



How is Muslim Tension with Government Ominous?

National Unity and Cohesion

Abstract

Since independence, Tanzania has physically witnessed of being a calm Nation. The Physical calm it's proud of today is partial and unrealistic. The main characters of political sphere today resulted from the long transformation planned and practiced by National founders. The founders of nation theoretically reorganized the danger of religious disagreement. There was theoretically well-built accentuate of like admittance to education to all children in Tanzania and equal opportunities in employment matters, while in practical life no equality in education and in employment existed. The haze idea was to promote national unity, cohesions, and social harmony.

All theories, programs, Policies, and strategies adopted to enhance national unity, cohesions, and social harmony were ironically successful, while in practical failed to internalize some sections of the population like Muslims. Global changes in social and political affairs have exposed critical problems existing in Tanzania. There are voices of dissatisfaction, blames and hatred from the Muslim to the Government. This paper is, therefore, an attempt to show where the problem lies and what to be done.

Key words: Religion tension, National Unity, and Cohesion

1.1 Tanzania Overview

The United Republic of Tanzania is a unified Republic formed by the Union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar in 1964. Tanzania has a total land area of 945,00 km² of which 881,000 km² is a Land ,of the Mainland and 2000 km for Zanzibar,62,000km inland Water and 3350 km of forest (URT, ibid). According to NBS (2013), Tanzania had a population of 44.9million people, 43.6million people are on Mainland and 1.3million people in Zanzibar.

In Tanzania, religion is a part and parcel of the people`s life. It`s used as a stimulus toward bringing people of different background into one unified community. The spiritual groups in Tanzania comprises of; Muslims, Christian, and traditional African Religions. The first census was 1957 and the Muslims surpassed Christians at a ratio of three to two. After the first decade in 1967, the second census was held Muslims were 30%, Christians 32% and traditionalist 37%.None of the reason was put forward to this sharp decline of Muslims numbers. It has been noted from the 1967 census Muslim were many compare to Christians numerically (Said, 2000).

Currently is no religion statistics from census, since religion items had eliminated census after 1967 (Tripp,1999).Tanzanian Government claims to be a secular state, while citizens had their religion and live in peace with each other and no tensions between Muslims and Christian. The tension is between Government and Muslim in which Muslims complain over government neglects and marginalized Muslims in favor of Christians.

1.2 Tanzania National Unity

National Unit is a situation of which all citizens feel the sense of belonging to a certain territory. Basing on this definition, sense of National Unit, can further is explained more in different context and realities. The National Unit should entail, treating people in the way that sense of nationality and belongingness come in, hence proper national unit is attained.

The founder of Tanzania theoretically advocated national Unit. Mwalimu Nyerere believed that the only unit can strengthen and tackle challenges of life (Chacha,2003). The broad view of the founder was to cherish and perpetuate norms and values for national identity and rejection of political violence (Kessler,2006).To transform the sense of national Unit, various ideologies and terms were formulated in Tanzania such as; *Comrade, Family-hood, and child of the Land*. So through this idea, each member of society realized the role in supporting the national-family (Kessler,2006).

The educational syllabi were made to focus on the national unity. According to Mejenberg (1966), family-hood year's good citizens were people who loved their country and willing to sacrifice for it. To cement the idea of National Unit Kiswahili was made a national language instead of Tribal languages which were so many. National Unity without Kiswahili could be possible? (Chaha,2003). Physically, all sorts of discriminations and segregation were discouraged.

Also, high learning Institutions was discouraged to research on tribes and religious matters. These were physical enforcement of unit in Tanzania. Civil servants were posted outside their home place and moved often to avoid support appearance (Tripp, 1999).Further, more physical steps to enhance national unity was the introduction of educational quota systems to advocate equal access to education. All these mechanisms were physically successful while internally failing to accommodate all sections of people in this Country. Nationalization of all schools which were under religion institutions was physically successful but in realities, nothing was achieved in term of enrollment and administrations. Again the running of nationalized schools in terms of enrolments and administration w purely Christian oriented and not as government schools.

