

‘NATIONAL RESOURCES’? THE FRAGMENTED CITIZENSHIP OF GAS

EXTRACTION IN TANZANIA

Abstract:

Recent discoveries of oil and natural gas across East Africa have provoked a wave of political optimism fuelled by imaginaries of future development. Tanzania is a paragon of this trend, its government having asserted its potential to become a globally significant natural gas producer within a decade. Yet, this rhetorical promise has been countered by a series of violent confrontations that have taken place between state forces and residents of southern Tanzania. Although these struggles are about various articulations of resource sovereignty, this paper argues that they should be located less in questions of resource control, than in a historical marginalisation of the south, or what has been called a ‘hidden agenda’, that privileges urban centres to the north. Drawing on original qualitative data generated over three years in Mtwara and Lindi regions, it shows how gas discoveries reveal the fault lines in the construction of an inclusive ‘Tanzanian’ citizenship. Protesters counter-narrate their sense of citizenship with insurgent strategies ranging from strike action to calls for secession. In short, natural gas discoveries actually *extend* the fragmentation of an already ‘differentiated citizenship’. Studies of resource conflict and sovereignty, we conclude, should pay more attention to the contested nature of citizenship.

‘NATIONAL RESOURCES’? THE FRAGMENTED CITIZENSHIP OF GAS EXTRACTION IN TANZANIA

‘It is something unacceptable that national resources can be restricted only to the place where they are found’ (Jakaya Kikwete, former President of Tanzania)¹

‘Here in the south we are different and we need to be respected and to get a good deal with this gas’ (Mtwara activist, 2012)²

1. Introduction

Between December 2012 and May 2013, a series of violent confrontations took place between state police, army forces and residents of Mtwara region in southern Tanzania. These globally reported clashes, in which 8 people were killed, dozens injured and hundreds arrested, concerned the new construction of a 512km gas pipeline connecting Mtwara to the commercial capital, Dar es Salaam, to the north. They can be situated at the centre of a contemporary debate over the meaning of Tanzanian citizenship which has been brought into view by the recent discovery of recoverable reserves of an estimated 57 trillion cubic feet.³ Despite the potentially record levels of investment that these developments may attract in the future (according to the IMF), their significance goes beyond the country’s transformation

¹ See Deodatus Balile, ‘Protest over gas pipeline in Mtwara turn violent, military deployed’ *Sabahi Online*, 23 May 2013 <http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/features/2013/05/23/feature-02> (28 May 2016).

² Interview, Basana Saidi, bar owner and protestor in 2013, Mtwara town, 29 June 2012.

³ While the current reserves are 57.17tcf, the US Geological Survey estimates that coastal deposits alone could reach 441tcf. See *Tanzania Daily News*, ‘Tanzania: Mtwara – Dar es Salaam Gas Pipeline Capacity to Increase Progressively’, 19 April 2017, <<http://allafrica.com/stories/201704190658.html>> (28 June 2017).

into a globally significant natural gas producer.⁴ Gas also serves to reveal the tensions around the construction of an inclusive ‘Tanzanian’ citizenship predicated on the equitable distribution of its benefits across the nation-state. For protesters in Mtwara, the government’s decision to overlook the south as a promised site for the development of a gas processing plant, directly echoes decades of marginalisation from *development* writ large. From this perspective, a longstanding ‘hidden agenda’ is understood to both discursively and substantively distinguish between Tanzania’s north as a locus of economic development and its south as a ‘location of passivity and apathy’.⁵ Thus, the discovery of offshore gas in contemporary Tanzania has served to reveal the fault lines of inequitable development, citizenship, cultural change or, more simply, what it means to be ‘Tanzanian’.

Against this background, this paper views the ensuing gas protests as a catalyst for interrogating the ways in which Tanzanian citizenship is discursively framed and contested more broadly. It presents and analyses original interview data generated over three periods between 2012 and 2014 in order to understand the ways in which competing political imaginaries of gas extraction produce particular kinds of citizenship.⁶ In doing so it offers one of the first critical analyses of the political contention around Tanzania’s ‘new’ gas and develops new arguments linking the country’s resource politics with its histories of citizenship. Theoretically, it draws upon the notion of ‘differentiated citizenship’ defined as ‘the differential treatment of populations in relation to ethno-racial differences, and the dictates of development

⁴ The International Monetary Fund predicts gas production by 2024 and investments totalling between US\$20 billion and US\$40 billion: *IMF*, ‘United Republic of Tanzania’ IMF Country Report No.14/228, July 2014, <<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14228.pdf>> (08 February 2017).

⁵ Pekka Seppälä, ‘Introduction,’ in Seppälä, P and Koda, B. (eds.) *The Making of a Periphery – Economic Development and Cultural Encounters in Southern Tanzania* (Stockholm: Elanders Gotab AB, 1998), pp.7-36.

