a DP candidate. Democracy in this case may thus be 'blamed' for reducing Museveni's payoffs from non-violent pursuit of interests by becoming a parliamentarian, altering his cost-benefit rationales in favour of violence which he started less than 3 months later. The Obote II regime was also heavily criticized by other sections of the Ugandan elite for a biased spending of rents it had generated through commodity exports and particularly international aid inflows. Although in part related to misperceptions and politically motivated allegations of the 'southern' elite unhappy to be governed once again by a 'northerner' (Gingyera-Pinyewa 1989), this also seems to have contributed to the large number of rebel groups active in the first half of the 1980s.

When the NRM assumed power in 1986, peace returned to large parts of the country, but large-scale violence continued mainly in northern Uganda. This sub-national variation in violence can also partly be explained with poorly-designed rent-sharing arrangements, as the north failed to receive government funds due to a mixture of the war situation, historically derived prejudices/misperceptions but also unwillingness, corruption and incapacity on the side of both the government and rebels (van Acker 2003:42-43; Lomo/Hovil 2004).<sup>46</sup> When the main peace accord – stipulating that rebel leaders would “begin receiving ration cash allowances from the NRA immediately” (Lamwaka 1998:154) – was signed with the majority of rebels in 1988, the LRA did not become part of it because it apparently was underestimated by the Ugandan army and government (author interview with local council chairman of Gulu district on 29 October 2004). And subsequent peace accords with the LRA failed also because the government apparently did not signal a credible commitment to secure non-violent payoffs (Lamwaka 1998). This government failure to co-opt rebel elites by offering them rewards for non-violent pursuit of interests from this perspective contributed to the continuation of violence in northern Uganda.

In contrast, on the national level the NRM regime after 1986 introduced a number of rent sharing policies such as a regionally based quota system for the national budget, the inclusion of ethnically and regionally diverse elites in the cabinet and a by African standards far-reaching decentralization policy. It is argued that its decision to build a 'government of national unity' was motivated mainly by the limited territorial control of the NRM during its early years in power so that “peace could best be achieved by incorporating the contenders for power in government.” (Regan 1998:162) The NRM's offer to a broad range of ambitious opposition elites to receive high payoffs from pursuing their interests non-violently thus seems to have contributed to peace in virtually all parts of the country until about 1993. Looking at Uganda's history, a particular danger to political stability was the military's turning into a political actor, so that rent-sharing with military officers was particularly important. This has been pursued by

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<sup>46</sup> The implementation of the movement system in the North was slow, government funds leaving Kampala have often not arrived (or at least perceived not to have arrived) in the region due to corruption, and elites – in any case perceived to be underrepresented in the national government – have largely joined the opposition (Muhereza/Otim 1998, Lomo/Hovil 2004).



the Museveni regime through the allocation of relatively high shares of government expenditure on the military (SIPRI 2005) and through offering the military (limited) political influence. In addition, it may be speculated that the Ugandan military's pursuit of violent rent maximization strategies *outside* the Ugandan territory, as suggested by the Ugandan military's infamous role in the Democratic Republic of Congo (United Nations Security Council 2002), has also offered profitable alternatives to violent pursuit of interests inside the country.

However, as the control of NRM over the country increased, by the time the new constitution was implemented in 1995 some of these rent-sharing policies were turned back and the 'broad base' increasingly became narrower (compare e.g. Okuku 2002:25). During the last 10 years, the NRM's capacity and/or willingness to co-opt opposition elites through broad-based rent-sharing seems to have decreased strongly, as indicated by the breaking apart of the former government coalition (i.e. tensions between Buganda and south-western elites, as well as among elites from the south-west) over issues of rent-sharing: The Baganda as well as parts of Museveni's fellow Banyankole are blaming Museveni for favouring only members of his own Hima sub-section of Ankole in the allocation of top government and parastatal positions as well as in the legal and illegal payoffs from privatization deals (as noted by opposition parliamentarians during October 2004 interviews with the author; compare also Tangri/Mwenda 2001 for an account of corruption during the 1990s privatization programmes). And the most serious challenger to Museveni in the 2001 and 2006 presidential elections was his former personal doctor who was also born in western Uganda.