These factors contributed Tanzania to enclose physical peace. However, the Muslims marginalization in various aspects raises the tension over the government on to why Muslim marginalized with all good policy and program to enhance equality in this country. The following sections trace the origin of Muslim-government tensions.

1.3 Muslim before colonialism

The evidence of the presence Muslims in East Africa was noted by the found of a mosque in Shanga on Pate Island. The presence of the oldest building that of Mosque at Kizimkazi in southern Zanzibar which dated AD 1007, provide another evidence of the earliest presence of Islam in the Coast of East Africa. It has been noted that Islam was dominant along the Indian Ocean area by the 14th century (Said, 2000). The visit of Ibn Batuta Back in 1332, he felt home because of Islam. The coastal population until today mostly is Muslims all along the coastal of East Africa. The Muslim controlled the trade and established settlement in South East Asia and East Africa (Said, 2000).

The Islam reaches through trade and not through conquest in the Coastal areas of East Africa. This spread was contrary to the spread of Islam in West Africa, but there is character in common, the spread of Islam was mainly found in urban and rural areas. The Islam ruling was shocked by the intrusion of Portuguese in 16th century, while Islam dominance and people of the coast had strong link with families in the Arab world (Arabia, Persia, India and South East Asia). The Monsoon wind trade played a very significance role for the growth of this trade relationship. The Portuguese were kicked out of the areas at the end of 17th and beginning of 18th century. The Coastal people were supported by Oman sultanate. The Arabs continued to influence coastal people until the time when the European conquered the Coastal areas and controlled trade. The coming of Portuguese destabilizes the coastal areas and several battles took place. In the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th centuries, the coastal Moslems managed to oust the Portuguese with the help of Omani Arabs (Said, 2000). These Arabs gradually increased their political influence until the end of the 19th century when European conquerors arrived at the coast of East Africa.

It has been noted that spread of Islam to the interior of East Africa was intensified during the Omanis dominance. It was through trade contact which opened up the interior of East Africa. The first outlined areas of interior exposed were; Tabora, Ujiji and Kigoma. Many chiefs, even in parts of Uganda, converted to Islam and cooperated with the coastal Moslems. Trade served to reach not only Islam but also the language and culture we call Swahili. Before the establishment of German East Africa in the 1880's the influence of the Swahilis or coastal people was mainly limited to the areas along the caravan routes and around their destinations.

1.4 Islam during German Rule

The Islam reached the interior of Tanganyika during the German rule. The German were hired Swahili servants to accompany the German toward the interior. The hired subordinate administrators, akida, Moslem soldiers were important to why Islam spread to interior earlier than Kenya and Uganda. The hired Swahili people were used to teach to establish German School along the coastal areas.

Despite the Moslem cooperated with German, there were other large group which was against the relation. The group of poor section in rural population was attracted to oppose the German administration. The Sufi, Qadiriyya and Shadhiliyya were activists and opposed the German rule in Tanganyika and all were Muslims. The Sufi played a significant role in the Majimaji war (1905-07) against German. The African ideas of Kinjikitile, the leader of the uprising, were influenced to an extent knotted with Sufi ideas. Despite the knowledge of Sufi expansion in German East Africa is limited, the fact remains that Sufi influence was an important factor in the expansion of Islam (Said, 2000).

1.5 Muslim during the British Colonialist

During the British rule in Tanganyika, growth of Islam decline a bit. The British used indirect rule of which local chiefs were used rather than Muslim from the coast. Its the time when missionaries activities increased, establishment of Christian school and promoted the employment of Christian and Muslim were marginalized. In 1950`s regular preaches come from Pakistan were visiting East and Southern Africa to promote renew and revive political conscious among Muslims. At the end the formation of Tanganyika National Union (TANU), was mostly founded by Coastal Muslims. The activist and strategic movement of TANU were stimulated by Coastal Muslims. The Christians position was mixed; the churches leaders opposed the movement while the common people were supporting the movement.

