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Political supremacy and quandaries of liberation parties in Africa: The Case of Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and Convention People's Party (CPP)

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Abstract

This article explores the current state of some nationalist political parties in Africa. Most African nationalists formed political parties after the Second World War to liberate their countries from colonial rule. The paper adopts a comparative historical approach to examine trends and new developments that underscores the current state of Julius Nyerere's Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) in Tanzania and Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) in Ghana. This article draws on these two cases to argue that the changes that have occurred within some liberation parties in Africa have either accounted for their political fortunes or misfortunes. It illustrates that African nationalist parties that failed to build robust and effective party structures after independence struggled to survive after their founders exited the political arena. While this holds true for most parties, other dynamics have also contributed to the sustained political dominance or miseries of some..

KEYWORDS:

Nationalist parties, Party change, Chama Cha Mapinduzi, Convention People's Party, Multi-party system.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The end of the Second World War (WW2) marked the 'foundational moments' for political development on the African continent (Cooper, 1996; Mamdani, 1990, 1996). These assertions are strengthened by the emergence of intermittent political movements after WW2, whose major objectives were to resist colonial oppression across the globe and particularly in Africa due to widespread colonial tyranny (Wantchékon & García-Ponce, 2013; Agomor, 2019). Subsequently, most of these political movements in Africa metamorphosed into political parties and ultimately led the independence struggles in their respective countries (Independence-led/Liberative parties). This paper defines an independence-led/ liberative party as any political party that championed the political freedom of any colonized countries in Africa (see Salih, 2003; Hodgkin, 1991). Examples include the Convention People's Party (CPP) in Ghana, the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) in Botswana, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) in Tanzania, South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia, among others (Makgala & Mac Giollabhuí, 2014; Friedman, 2014; Melber, 2014; Croke, 2017). Parties like the ANC, BDP, SWAPO, and CCM are still active and dominates the politics of their respective countries amidst the proliferation of other parties.

Nevertheless, other nationalist parties have either lost their relevance, near extinction or defunct. For instance, the CPP that once dominated politics in Ghana has lost its prominence (see Bob-Milliar, 2014, 2019). The political space that was once

occupied by the CPP has been taken over by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP) (Yobo & Gyampo, 2015; Ayee, 2017; Frempong, 2017). Comparatively to a party like the CCM, whose founder, Julius Nyerere was a close associate of Kwame Nkrumah, the CPP fortunes keeps declining in every election since the inception of Ghana's Fourth Republic (Bob-Milliar, 2019). I argue that the changes that have occurred within most liberative parties in Africa have either accounted for their sustained political dominance or decline and the CCM in Tanzania and CPP in Ghana are the best cases that support this hypothesis.

The paper is based on data generated through fieldwork and supplemented with secondary literature. The fieldwork comprised of the face-to-face and virtual interview of key informants and party technocrats from the CPP in Ghana and experts who research African politics with a focus on Tanzania politics. Following the introduction, the rest of the paper is structured as follows. First, I review the relevant theoretical debates on party change to underscore the vicissitudes that have occurred within the CCM and CPP. Second, discuss the relevant studies on political parties and party systems in Africa. The essence is to trace the antecedents of the evolution of political parties and party systems on the African continent. Using the comparative historical approach, this section traces the evolution and transformation of the CCM and CPP. Finally, I analyze how the multi-party transitions within Tanzania and Ghana has affected the organization of the CCM and CPP respectively.

2 | THEORIZING PARTY CHANGE

Political parties have often been described as conservative organizations that hardly adapt to change (Panebianco 1988; Schumacher & Giger, 2018). However, due to the challenges encountered and vicissitudes in political environment, most tends to undergo certain changes and adopt programmatic ideas to stay relevant. Some scholarly works have highlighted the changes parties undergo (see Kirchheimer, 1966; Janda,1990). For instance, Kirchheimer (1966) in his “catch-all-party”¹ thesis posited that, as a survival strategy, most political parties shun extreme party dogma and embrace pragmatic strategies to attract median or cross-sectional voters. To Kirchheimer,

The reduction of the ideological content and the increasing programmatic convergence of the larger mainstream parties would see them appealing to a wider audience (cited in Bob-Milliar, 2019: 449).

Other triggers for party change can be traced to the integrated model of party change (Janda, 1990; Harmel et.al, 1995; Janda et.al, 1995; Harmel & Tan, 2003; Somer-Topcu, 2009). In his seminal work, Janda (1990) theorized that the factional displacement and struggle for the control of party apparatuses has the propensity to trigger some changes. Most of these changes results in the emergence of splinter parties by aggrieved individuals from the parent party, possible mergers and coalitions with other parties or the worst-case scenario where there is a total dissolution of the parent party (Janda,1990; Harmel & Tan, 2003). Again, political parties are generally seen as vote seeking machineries (Schattschneider, 1942), hence, a political party's performance in an election has the tendency to trigger party change (see Janda et.al, 1995; Somer-Topcu, 2009). Accordingly, Janda (1990) maintained that parties that do not perform well in elections are mostly under pressure to change their political tactics, leadership, identity, orientation, structures, or even political goals. Furthermore, an anticipated changes in a political environment like changes in electoral rules, legislative frameworks, power disruptions by military juntas, etc. also culminates into party change (Janda,1990; Harmel et.al, 1995).