Turning to the Tanzanian government's rent-sharing policies, under Nyerere these were also focused upon a co-optation of all potential and actual dissent into TANU (Mmuya 2000). This co-optation was cutting across identity lines and had started already before independence: Omari (1995:26) for example notes that "after TANU was constituted in 1954, the key figures from various ethnic groups were recruited into the party." This similarly occurred with elites from other potential conflict groups, such as cooperatives or trade-unions (Hofmeier 1997, Hirschler 2000). Particularly successful was this strategy with regard to the military, whose top ranks at the time where it was most powerful (i.e. since the late 1970s and the war with Uganda) were appointed to civilian offices on a large scale, which according to Swai (1991) helped eliminate the need for coups by the politically ambitious sections of the military. Noteworthy in this respect is Zirker's quote that "in the eyes of senior officers, at least, civilian single-party government in Tanzania may well be seen as the best possible bargaining agent for their individual interests." (1992: 115, cited in Hirschler 2000)

It must be stressed that this co-optation strategy differs from the ideals often associated with Nyerere's policies. It focuses on altering cost-benefit rationales specifically of those who pose a threat to the regime (i.e. elites from strong identity or well organized interest groups) in favour of non-violence with the objective to secure the regime in power, rather than to provide truly collective goods such as justice, equality or democracy (although one does not exclude the other). Consequently it does not require or lead to a consensus among broader society: "One can

justifiably claim that stability hinged on a combination of authority and co-optation which depended upon on a clever development of institutions of integration under the authority of a one party regime and not through a practice of consensus that arises out of citizens' will" (Mmuya 2000:76, 1979).

This fits the observation of a strongly increasing number of state elites: Pratt (1976:226) for example notes that during the years 1961 to 1966 thousands of Africans had moved into the more highly paid positions within the government, and that main beneficiaries of the strongly inequalities within the social system were the bureaucracy and the leadership within the party, so that "the class stratification which had largely been along racial lines in 1960 was thus an African phenomenon by 1966." According to Shivji (1976), this trend continued also beyond the Arusha declaration. The TANU regime seems to have understood the logic underlying the present paper, replacing a 'horizontal' (Stewart), i.e. racial or ethnic inequality which could have been dangerous to its regime due to ease of mobilization along identity lines, with a vertical inequality, which was less dangerous because of the difficulties of mobilizing along income or class lines.

The avoidance of violence in Tanzania, similarly to NRM Uganda, from this perspective was at least partly an outcome of effective co-optation of potential rebels from opposition elites most dangerous to the state by providing them with top jobs in the party organization. This strategy by state actors reveals similar maximizing behavioural rationales as those assumed for rebels, the difference being that Nyerere's and (to a lesser extent) Museveni's success in building encompassing and disciplined organizations led to an encompassing interest in society, which extended their time horizons and increased the regime's incentives to invest instead of to redistribute.

### 4.3 The costs of violent state capture

Besides the payoffs from violent state capture, potential rebels' cost-benefit rationales are also influenced by the costs they incur through violence. Costs of violence are likely to be determined most of all by state authority, e.g. through the capacity of the state to militarily defend itself against an armed rebel attack: The more powerful the state, the more followers rebels must recruit and pay and the more arms they need to have a chance of state capture. Therefore, opportunity costs, measured by CH through GDP/capita, as well as availability of violence-specific capital indeed influence the cost side of violence, but are only secondary to the state's military strength.<sup>47</sup> CH measure state strength by the geographic dispersion of the population index, which may indicate opportunities for rebels to hide from the state, but is a rather poor measure for their capacity to capture it (besides the variable's lack of variation over time). The size of state military and paramilitary personnel for example is conceptually superior, and should be relatively widely available.

In the post-independence East African context, we find that rebel violence was indeed directed at militarily weak states. This is most obvious in the case of the Zanzibar revolution of 1964: As noted by Lofchie (1965), Zanzibar at the time had no army, and the only significant resistance to be overcome by rebels was the police force, which was weak and demoralized. Okello, the leader of the revolutionary army, launched a surprise attack to capture the only two armouries available to the police which were both situated close to each other in Zanzibar town, and this deprived the government of virtually its entire capacity to resist or to retaliate, leading Lofchie to note that “the revolution was, for all practical purposes, completed within an hour or two.” (1965:275) In case of the Buganda crisis of 1966, a clear military advantage of Obote’s army during his attack on the Buganda king’s palace is also apparent: Following colonial policies, Obote’s central government could rely on a strong army (led by Amin), while the Baganda did not have an army of their own and the Baganda king’s personal guard consisted of only 120 men (Kasozi 1994:85). And when Amin launched his coup roughly five years later, he was in control of large parts of the army, making it relatively easy for him to overthrow Obote who was abroad at the time.