1.6 Muslims-Government Tensions

Although some scholars like, Helman & Kaizer (2002), Mbogoni (2005), Mesaki (2011), Tambila (2006), argue that Tanzania had religion tension (Muslims vs Christians) resulting from the birth of religious fundamentalist in 1980`s. the facts are that Tanzania had no problem of Muslims

population against Christian population rather Muslims against the Government. Muslims and Christians cooperate and participate in religious holiday regardless of their religion difference (Omari,1984).

The logic behind of the argument is that individual incidence has been generalized into public affairs. Some scholars believe in Tanzania the conflict between Muslims and Christians based on recent incidence; attack of the bishop in Zanzibar, attack of a church in Arusha and mbagala incidence, each incidence had different context and cannot be referred as a reference in the academic ground. The Muslims - Government tension rooted from the Government decision of burning former Muslim Organization known as East African Muslim Welfare Society in 1968 and government formulation of Bakwata as Muslim governing body in the same year (Said, 2000). In 1968 Nyerere declared the East African Muslim Welfare Society (EAMWS) an illegal organization and a puppet organization, BAKWATA was formed by the government to replace it with hand picked Muslims from the sole ruling party the African National Union of Tanganyika (TANU) as leaders. The government tied all Muslims to BAKWATA since then, while the nagging silences continue from Muslim until today. The move continues as the government being engulfed by the Christian hegemony in Tanzania. So many questions arise, to why Tanzania Government took that steps and why the government formulated Bakwata instead of leaving Muslim to form their own organization, why secular state interfered in religious affairs? In addressing these questions is where the main argument lies.

1.7 What is the center of the Problem

Tanzania Government has internally failed to establish good relationships with Muslims and that created tensions with Muslims. Komba (2013) argued that father of Tanzania nation had taken premeditated efforts towards bringing equitable and just society, the realities on the ground are different, and Muslim had been marginalized in each aspect of their life.

According to Jan P van Bergen in his book, *Development, and Religion in Tanzania*, (1981) enlighten the highest level incriminating fact on former President Nyerere. The book gives details the silence of move of the President Nyerere to Christianize the Tanzania. The secret

meeting were held between Nyerere and some Bishops to discuss the future of Tanzania. In those meetings, Nyerere is reported to have assured Bishops of his continued support to Christianity (Said, 2000). This book revealed how the Government has been favoring Christian secretly in the expense of Muslim.. Dr. John C. Sivalon, in his, *exposes, Kanisa Katoliki na Siasa ya Tanzania Bara 1953 Hadi 1985*, unmasks a conspiracy in Nyerere's government to subvert Islam (Said,2000). There are also two works by Muslim writers focusing on post-independence relations between the government and Muslims which detail conspiracy and abuse of state organs to subvert Islam (Said, 2000).

1.8 Muslims- Government Current situation

Kombo (2013) argues that current politics in Tanzania had identified religion and ethnic diversity for ideological and political goals as among core four factors with the high potential to threaten national unity. Mukanda *et al*, (2006) argued that the phenomenon is manifested as a conflict between religious groups and the state, but in actual sense rooted in resources disparity by region and social groups, equitable allocation of resources, benefits, poverty, weak or undemocratic institutions, myopia and selfish leader and absences of an integrative ideology. This argument is not valid in the sense that, unequal resources distributions and selfish leader could bring the crisis to all religious groups and social group, but why the factors affect only Muslim? Muslims in Tanzania had been sending to the government various sign of marginalization since independence but the government is not listening to them. So currently, majority Muslims are living in the desperate state as if they are in Tanzania by accident. This attitude reduces the sense of nationality and patriotism. The Government case against Member of UAMSHO sheiks suggests the growing tension between Muslims and the Government.

1.9 Recommendations

To address the problem, the government should treat Muslims as she treats Christian. The religious leaders should not interfere with the government decision on various matters submitted to the government. The Government as the father of religious groups should act accordingly to each group without discriminations and segregations. The government should

conduct proper research on why some religious groups complain instead of using physical rule and disputing them. As well the Government must create patriotism culture by treating her people fairly. The Key mission of the government should be making people feel being respected regardless of their origin, color, religion and zone.

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