Relating these propositions to the changes that have occurred within the CCM and CPP, I argue that the merger of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) and Afro Shizo Party (ASP) into the CCM in 1977, among others somewhat accounts for the successful party organization that emerged. Similarly, the political dilemmas of the CPP can also be explained in terms of the same changes the party has witnessed over the years. In sum, the theory of party change provides enough scope and some satisfactory explanations for the paper.

3 | POLITICAL PARTIES AND PARTY SYSTEMS IN AFRICA: AN OVERVIEW

The link between political parties and democracy has always been “a chicken and egg” conundrum. However, modern day democracy thrives mostly on the existence and active role of political parties (Stokes, 1999; Webb, 2005). Similarly, John

¹The fading of smaller parties as a result of the all-embracing ideological positions and policies of major parties.

Aldrich (2011) posited that “political parties created democracy” (p.3). Several scholars including Schattschneider (1942) and Schumpeter (1966) have broadly defined a political party as a concerted effort by a group whose major purpose is to struggle for power. Nevertheless, Anthony Downs (1957: 24) defined a political party in these words: “[i]n the broadest sense, a political party is a coalition of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by legal means.” Joseph Schlesinger (1991) notes: “A political party is a group organized to gain control of government in the name of the group by winning election to public office.” And John Aldrich (1995) notes that “Political parties can be seen as coalitions of elites to capture and use political office.” The common thread running through these select few definitions is that parties are formal organizations formed by like-minded individuals to contest elections and, ultimately, form a government.

However, most of the conceptualization of what constitute a political party is somewhat problematic and limited in scope. For instance, it fails to distinguish a legitimate and illegitimate means of power acquisition. Many of the above definitions endorse a concerted effort by any group, being a junta or any to acquire power as legit. Giovanni Satori’s (1976) classic definition appear to provide an all-convincing framework. He posits that a political party is “any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections (free or non-free), candidates for public office” (p.63). Gunther & Diamond (2003) expounded on the conceptualizations of a political party by identifying its typologies; elitist, mass-based, ethnic-based, electoral or simply a movement and for the purpose of this paper, liberative parties.

The development of party systems in Africa were triggered by the evolution of political parties in the mid-19th Century, with one of the oldest being the True Whig party in Liberia in 1860, among others (Mozaffar, 2005). The African continent witnessed the proliferation of more nationalist parties between 1945 and 1958 owing to the desire to stop all forms of European imperialism (ibid). Many of these parties ended up creating ‘one-party’ or ‘two-party’ state exemplars and have since dominated the politics of their respective countries (see Daddieh and Bob-Milliar 2014). The Frelimo (Angola and Mozambique), the Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF -Zimbabwe), ANC (South Africa), BDP (Botswana), CCM (Tanzania) and SWAPO (Namibia) are some examples (Doreenspleet & Nijzink, 2014). Attempts to explain the sustained political dominance of these parties have been linked to the authoritarian legacies, liberation dividends and weak opposition parties (See Mozaffar & Scarritt, 2005; Doreenspleet & Nijzink, 2014). Contrary to the earlier arrangements, the case of the CPP in Ghana deviates from these political prospects. A once vibrant political party in Ghana and Africa as a whole, owing to the impact of its founder, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah has been relegated to the fringes of Ghanaian politics and is almost defunct.

4 | FROM PREDOMINANT TO SINGLE PARTY: CCM VS CPP

In this section, I briefly analyze the circumstances that led to the emergence of the two liberation parties under review. It also provides some factors that contributed to the sustained political fortunes of the CCM and the CPP in the past.

4.1 | Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM)

The CCM was founded on 5 February 1977 as a merger party between the Tanganyika’s ruling TANU and the ASP of Zanzibar at the union of the Tanganyika and Zanzibar to form the present-day Tanzania (Croke, 2017). Prior to this merger, the TANU started as the Tanganyika African Association (TAA) in 1929 as a professional discussion group, but was later transformed into a liberative political party by Julius Nyerere (Khapoya, 2015). The Afro Shizo Party (ASP), on the other hand was one of the major parties in the then autonomous island of Zanzibar which had the British backed Civic United Front (CUF) as their main political opponent in a seemingly majoritarian two-party system (Chege, 2007). The CCM was formed to exemplify the socialist principles of Ujamaa, as espoused by Julius Nyerere. Before the merger between TANU and ASP, the Julius Nyerere-led TANU won the 1962 presidential elections overwhelmingly in the mainland Tanzania against Zuberi Mtemvu of the African National Congress (*ANC)² and sustained its dominance until 1975 (table 1). The *ANC, emerged as a splinter party from the TANU in 1958 and was later proscribed after the 1962 elections (EISA Website, 2010)³.