At the beginning of the 1980s the Ugandan government army was weak, both quantitatively and qualitatively: As Omara-Otunnu (1987:158-9) notes that the liberation war had been fought by only a small Ugandan exile force (totalling 2,000 men, some of them had never received military training). Following Amin’s defeat, the army had to be built anew, which however was not tackled by the Lule and Binasisa administrations. Security was thus guaranteed mainly by the 40,000 Tanzanian troops which had left by June 1981. Obote’s heavy investments in the army (23 percent of government expenditure in 1981/82) also point to his military weakness. Maybe more importantly, the Ugandan army was in fact a collection of separate armies whose leaders (mainly Museveni and Ojok) had antagonistic interests and were fighting behind the scenes over its control already prior to the December 1980 elections. Museveni’s decision to start rebellion significantly weakened the government army, of which he was at the time still a commander (Okoth 1994:14). The rebellion itself thus altered the state-rebel power ratio.

If we compare this with the observations of (relative) peace, we also find support for the state authority hypothesis, although with some further differentiations. The NRM after 1986, in addition to its rent-sharing policy in the ‘government of national unity’, consistently worked towards building up its military power. The main strategy to achieve that was to provide amnesties and integrate forces of those rebels which were defeated and/or with which peace agreements had been signed (Museveni 1997:174, Gershony 1997, Lamwaka 1998). While this multiplied army size and thus violence-specific capital, parallel measures to tightly discipline the army (which had turned into chaos during the Obote II period) and subjugate it under civilian

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<sup>47</sup> What is not recognized by CH is that opportunity costs of violence are also influenced by rent-sharing of the state, as discussed previously. Rent sharing can thus be interpreted both as increasing opportunity costs and as decreasing (relative) payoffs from violence.

control were also taken (e.g. van Acker 2003). This ensured that the military truly was a measure of state military authority, at least within most parts of Uganda – the exception being areas mainly in northern Uganda which were controlled by the LRA or other insurgent groups.

However, authority increasing the costs of violence for the opponent is not only the result of military strength, it may also be achieved by more indirect means of control, which brings us back to the NRM's organizational capacities: Museveni's forces at the time he had started the rebellion were relatively small and confined to a small section of the Ugandan population, not providing him with a clear military advantage vis-à-vis government forces. This necessity to plan for a long civil war seems to have played a role in his focus upon the politicization and armament of the population tightly organized by the NRM all the way down to the grass-roots level (Kasozi 1994:165), which seems to have substituted for the lack of easily appropriable financing and ethnic capital available.<sup>48</sup> Upon taking Kampala, this tight organization and control was continued and expanded nationally with the 'movement' political system. The resulting overlap of state, (no-)party and (para-)military structures led the NRM to become firmly rooted in society and thereby consolidate its authority. Only recently has this become more obvious, leading to harsh critique of the movement as an instrument for Museveni to hold on to power by both opposition parties as well as international observers (e.g. Hofer 2002, Mugisha 2004).

Turning to Tanzania, the country's one-party system dominated by TANU/CCM was at least in part a role model for the NRM no-party system (resemblance is far from casual, as Museveni had become familiar with CCM during his exile in Tanzania). The authority of TANU/CCM in Tanzania was also the result of a mix of military capacity and organizational control. Initially, the Tanzanian military continued to be a colonial army, but this changed dramatically after the mutiny of 1964. The mutiny had been a serious danger for the Nyerere regime and may have overthrown it had it not been for the help of the British (Luanda 1993). Following this experience, the TANU regime built a new, highly politicized and tightly controlled army as well as, partly as a balancing force to the army, the paramilitary National Service and People's Militia (compare Hirschler 2000:section 4.3), subsequently gaining substantial military strength (shown by the 40,000 strong force it deployed to Uganda at the end of the 1970s).