⁶ The methodology is discussed in detail in section 2 below.

programs'.⁷ In this formulation, citizenship is not about equating citizens but about articulating, codifying and enacting their differences. It is used in this paper to explain how the contentious politics of natural gas extraction in Southern Tanzania can be located less in questions of resource control than in the historical inequity of the terms of Tanzanian national membership. It builds upon recent writing on this topic, which has examined the drivers of conflict in the region⁸. However, in developing this work, we argue that the historical dimensions of citizenship have been insufficiently addressed. Indeed, we assert that by understanding the fragmented iterations of Tanzanian citizenship in the past, the contemporary processes of Tanzania's gas politics can be better understood. More broadly it is one of the first papers to demonstrate how specific extractive resources (in this case, gas) actually extend the fragmentation of citizenship in an African context. Gas extraction does not just shape narratives of resource nationalism, it is also used to 'rationalize local geographies of dispossession'.⁹ By highlighting these processes in the context of the Tanzanian gas riots, we thus begin to answer the research call to show how 'energy extraction is an active moment in the construction of specific geopolitical imaginaries'.¹⁰

Framing Tanzania's contentious gas politics in this way also invites a novel engagement with the socio-cultural aspects of resource politics and sovereignty. Notwithstanding Must's spatial analysis of anti-gas activism¹¹, and the valuable body of established political economic and natural resource management critiques of extraction in Tanzania, empirical analyses which foreground the links between

⁷ James Holston, *Insurgent citizenship: Disjunctions of democracy and modernity in Brazil* (Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford, 2008); Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as exception: Mutations in citizenship and sovereignty* (Duke University Press, Durham, N.C., 2006), p. 88.

⁸ Elise Must, 'From silence to storm.' Investigating mechanisms linking structural inequality and natural resources to mobilization in southern Tanzania', *African Affairs* (forthcoming).

⁹ Matthew Huber, 'Theorizing Energy Geographies', *Geography Compass*, 9, 6 (2015), pp. 327-338, p. 4.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Elise Must, 'From silence to storm.' Investigating mechanisms linking structural inequality and natural resources to mobilization in southern Tanzania', *African Affairs* (forthcoming).

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extractive resources and identity formation still remain notable by absence. Thus, in order to begin to address this gap, we show how gas discovery is used to produce a series of competing framings by the state and by protesters (themselves holding differing perspectives). As we will show, these are firstly articulated by the state in terms of the 'national' but with a negotiated sense of place that speaks to the imperatives of global capitalist investment. At odds with this framing, the protesters express their sense of citizenship in terms of the 'regional', with a discourse ranging from the insurgent to the silent and strategies varying between strike action and calls for secession. The focus here is on the clashes which these competing positions have provoked, which reminds us of the ways in which resources only 'become through the triumph of one imaginary over others'.¹² Resource discoveries are by their very nature forward facing and they invite a series of political futures to be imagined in different ways. These may not fully determine the policies of resource extraction but they do shape them and they are based on different ontologies and imagined geographies. In this case, differences in understanding Tanzanian political identity produce the conditions for the formation of an emergent gas politics. Such a politics is resonant of what Piot calls a 'nostalgia for the future'¹³ in that it is the removal of benefits promised – but never to be experienced by southern Tanzanians – that are contested.

Section 2 details the paper's methodology, before proceeding, in section 3, to a critical review of the literature surrounding citizenship, particularly in the Tanzanian context. Moving beyond work from political geography that has highlighted the differentiated aspects of resource sovereignty, it outlines the context of struggles over the meaning of citizenship in Tanzania. In section 4, we situate the gas riots in

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¹² Gavin Bridge, 'Material worlds: Natural resources, resource geography and the material economy', *Geography Compass* 3, 3 (2009), pp. 1217-1244, p. 1221.

¹³ Charles Piot, *Nostalgia for the Future: West Africa after the Cold War* (London, University of Chicago Press, 2010).

Mtwara as part of a debate over a ‘hidden agenda’ that has simultaneously privileged an urban elite whilst marginalising the south of Tanzania from ‘national’ development processes before briefly mapping the politico-historical trajectory of gas extraction in Tanzania and how this relates to the historical patterns of Tanzanian national development. Sections 5 and 6 analyse original empirical data generated by protesters and Mtwara residents which, together, illustrate a series of qualitatively distinct political imaginaries. These not only reveal the fractured nature of ‘national’ claims to gas in the region and a fragmented sense of citizenship but also highlight the array of alternative ways for imagining the political futures of gas extraction. We conclude, in section 7, by identifying future research questions that might emerge from the politics of new resource discoveries in both Tanzania and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa when the question of fragmented citizenship is foregrounded.