Since the merger into CCM, the party dominated the politics in Tanzania between 1980 and 1990 owing to the institutionalization of a ‘one-party’ system after the 1962 elections. Hence, elections held were basically a Yes/No vote (Table 1).

²This *ANC is different from the ANC in South Africa

³Retrieved from <https://www.eisa.org/wep/tanparties6.htm> on 17/11/2021.

Table 1 Electoral outcome in Tanzania (1962-1990)

Year	Party	Nature of Contest	Outcome
1962	TANU	Presidential	Julius Nyerere –98%
	*ANC		Zuberi Mtemvu –2%
1970	TANU	One party election	Yes- 95%
1975	✓		No- 5%
1980	CCM	✓	Yes- 92%
1985			No- 8%
1990	✓	✓	Yes- 93%
			No- 7%

Source: EISA, 2021.

4.2 | Convention People's Party (CPP)

Contrary to the merger that created the CCM, the CPP emerged as a splinter from United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC)- a popular political movement within the southern colonies of the then Gold Coast in 1949. George Bob-Milliar (2014) notes that the UGCC was mobilized around some disgruntled elite in the urban areas, while the CPP was “dominated by commoners who called themselves verandah boys” (p.228). The rationale for the party change within the parent party, UGCC, was on ideological principles and modus operandi of the party. Whereas the UGCC by dint of their slogan ‘Self-government step by step’ subscribed to liberal conservatism, the CPP resorted to radicalism and the slogan of ‘Self-government now’ (Chazan, 1983; Austin, 1964). Just like the CCM, the CPP, with its principles of Nkrumahism, later became another machinery to promote socialist ideologies in Africa. After a successful political show in the 1951, 1954 and 1956 parliamentary elections, the CPP metamorphosed into a mass party with a large Ghanaian following (Austin, 1964; Frempong, 2017). Between 1954 and 1964, the CPP controlled 71 out of 104 parliamentary seats, leaving the remaining 33 for the opposition parties (Table 2).

Just like the CCM, the CPP later transformed from a predominant party to a sole de jure party in 1964 after the regime's declaration of a one-party state arrangement. Consequently, all forms of opposition parties were proscribed. This, to a larger extent, accounts for why all the 198 contested parliamentary seats were filled with CPP representatives in a radio broadcast in 1965 by the then President, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (Table 2).

Table 2 Electoral Outcomes in Ghana (1951-1965)

Year	Number of contested seats	Electoral Outcome
1951	38	CPP- 34, UGCC- 2, *IND- 2
1954	104	CPP- 71, NPP- 12, TC- 2, GCP-1, MAP-1, AYO-1, IND-16
1956	104	CPP- 71, NPP- 15, NLM- 12, MAP-1, TC-2, IND- 2
1960	Presidential election	CPP's Kwame Nkrumah won against the UP's J.B Danquah
1965	198	Owing to the one-party state declaration, CPP candidates were duly confirmed elected in a radio broadcast without an election.

Source: Frempong (2017).

The existing scholarship explain the dominance of the CPP (see Austin, 1964, Chazan, 1983; Bob-Milliar, 2014; Botwe-Asamoah, 2005, Frempong, 2017). Some of these works have maintained that the CPP dominated the pre-independence electoral politics of Ghana as a result of their independence project (Austin, 1964; Chazan, 1983, Botwe-Asamoah, 2005). As noted earlier, the CPP's slogan; Self-government now as against the UGCC's Self-government step by step clearly distinguished the motives of both parties and eventually set the blueprint for Ghana's quest for independence (Austin, 1964). To Bob-Milliar (2014), “The CPP aimed at “fighting relentlessly by all constitutional means for the achievement of full self-government now”

(p.294). Hence, the two slogans became the major campaign message ahead of the 1951 elections (ibid). On the whole, the CPP's independence agenda was summarized by Botwe-Asamoah (2005) when he argued that unlike, the conservative members of the UGCC who took politics as a 'hobby', the CPP came in as the only nationalist party with the sole objective of attaining political independence for the country. In essence, the CPP enjoyed liberative dividends in the post-independence politics of Ghana. A prominent Nkrumahist and former Presidential Candidate of the CPP re-echoed these observations in an interview:

The CPP's project to free Ghana from colonialism was believed to have pushed a lot of Ghanaians onto the party's bandwagon and gave Nkrumah and the CPP some unquestionable loyalty from most Ghanaians (Interview, 7 April, 2020).

It is worth noting that Ghana's independence agenda would not have materialized without the requisite leadership. In essence, Nkrumah's personality as the leader of the CPP also made the party appealing to the ordinary Ghanaian. Accordingly, George Hagan (1991) posited that, though there were some factional strife within the CPP, Nkrumah's charisma, coupled with his exceptional communication skills and trait as a unifier somewhat stabilized the cohesion in the party.