Equally important for the prevention of large-scale violence in post-independence Tanzania seems to have been TANU's disciplined organization and tight grip over the societal elite and population. Besides its rent-sharing dimension described above, the single party was also highly effective as an instrument of state authority and control, being compared to "a lion from whose power one cannot escape." (Kimbu, cited in Iliffe 1979:571) Although often

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<sup>48</sup> The local population may for example provide logistical support such as hideouts or food and shelter, as well as information on opponents. Due to its paramilitary character it may in some cases also complement military power. Fearon/Laitin (2003) similarly argue that civil war is made more likely if rebels possess superior knowledge of local population compared to the government's.

forgotten in the contributions hailing Nyerere's socialist ideals, various scholars have emphasized this authoritarian side of TANU, by which the opposition was given the choices of either co-optation or disallowance (e.g. Iliffe 1979, Kwekwa 1995, Hirschler 2000, Mmuya 2000). Virtually all mass organizations with the potential for autonomous political power such as cooperatives or trade unions were either affiliated with or incorporated into TANU, often against their will (Hofmeier 1997). This was supported by authoritarian legal codes from before independence, which often remained in place or were replaced by similar acts, such as the 1962 Preventive Detention Act, which was widely used (Coulson 1981:220-221). Coulson (1981:329) concludes that Tanzania's leadership was 'authoritarian', Nyerere a 'shrewd tactician' and that "this [authoritarian] view of the state illuminates much which otherwise appears contradictory in Tanzania."

Finally, we turn to Zanzibar: As noted above, although the revolutionary government of Zanzibar's track record of peace and stability is hardly comparable with that of TANU, its achievements *relative* to what could have been expected in the mid 1960s appear in a more positive light, and were improving over time (compare section 2.2 above). It may be argued that this relative absence of large-scale (if not small-scale) violence on Zanzibar is also compatible with the present argument; this is mainly because we find a number of characteristics of the TANU and (early) NRM regimes also in the organization of the rebellion and later the revolutionary government on Zanzibar: A central role in the revolution was taken by the Umma party whose split from the ruling and Arab-dominated Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP) about 6 months prior to the revolution (similar to Uganda during the beginning of the 1980s) had substantially weakened the government. Its significance lay in providing a centre through which a unified (and racially cross-cutting) political movement of the myriad groups opposed to the ZNP was built. It was highly disciplined and tightly managed, by the end of 1963 having developed into a fully organized shadow government (Lofchie 1965:260-262).

After the revolution, the previously separate Umma and ASP (backed by the African majority of the population and mass organizations) merged and both parties' leaders became equal partners in the new revolutionary council, which introduced also a strong rent-sharing dimension. Lofchie (1965:277) concludes that "the most striking feature of Zanzibar's revolutionary government was the rapid consolidation of the diverse opposition groups and the formation of a highly unified regime." While the military hardliners including president Karume dominated the government during the first decade of this government, his departure in 1972 and the ASP merger with mainland TANU to form CCM in 1977 further seems to have strengthened the party organization and with it non-violent control over society, contributing to more stability and peace on the islands.

The Zanzibar revolution is interesting also for another reason. Above, we have pointed to the difficulties of groups with an encompassing interest in society to overcome collective action problems and capture the state capture. So far, we have argued that in East Africa, tight organizational structures involving both rent-sharing and authority were able to overcome

collective action problems and thus allow state capture/defense by an encompassing coalition of identity groups. In Zanzibar, however, the situation was special in that the actual revolution (i.e. violent take-over of the strategically important armouries) was not conducted directly by Umma or ASP but rather by an autonomous military force independent of both third government financing and the existing opposition (Lofchie 1965:274ff): The revolution was the 'personal creation' (Lofchie) of the Ugandan John Okello, a highly militant African nationalist who had recruited a small force of less than a few hundred poorly-armed followers (largely policemen unhappy with the government and militant youths of his former party ASP).

The Zanzibar revolution thus provides some support for the economic perspective of conflict presented here. On the one hand, it adds to our argument that large and encompassing coalitions of identity groups (such as an Umma-ASP coalition would have been) have comparative disadvantages in rebellion vis-à-vis small and well organized forces.<sup>49</sup> On the other hand, it rejects CH's view that appropriable financing is necessary to overcome collective action problems, while supporting the economic-motivation logic of state capture advanced here: Okello did not extort primary commodities and was not financed from abroad but used a surprise attack to capture a state which was at that time the world largest exporter of cloves. Moreover, based on our argument above that those who are most successful in capturing the state may not be most successful in defending it, we expect that Okello, while able to mobilize for the revolution and launch a surprise attack, would not be able to sustain this state capture for long on his own. Therefore, his appointment of a revolutionary council distributing top government positions on relatively equal terms to both ASP and Umma (Lofchie 1965:277) almost immediately after the revolution came at no surprise. From the economic perspective of violent conflict advanced here, it can be concluded that the Zanzibar revolution was successful because it brought together a small group of people with a comparative advantage in mobilization for state capture with an encompassing opposition organization able to consolidate the state.