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2. *Research Methodology*

The first period of fieldwork took place in 2012 and lasted for four months. This involved interviews (both structured and semi-structured) and focus groups, principally in Mtwara but also in the Lindi region to the north. One of the researchers was based in Mikindani (near to Mtwara Town) for the duration and travelled to Kilwa Kivinji, Kilwa Masoko, Lindi Town (Lindi region), Dihimba, Masasi, Mtwara Town, Newala, Msangumkuu, Msimbati, Tandahimba (Mtwara Region). These are predominantly coastal locations but Dihimba, Masasi, and Newala are in the interior. As with Must’s findings,¹⁴ criticisms of processes relating to gas extraction were far more common in those locations adjacent to the Indian Ocean coast and nearer to the gas discoveries which are predominantly offshore. In the interior, where communities

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¹⁴ Elise Must, ‘From silence to storm.’

are less directly affected by these processes and not geographically proximate to the gas fields, there seemed to be less concerns about extraction processes, the distribution of future benefits, and less resentment overall.

Interviews and focus groups were held with various groups affected directly incipient processes of gas extraction. These include but are not limited to; political actors, port workers (and others with some role in the emerging gas industry), and groups of (predominantly) men at Mtwara and Lindi fish markets. Many other individual interviews were held with those not directly affected and given that the nexus of the process was Mtwara Town and that the researcher was based in Mikindani (ten kilometres away), much of the research referred to here was conducted in and around one of these two locations. During the initial research period thirty interviews and five focus groups were conducted, they were largely unstructured and focused on expectations around gas extraction, with informants leading the conversations. This allowed for wide-ranging discussions and saw many highlight an historical 'hidden agenda' against 'the south', analysed in section 4. Research conducted in Lindi region (to the north) also allows for the reflections of local actors that have lived through and witnessed a process of natural gas extraction on Songo Songo Island, and in the affected towns on the mainland. In terms of sampling, this was mostly random although the decision to conduct research in certain places was premised on the assumption that they had more experience of the processes linked to potential future extraction. All interviewees have been anonymised although, largely at their request, other biographic details such as employment status, gender, location of interview and so on, have been included.

The following periods of fieldwork took place in 2014 (three weeks in January and two months later in the year), with the intervening period marked by a number of

major protests in Mtwara (December 2012-May 2013) – some violent – against government decisions relating to gas extraction. Both researchers were present for the first period of research in 2014, while the second period was conducted by the same researcher that had spent time in southern Tanzania during 2012. Across the fieldwork in 2014, another thirty interviews were conducted, focus groups were held with port workers, local residents, villagers affected by the process of gas extraction (after the creation of exclusion zones for sea traffic) and other stakeholders in Mikindani and Mtwara. The main findings and quotations presented here serve as emblematic of those held across the Mtwara Region, although the focus of research shifted in 2014 to include a specific discussions of the unrest in the previous year. Our aim is to offer a thorough reading of the reasons for malcontent in Mtwara, rather than offering a comparison with a more ‘national’ picture. Suffice to say that both are imagined constructs¹⁵ and we are seeking to offer a sense of the perceptions from southern Tanzania in order to make explicit the sort of regional politics and regional history that inform contemporary notions of citizenship.

This research is also informed by previous experience of both researchers, who have lived in Mtwara in the past, while one has previously completed research projects within the region. Key informant interviews were also conducted with (anonymised) faculty from the Stella Maris Mtwara University College in order to gain further perspectives on the protests and the broader politics of the, and with gas company representatives (in Dar and London) as well as relevant stakeholders from the NGO sector. Other requests for interviews with government representatives to discuss these issues were rejected or ignored. Overall, then, this has been a wide-ranging process of data gathering against which certain specific claims are made.

¹⁵ Recalling the work of Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (Verso, London and New York, 1983).

3. Citizenship in Tanzania

Resource discoveries provide key moments for resource-rich states to imagine and legitimate particular socio-economic futures. They carry and enable the transformative promise of particular visions of development through which state discourses are produced. As Fernando Coronil memorably put it, with reference to Venezuela and oil, resources afford a ‘magic’ that brings a fetishized ‘resource state’ into being through a combination of nature, nation-building and the impulses of modernity.¹⁶ In other words, resources become a central part of a ‘geopolitical imagination’ of the state that turns the resource- or petro-state into a naturalised subject.¹⁷ However, the consistency and rhetorical promise of these unified, ‘national’ framings of resources hinge upon particular ways of spatializing citizenship that elides substantively uneven encounters with the state. Taking resource sovereignty as a point of departure, this section interrogates the way in which citizenship is constructed and enacted in Tanzania. By locating the discussion in a broader literature on African citizenship, it highlights the ways in which the link between resources and a fractured sense of citizenship has been under-explored. This specific account of Tanzanian citizenship suggests a conceptual framework for understanding Tanzania’s emergent politics of gas extraction which can be seen to distinguish between and produce differentiated forms of citizenship.