Again, the 1964 declaration of one-party state arrangements with the CPP as the sole de jure national party also increased the party's fortunes ahead of the 1965 pseudo-parliamentary elections. In line with this, Frempong recounted:

As the only legal party in Ghana, the CPP had the sole right to contest the elections. For this purpose, the party decided that candidates for elections [1965 parliamentary elections] would be selected by its Central Committee. In the absence of any other contestants, the candidates nominated by the Central Committee were declared unopposed and duly elected as members of the National Assembly in a radio broadcast (Frempong, 2017:70).

Prior to the 1964-65 event, most of the opposition parties that had ethnic, religious and regional colorations were affected by the advent of the Avoidance Discrimination Act (ADA)- 1957 and Preventive Detention Act (PDA)-1958 (Austin, 1964; Chazan, 1983). The rationale behind such move was to forged a united front in dealing with colonial rule and to avoid unwarranted dissections that could stall the independence agenda (ibid). By late 1964, the thirty-two (32) parliamentary seats held by the opposition parties had been halved to sixteen (16), with the remaining 16 either cross-carpeting⁴ to the join the CPP, fled into exile or were detained owing to the excesses of the PDA (Frempong, 2017).

In addition, party financing in Ghana remains crucial to the prospects of any political party (See Ayee, 1993; Ayee et al, 2007; Prempeh & Asare, 2017). The robustness of the CPP then could partially be attributed to right party funding. Precedents by successive regimes in Ghana has revealed somewhat an unconventional means of using state resources to finance the activities of incumbent parties. In the case of the CPP, Ayee (1993) recounted how Nkrumah strategized to use resources from state institutions like the National Development Company (NADECO) and the Cocoa Purchasing Company (CPC) to finance the activities of the CPP at the expense of other existing political parties.

5 | TRANSITION TO MULTI-PARTY SYSTEM AND STATE OF AFFAIRS: CCM VS CPP

The early 1990s marked the period Huntington (1991) described as the "third wave of democratization" on the African continent. As a result, most authoritarian and military regimes transitioned into multiparty systems to meet the conditionalities for either foreign aid and grants/loans from the Bretton woods institutions (Gazibo, 2005; Wright, 2009). Countries which were under an exemplar one party arrangement like Tanzania, and military regimes like Ghana had to introduce a multi-party system (See Croke, 2017; Danso-Boafo, 2012). In this section, I briefly analyze in two ways, the state and prospects of the CCM and the CPP after the introduction of multi-party system in Tanzania and Ghana. First, I examine the dynamics to the sustained electoral dominance of the CCM in Tanzania and its possible challenges. Second, the current state of the CPP would be analyzed to ascertain what may have accounted for the poor state of the party since the return to civilian politics.

⁴Several opposition MPs on the ticket of the United Party (UP) like C.K. Tedam and Mumuni Bawumia switched their political allegiance to the CPP to escape the excesses of the PDA.

5.1 | Sustained dominance of the CCM

Despite Tanzania's transition into a multi-party system in the early 1990s, the CCM still appears as the most dominant and successful party in terms of electoral gains (Paget, 2017 & 2021). For instance, the CCM has dominated every single election, be it presidential or parliamentary in Tanzania (table 3). However, the party's fortunes dwindled in two consecutive elections. Specifically, the CCM percentage votes in 2010 dipped from the previous 80.3% to 62.8% in the presidential elections. Similarly, the votes further declined from the previous 62.8% in 2010 to 58.5% in 2015 (ibid). This significant percentage reduction was attributed to the intra-party rift over who should succeed the party's former leader Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete (Kisiangani & Lewela, 2012). The presidential primaries between Edward Lowassa, a former Prime Minister who was made to resign in connection with a corruption scandal and a former Minister of Works, John Magufuli left the party divided (Pallotti, 2017). The situation exacerbated when Magufuli's rival, Edward Lowassa defected and was nominated as the presidential candidate for the *Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo* (CHADEMA) (ibid).

Table 3 Electoral Results in Tanzania (1995-2020)

Election	Party	Presidential	Parliamentary
1995	CCM	61.8%	80.2%
	Opposition	38.2%	19.8%
2000	CCM	71.7%	87.5%
	Opposition	28.3%	12.5%
	CCM	80.3%	88.8%
	Opposition	19.7%	11.2%
2010	CCM	62.8%	77.8%
	Opposition	37.2%	22.2%
2015	CCM	58.5%	73.4%
	Opposition	41.5%	26.6%
2020	CCM	84.4%	97.0%
	Opposition	15.6%	3.0%

Source: Tanzania's Electoral Commission and Dan Paget (2021: 63).