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<sup>49</sup> While Umma with its tight discipline may at a later stage also have been in the position to launch a revolution, at the time of revolution (having been founded only 6 months prior) it was not ready for that.

## 5 Conclusion

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To conclude, we have argued in this paper that a theoretical framework based upon cost-benefit rationales for and against violence may contribute to explaining cycles of violence in Uganda from the 1960s to the 1980s, showing why those groups with comparative advantages in capturing the state may have comparative disadvantages in consolidating it (and vice versa): Small ethnic groups having inherited military power from colonial times managed to capture the state in East Africa, but once they had captured it their selective and short term interests led to a weakening of the regime and subsequent overthrow by other ethnic groups with selective interests, thus starting the same process anew. This framework builds upon the economic theory of conflict (Grossmann 1991, Azam 1995), but diverges from CH's (2004) theoretical propositions which focus on opportunities (or financing availability) for violence at the expense of motivations. In contrast to CH's global hypotheses, we interpret the results of an application of the CH model to Tanzania and Uganda to point to an important role of the state in East African violence and its avoidance: We argue that the primary commodity exports variable in the East African context must be interpreted as the state's worth (thus measuring rebel motivation for state capture), and that state violence has made subsequent civil war more likely due to its build-up of violence-specific capital.

This framework is however confronted with what we have termed the 'paradox of peace', i.e. the puzzle why sustained periods/regions in East Africa were characterized by relative (NRM, Zanzibar) and even absolute (Tanzania) peace. It was argued that this paradox can be explained by the possibility and attractiveness for elites to co-opt opponents with the capacity to mobilize violence through a mixture of rent-sharing and non-violent authority. Broad-based, hierarchical and tightly managed organizational structures firmly rooted on all levels of society thereby ensured that collective action problems of state capture and defence could be overcome – even despite a lack of appropriable financing. As an alternative to overcoming collective action problems of state capture through effective organization, the revolution on Zanzibar pointed to 'outsourcing', so to speak, of the actual state capture to a well organized autonomous military force. The broad-based redistribution system and relatively encompassing interest of the resulting no-party (NRM) or single-party (Tanzania, Zanzibar) regimes then explain why they could consolidate the state once in power.

This may have implications for the way we see both the past as well as prospects for the future. With regard to the past, the NRM's and TANU's mixture of authority and participation/rent-sharing, sometimes described as puzzling (e.g. Kannyo 2004 for the NRM), comes at no surprise: From the perspective of this paper, the emergence of authoritarian single- or no-party structures characterized by clientelistic redistribution and limited participation in the

East African context was an effective policy to secure state power. The avoidance of violence in some regions/during some periods of East African post-independence history in this view is primarily a ‘side-effect’ of successful elite strategies to maximize their interests: Where state elites were successful in building a broad-based, firmly rooted and tightly disciplined political organization, this created incentives for all participants to pursue long-term non-violent appropriation strategies; but where elites were unwilling or unsuccessful in building such organizations, cost-benefit rationales were altered towards short-term redistribution and violence. The government of Uganda’s lack of providing the LRA leadership at an early stage with a credible perspective for non-violent pursuit of interests in combination with a failure of the movement system to become firmly entrenched in northern Uganda from this perspective were main reasons why violence continued in the north.<sup>50</sup>

This does not reject the view that truly collective goods<sup>51</sup> such as equality, democracy and participation – often discussed in contributions on Tanzania under the heading ‘African socialism’ – may have been pursued by Julius Nyerere. But it implies that provision of such truly collective goods (in so far as it was successful) was not the reason for Tanzania’s extraordinary extent of political stability. In other words, while universal participation and equality are certainly be desirable in their own right, from the perspective of this paper they were not responsible for the absence of large-scale violence in Tanzania. Indeed, collective goods provision even can be detrimental, as it limits the scope for rent redistribution and, as the case of Museveni (starting a rebellion after losing the election) suggests, democracy may lead to an under-provision of rents to those with the capacity to mobilize violence. Outstanding among ‘the contribution of Nyerere’ (the title of a 1995 book) from this perspective was his finding of the right balance between implementation of his ideals and a pragmatic response to the pressures arising from the logic of collective action in order to safeguard peace.<sup>52</sup>