Some existing scholarly works provides explanations for the sustained electoral fortunes of CCM in Tanzania (see O'Gorman, 2012; Croke, 2017; Page, 2017 & 2021). For instance, O'Gorman (2012), provides some empirical analysis on the determinants of voter behaviour in Tanzania. The essence of the survey was to gauge the reasons for CCM's support in Tanzania. The findings are illustrated below (Table 4).

From the table, it can be inferred that the nostalgic and strong attachments to the CCM in Tanzania can somewhat be attributed to the party's performance during the defacto and dejure one party-state arrangement between 1970 and 1990 and the fact that it is the only strong party (18.6%). Again, the CCM's ability to maintain peace and promote Kiswahili as a national language projected the party as an entity which is committed to promoting a sense of nationhood after independence. This re-echoes some claims by Kevin Croke. He averred:

What explains such single party dominance? The "official" story is that Tanzanians appreciate CCM for its role in maintaining peace and stability, and because it was the party of Julius Nyerere, who was beloved for his personal integrity and his far-sighted policies to promote a Tanzanian sense of nationhood in place of ethnic and subnational identity (Croke, 2017:7).

Though it has been argued earlier that most liberative parties across the African continent like the CCM Tanzania, ANC in South Africa, BDP in Botswana, FRELIMO in Angola and the SWAPO in Namibia have largely benefitted from liberative dividends (Doreenspleet & Nijzink, 2014), the findings on the CCM in Tanzania suggests otherwise. It only accounted for 8.4% of the voter choice (Table 4). The 'liberative dividends' construct remains questionable due to the generational gap. 'This is

Table 4 Reasons for CCM Support

Reasons for CCM support	Percentage (%)
Performed well during one-party rule	24.1
They are the only strong party	18.6
They are the party that identifies with farmers	7.6
They are the party that identifies with the business community	2.5
They are progressive	4.2
They are conservative	0.4
They identify with my ethnic group	1.3
They will maintain a stable economy	4.2
They have maintained peace	18.2
They brought us independence	8.4
They are the only party I've known	4.6
I love the CCM	3.8
They have brought development to our community	1.3
I support them but plan to change soon	0.8

Source: O’Gorman (2012: 321)

because the perception is common among a much older generation in Tanzania, who may not be in the majority considering the youthful population in most African countries’ (interview, 17 September 2021).

Aside these, Paget (2021) maintained that the ostensible popularity of the CCM in the 2020 general elections was as a result of the incumbent president’s anti-corruption campaign- ‘house cleaning to restore Nyerere’s agenda’. As populist as it was in form, the CCM was believed to have capitalized on its major achievements; revival of the defunct national airline, expansion of the Julius Nyerere International Airport, etc. as their main campaign message (ibid).

However, Cheeseman et al (2021) in their work, Tanzania: The roots of repression, presented another explanation. They maintained that the CCM has dominated the politics of post multi-party system in Tanzania due to the use of what was described as ‘interconnected authoritarian control mechanisms’ - opposition suppression, media censorship, over-exploitation of incumbency advantage and patronage politics (ibid). The authors noted:

First, the government manipulates the rule of law to harass and detain opponents. Nyerere did this—whatever his reputation as an enlightened leader, he was fond of jailing critics and rivals—and Magufuli followed in his footsteps. Second, CCM uses tight control of media and information to conflate loyalty to the party with being a good citizen. This too is nothing new. Tanzania has never had a fully free and open media sphere. The intensification of media suppression and nationalism under Magufuli represents a continuation of the ruling party’s playbook rather than a dramatic change. Over the last sixty years, these two strategies have been consistently complemented by a third: the diversion of state resources to sustain the ruling party, build patron-client networks, and deny resources to potential rivals (Cheeseman et al, 2021:78).

Paget (2021) corroborated these claims by citing the preservation of some of the previous ‘authoritarian architecture’ by the CCM, when Tanzania was transitioning into a multi-party system in 1992. Campbell (2020) have also described the CCM as a ‘benign hegemon’ which has dominated all elections in Tanzania but not on merit because of the use of intimidation and violence to sustain control. Despite the gains, the CCM has been bedeviled with its own challenges which has largely been described as self-inflicted. For instance, the island of Zanzibar has countlessly accused mainland Tanzania of political marginalization despite being a tourism hub and major source of income for the Tanzania government (Kisiangani & Lewela, 2012). Consequently, there were major calls by the Zanzibaris for more political autonomy when Jakaya Kikwete exited power in 2015. This signified their dissatisfaction with the Tanganyika-Zanzibar union (Awami, 2015).

5.2 | The decline of the CPP

As evident in the case of the CCM, the viability of a political party is mostly measured on their electoral prospects (Downs, 1957; Schlesinger, 1991). However, since Ghana returned to multi-party democracy in 1992, the CPP's electoral fortunes keeps dwindling over every election cycle (see Bob-Milliar, 2019). For instance, the party has witnessed a significant percentage decline in presidential elections, from 1.8% to 0.1% over 6 election cycles between 2000-2020 (table 5). Similarly, the CPP has generally not been successful in terms of parliamentary representation. The party managed to increase its sole seat in 2000 to 3 in 2004 but could retain only one in 2008. The CPP has not been successful in attaining parliamentary representation over 3 election cycles (2012-2020), after losing its sole seat in the 2012 elections (Table 5). Theoretically, the poor state of the CPP can be linked to the changes that have occurred within the party over time (see Janda, 1990). It is imperative to note that the only significant electoral gains any pro-Nkrumahist party has made under Ghana's Fourth Republic was when the National Convention Party (NCP) and the People's Convention Party (PCP) went into an electoral alliance with the NDC and NPP in the 1992 and 1996 elections respectively. Consequently, the NCP garnered about 8 seats in 1992 while the PCP won 5 seats in 1996 (Frempong, 2017).

Table 5 CPP's Electoral Performance in Ghanaian Elections: 2000-2020

Year	Nature of contest	Electoral Outcome	
1992&1996	Multi-party General Elections	The CPP name was still proscribed owing to the 1966 coup and was restored in 1998 through a court order.	
	✓	Presidential	Parliamentary
2000	✓	1.8%	1/200
2004	✓	1.9%	3/230
2008	✓	1.3%	1/230
2012	✓	0.2%	0/275
2016	✓	0.2%	0/275
2020	✓	0.1%	0/275

Source: Electoral Commission, 2020.

The poor state and the electoral misfortunes of the CPP have been attributed to several factors. For instance, the poor state of some liberative parties in Africa has been linked to the absence of effective party organization (Kasfir, 1976). Prunier (1997) re-echoed this assertion by arguing that the few nationalist parties like the CCM in Tanzania and *Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement* in Rwanda have stood the test of time because they developed robust organizational apparatuses. From Prunier's perspective, one thing that remains clear is that the CPP's failure to replicate similar strategies. A cursory observation of the various party structures in Ghana by Onja Osei (2012) revealed that the CPP "operates only a rudimentary party apparatus" (p.584) which is not as robust as the leading parties like the NPP and NDC.

In addition, the CPP tradition's constant subjection to coups in Ghana weakened the political tradition and scattered its stalwarts. An analysis of the collapse of political regimes in Ghana from the First to the Third Republics (1966-1981) reveals the deliberate ploys by the anti-Nkrumah/CPP groups to annihilate the old CPP stock from Ghanaian politics (table 6). For instance, Colonel Kotoka's submissions on the day of the 1966 coup somewhat confirms these claims. He stated:

The myth surrounding Kwame Nkrumah has been broken today. Parliament is dissolved and Kwame Nkrumah is dismissed from office. All ministers are also dismissed. The Convention People's Party is disbanded with effect from now (Austin & Luckman, 1975:16).

"It is worth noting that the declaration of the CPP as the national party in 1964 sparked some agitations in Ghana. So, Nkrumah's overthrow was synonymous with the annihilation of the CPP. There was a conscious effort to make sure that the CPP was disintegrated and never to re-group" (interview, 7 April 2020).

By direct inference to the theory of party change (see Janda, 1990; Harmel et.al, 1995), the changes in the political environment in the form of coups in Ghana between 1966-1981 to some extent resulted in the organizational death of the Nkrumahist tradition when its associated parties; CPP and PNP were ousted and proscribed in 1966 and 1981 respectively. Juxtaposing what happened

Table 6 Military overthrows of legitimate governments in Ghana (1966-1981)

Parties	Political traditions	Year of overthrow	Splits after coups
Convention People's Party (CPP)	Nkrumahist	1966	NAL, United Nationalist Party (UNP), etc.
Progress Party (PP)	Danquah-Dombo-Busia	1969	PFP/UNC split
People's National Party (PNP)	Nkrumahist	1981	PNC, NCP, NIP, PHP

to the CPP to other liberative parties in Africa like the CCM, ANC, and SWAPO, among others, one respondent noted that “most parties that led independence struggles in Africa were lucky enough to have escaped military overthrows and this, to a larger extent, explains their survival and resilience. The Nkrumahist tradition, after being overthrown twice had all its strengths sapped by the coup makers” (interview, 13 January 2020). Consequently, the CPP tradition had to deal with fragments when party politics was unbanned in the early 1990s and ultimately led to the proliferation of several pro-CPP splinters ahead of the 1992 elections (Nugent, 1995; Addae-Mensah, 2016).