So does the past tell us anything about the future? An answer to this question can only be hinted at here: Both Uganda and Tanzania in recent years have passed through a period of rapid transformation, associated mainly with structural adjustment programmes and multi-party politics. At the same time, violent tensions are on the rise again, particularly in Uganda and (to an absolutely small but relatively to before large extent) on Zanzibar. Following our argument in this paper, a trend towards more violence in East Africa points to the loss of the state’s non-violent authority and/or its failure to co-opt opposition elites through rent-sharing policies. The situation on Zanzibar in this regard may give some reason for hope since the signing of what could be described as rent-sharing agreements (‘Muafaka’ I and II) and the relatively peaceful 2005 elections, which the opposition actively participated in. However, non-violent control of the Zanzibar government may further deteriorate, increasing the propensity of state actors to

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<sup>50</sup> After the many peace talk failures and large-scale LRA violence in the past, this option may now not be available any more, potentially leaving room only for military solution.

<sup>51</sup> That is, to be exact, goods with positive externalities for society as a whole.

<sup>52</sup> Another of his ideals, the forging of a Tanzanian nation, may indeed have contributed to preventing the logic of repeat violence cited above. But since the 1980s this trend towards stronger national identity is being reversed, with sub-national ethnic and religious identities being politicized on an increasing scale.



employ violence to secure their authority. Whether this also leads to rebel violence depends mainly on their scope for mobilization of violence. If the conflict on Zanzibar is less about identities<sup>53</sup> than about parties (CUF versus CCM) and their leaders or about regional political-economic interests (Pemba versus Unguja, Zanzibar versus mainland Tanzania), then this may impede large-scale mobilization while facilitating a rent-sharing solution. From this perspective, prospects for a continuation of relative peace (but continued state repression) on Zanzibar may be seen as relatively good. In Uganda, however, the Museveni regime apparently tries to compensate its loss of non-violent authority and break-up of the redistribution-based coalition with Buganda by an increased threat and employment of its means of coercion. With this trend towards less encompassing redistribution/non-violent control and more reliance on the military continuing, we may not only see a further economic deterioration in Uganda, but potentially also, in some not-too-distant future, more violence on a national level.

Based on the present analysis, we would not expect democracy (as a truly collective good) to arise from the paternalistic and authoritarian structures in place in East Africa. However, it must be noted that economic theory is to some extent puzzled by the emergence of democracy out of autocracy (Olson 1993:573). What can be said is that the imposition of democracy under pressure from abroad under these circumstances is likely to be sabotaged by state elites, resulting in unfree, at least in unfair elections (as described e.g. by TEMCO 1995, 2000). Whether such *de jure* democracy leads to more or less violence in our view depends on whether the redistributive structures resulting from it are superior to those previously in place in allocating rents to elites with the capacity to mobilize violence. That this is indeed the case may be indicated by the continued participation of opposition elites in elections (such as Kizza Besigye's, who was allegedly involved in founding a new rebel group prior to running against Museveni in this year's Uganda presidential elections), signalling that payoffs from non-violent pursuit of interests are still attractive.

The wild card is thereby held by the donor community which finances around 50 percent of the state budget (and most opposition groups) in Tanzania and Uganda. Aid inflows not only have been responsible in part for the economic 'success story' of the 1990s (particularly in Uganda), in some cases they directly finance the re-distributional arrangements in place. As an example, the strong tendency of the Ugandan government to create new districts and with it also new budgets and top government jobs could be seen as an effective instrument to co-opt elites at the expense of donors, who largely bear the resulting increase in government expenditure. Donors thus have substantial leverage over cost-benefit ratios towards violence and non-violence of all involved actors. It may even be argued that donor fund inflows have kept the increasingly re-distributional political-economic systems from collapsing, which entails the risk that should inflows, which so far keep up payoffs from non-violent pursuit of interests, fall substantially – as may be the case if the former 'donor darling' Museveni ceases to be in donors' good graces – behavioural rationales may once again turn towards violence.

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<sup>53</sup> Religious identities are relatively difficult to mobilize on Zanzibar (99% of the population are Muslim), as are

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racial/ethnic identities (large share of mixed population).

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