Another factor linked to the decline of the CPP is the emergence of the Rawlings tradition. As a survival strategy, most political parties or movements often devise both conventional and unconventional strategies to sabotage their political opponents (Ripley, 1972). There is enough evidence to support the ploys that were hatched to deliberately keep the Nkrumahists fragmented and to co-opt prominent members of the tradition into Rawlings' newly formed NDC (see Oquaye, 1995 & 2004; Addae-Mensah, 2016; Debrah, 2004). For instance, Addae-Mensah (2016) recounted how the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) deployed strategies to infiltrate the Nkrumahist camp, after their fruitless appeal to the Danquah-Dombo-Busia tradition. These plans were executed with tacit support of old CPP stalwarts like Prof. Kofi Awoonor and Capt. (Rtd) Kojo Tsikata, who later became prominent members of the NDC and occupied important positions when the NDC was in government between 1992 and 2001. As noted earlier, The PNDC's sole aim was to pre-empt defections within the Nkrumahist camp and co-opt most of their experienced politicians into Rawlings' newly formed NDC (Debrah, 2004). These observations were emphasized in an interview by a former CPP national executive. He noted:

One thing that became obvious in the mobilization of the Danquah-Busia and Rawlings traditions was their machinations to ‘cannibalize’ the CPP and to co-opt some its core members and strong organizers. There was a deliberate attempt by the PNDC to identify with the CPP tradition when they decided to convert their movement into a political party in 1992. The UP tradition also used some of the CPP elements. So, the Nkrumahists found it difficult to re-organize because these forces were tearing them apart (interview, 10 March 2020).

However, an NDC party official refuted these claims noting that:

It will be intellectually wrong to assume that some parties infiltrated into the camp of others to keep them fragmented. We [NDC] in our organization in 1992 made proposals to both the Nkrumahists and Danquah-Busia traditions. However, the Danquah-Busiasts rejected the offer because of their reservations about Rawlings. I do not think it is a defensible position for you to write away the wishes of a group of people who would want to form a party to protect their interests. Some splinter groups which emerged from the CPP tradition were ready to do business with the NDC and we did business with them (interview, 11 May 2020).

Nevertheless, an observation of the activities of some old CPP guards who led the crusade to restore the proscribed CPP in 1998 give some credence to some of the earlier assertions (see Addae-Mensah, 2016; Debrah, 2004). For instance, it was further argued that:

The motive for seeking to replicate Nkrumah's CPP was to cripple its fortunes and render it only viable to support other parties. So ‘the kingmaker’ role of the CPP as we see today was a deliberate creation of some external forces to project Ghana as a multi-party democracy when in practice there is a two-party arrangement between the NPP and the NDC (interview, 12 June 2020).

For instance, some notable individuals like Freddie Blay⁵, Kweku Baako⁶ and Kwesi Pratt⁷ who actively prayed the courts to overturn the NLC's decree of 1966 and restored the CPP have either abandoned the party or aligned with the NDC and NPP in one way or the other. The most striking was how Freddie Blay defected from the CPP completely to the NPP and is currently their National Chairman. Similarly, Dr. Kwabena Duffour, who at a point was the head of the finance committee of the CPP also defected and joined the NDC, and was later appointed as the Governor of the Bank of Ghana between 1997-2000 (Table 7).

Flowing from the above observation, the CPP's political quandaries can also be linked to the excessive showcase of political patronage of other parties within the rank and file of the CPP and other pro Nkrumahist parties like the Peoples National Convention (PNC). Though rational choice theorist has maintained that human beings are incurably opportunistic in most of their dealings (Simon, 1995; Levi, 1997), the unbridled show of political opportunism by recent leaders of the CPP and other pro-Nkrumahist parties like the PNC keeps affecting the political fortunes of the tradition. Bob-Milliar (2019) argued that most leaders of the CPP often activate either 'coalition potential' or the 'blackmail potential' to gain what he described as the 'political crumbs' of the spoils of power from the NDC or the NPP. Evidence to the claims of patronage politics within the CPP have often manifested in political appointments given to top officials and influential members (Table 7).

Table 7 List of CPP Stalwarts who benefited from the NDC and NPP Administrations

Name	Party	Position in Party	Administration	Portfolio	Period
Dr. Kwabena Duffour	CPP	Finance Committee Chairman	NDC	Governor, Bank of Ghana	1997 – 2001
				Finance Minister	2009 – 2013
Prof. Nii Noi Dowuona	CPP	Former General Secretary	NDC	Member, N.C.T. E ^a	2009 – 2013
Prof. George Hagan	CPP	Former flagbearer, 2000 elections	NPP	Chairman, N.C.C ^b	2001 – 2007
				Board Chairman, ECoG ^c	2017 – 2020
Kojo Armah	CPP	Former MP, Evalue-Gwira	NPP	MCE, Nzema East	2001-2004
Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom	CPP	Former MP, KEEA ^d	NPP	Energy Minister	2003- 2004
				Public Sector Reform Minister	2005-2007
				1st Deputy Speaker of Parliament	2005-2009
Frederick Blay	CPP	Former MP, Ellembelle	NPP	1st National Vice Chairman	2014-2018
				National Chairman, NPP	2018- date
				Director-General, Ghana Health Service	2003-2007
Prof. Agyemang Badu Akosa	CPP	Former, Flagbearer Aspirant	NPP	Director-General, Ghana Health Service	2003-2007

Note a = National Council for Tertiary Education , b = National Commission for Culture , c= Energy Commission of Ghana, d = Komenda Edina Eguafio Abirem Constituency in the Central region of Ghana, **Source:** Bob-Milliar (2019: 461) with few additions by the author.

These observations somewhat explain the nagging question of “how these leaders get richer while their party is performing abysmally in elections? It can be inferred from the above observations that leaders who exhibits opportunistic tendencies within the CPP, do so to advance the course of either the NPP or NDC and to enjoys the “spoils of power” from their paymasters (interview, 10 March 2020). To wit, the CPP has been rendered as a conduit for businessmen who would want to amass wealth at the back of politics. There is enough evidence to suggest how some CPP leaders later abandoned the party to form splinter parties after they lost control of the party machinery. For instance, Dr. Papa Kwesi Nduom and Dr. Abu Sakara, after serving as the party's presidential candidates for the 2008 and 2012 elections broke away to form the Progressive Peoples Party (PPP) and the National Interest Movement (NIM) respectively.

⁵Former PCP-CPP Member of parliament for Ellembelle Constituency

⁶Son of Kofi Baako (Nkrumah's Defense Minister), Editor-in-chief of the Crusading Guide Newspaper in Ghana and an Nkrumahist.

⁷An Nkrumahist and Managing Editor of the Insight Newspaper in Ghana.

6 | CONCLUSION

The survival of old and liberative parties in Africa can only be understood within the wider context of the changes these parties have undergone over time. In this paper, I presented the dynamics of the resilience or quandaries of liberative parties in Africa citing the cases of Julius Nyerere's CCM in Tanzania and Kwame Nkrumah's CPP in Ghana. Drawing from the above observations, the paper concludes accordingly.

First, the paper concludes from the earlier observations that investments in building resilient party structures in the management of any political entity helps it to stand the test of time. For instance, it was revealed that only few liberative parties like the CCM (Tanzania), ANC (South Africa), Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement (Rwanda) have survived because such parties instituted proper party structures that could outlive its pioneers. Julius Nyerere, after leading a successful independence campaign and the merger of the TANU and ASP in CCM adhered strictly to the party's structures and paved way for other prospective leaders. The political quandaries of the CPP today strengthens these claims. This is because the CPP largely engaged in personality cult of the founder, Kwame Nkrumah and invested so much power in one man and not the party structures. It is however not surprising how the CPP literally came to its knees when the founder exited the Ghanaian political scene. This reverberates the earlier observations that political parties that are built around a personality or excessively engages in personality deification undermines internal democratic structures and struggle to survive in a competitive environment when the leaders exit the scene (see Scarrow, 2005; Agomor, 2019).

Second, the dynamics to the sustained electoral fortunes or misfortunes between the CCM and CPP can be explained in terms of security of regime. Though these parties at one point enjoyed the security of tenure after institutionalizing a *de jure* 'one-party' rule, it is instructive to note that collapse of the CPP regime and other Nkrumahist parties like the Peoples National Party (PNP) in 1966 and 1981 respectively crippled the fortunes of the Nkrumahist tradition in Ghana. Contrary to this, most surviving nationalist parties like the CCM and ANC have never experience military coups so far. The earlier observations suggests that there was a deliberate ploy to annihilate the CPP tradition from the Ghanaian political space. It is quite instructive to note that it has not been all rosy for the CCM over the years because there is enough evidence to suggest that the party may have exhibited some autocratic tendencies to sustain their fortunes (See Paget, 2021; Cheeseman et al, 2021).

Third, the CPP's misfortunes currently is largely self-inflicted. The poor state of the Nkrumahist tradition under Ghana's current Fourth Republican arrangement can be attributed to the unwarranted display of political opportunism and greed by prominent and influential members of the party. There is enough evidence to suggest how some old CPP guards virtually sold the party for it to be infiltrated by the NDC (see Addae-Mensah, 2016) in the early years of Ghana's transition into a multi-party democracy in 1992. This practice has continued in perpetuity with current leaders of the party rendering the CPP as only viable in supporting either NDC or NDC to win an election. To wit, the CPP has carved a niche for itself as a 'king maker'. As noted earlier, leaders who are often behind the such clientelist arrangements have often been rewarded with the spoils of power (see Bob-Milliar, 2019).

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

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LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Interview with a Former CPP Presidential Candidate, April 7, 2020.

Interview with a Former Acting General Secretary of the CPP, March 2 2020.

Interview with a Former Chairperson of the CPP, March 10 2020.

Interview with a Former National Youth Organizer of the CPP, June 12 2020.

Interview with a National Executive of the NDC, May 11 2020.

Interview with a Lecturer and African politics researcher with focus on Tanzanian politics- University of Aberdeen (Scotland), September 17 2021.

Interview with an old Nkrumahist and Political Scientist at University of Ghana, January 13 2020.

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