Following Marshall’s seminal work over half a century ago, the field of citizenship studies has been marked by a certain Eurocentrism that has marginalised African

¹⁶ Fernando Coronil, *The magical state: Nature, money, and modernity in Venezuela* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1997).

¹⁷ Matthew T. Huber, ‘Energy, environment and the geopolitical imagination’, *Political Geography*, 31, 6 (2012), pp. 402-403.

contexts and their specificities.¹⁸ Where attention has been forwarded to the continent, it has tended to highlight a series of binaries and contradictions, most of which emerge out of the colonial experience. The faultlines of citizenship have been drawn between different publics and along the struggles over inclusion in societies that have asserted state power through processes of exclusion.¹⁹ From a postcolonial perspective, Mamdani points to the continuing salience of colonial experiences on the continent with a distinction drawn between urban and rural modes of power – what he terms the ‘bifurcated state’.²⁰ In this formulation, the ‘janus-faced’ state created the legacy of indirect rule via customary authority that emphasised tradition in rural areas, ‘organized around the principle of fusion to ensure a unitary authority’.²¹ Such a ‘split’ between urban and rural modes of rule can be seen, in the present study, to help shape the construction of ‘hidden agenda’ in Tanzania which is detailed more fully later in this paper. Continuing this postcolonial theme, the coast of East Africa has been analysed as being marked by a contentious ‘politics of the soil’ in which resources themselves becomes central to understanding citizenship on the continent. One example of this are the attempts made to transform ‘the “soil” into a symbolic reference for imagined histories and contemporary aspirations’ of colonial Kenya.²²

If a politics of the soil has come to be represented by the notion that access to land and its resources ‘symbolises...citizenship in many African societies’²³, then it turns

¹⁸ T.H. Marshall, *Citizenship and social class* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1950).

¹⁹ C.R.D. Halisi, Paul J. Kaiser, and Stephen N. Ndegwa, ‘Rethinking citizenship in Africa: Guest editors’ introduction: The multiple meanings of citizenship; rights, identity, and social justice in Africa,’ *Africa Today* 45, 3/4 (1998), pp. 337-349; Bronwen Manby, *Struggles for citizenship in Africa*, (London, Zed Books, 2009), p. 141.

²⁰ Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and subject: decentralized despotism and the legacy of late colonialism* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997)

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 18.

²² Jeremy Prestholdt, ‘Politics of the soil: separatism, autochthony, and decolonization at the Kenyan coast’ *The Journal of African History*, 55, 2 (2014), pp. 249-270, p. 252.

²³ Sara Rich Dorman, Daniel P. Hammett and Paul C. Nugent (eds) ‘Introduction: Citizenship and its causalities’, p.16, in *Making nations, creating strangers: States and citizenship in Africa* (Brill, Leiden and Boston, MA, 2007).

on certain framings whereby identity and belonging become of paramount importance. Put another way, at the heart of both citizenship struggles and the question of political identity formation in Africa lies the processes of boundary making, both metaphorically and materially. In symbolic terms, these processes involve the creation of 'others' who are excluded from a political community at the same time as the discourse of national citizenship promises inclusivity. Aminadze explores this dialectic by providing a historical sociology of national citizenship in Tanzania - this paper's country of study. Tracing its contradictory nature, he shows how national articulations of being a 'good citizen' work to exclude certain people due to the 'durable racial inequality inherited from colonial rule' as well as more contemporary marginalisation on account of 'the supposed imperatives of economic development in a global economy'.²⁴ As Emma Hunter reminds us in the Tanzanian context however, it should be remembered that concepts such as 'good citizenship' are never simply and passively accepted by the colonized state but rather refashioned as they are 'incorporated into the local context'.²⁵ Nonetheless, it is precisely in the process of this reworking that differential treatment of citizens is made evident and particular groups emerge as included or excluded.

Throughout its history, Tanzanian citizenship has been shaped by simultaneous processes of inclusion and exclusion. For example, the country's (then Tanganyika) first citizenship law ushered in a debate between, on the one hand, government proposals allowing the granting of citizenship status to non-Africans who had been resident there for at least five years and its opponents who argued that the rights of

²⁴ Ronald Aminzade, 'The Dialectic of Nation Building in Postcolonial Tanzania,' *The Sociological Quarterly*, 54, 3 (2013), pp. 335-366, p.336.

²⁵ Emma Hunter, 'Dutiful Subjects, Patriotic Citizens, and the Concept of "Good Citizenship" in Twentieth-Century Tanzania,' *The Historical Journal*, 56, 1 (2013), pp. 257-277, p.277.

citizenship should only be conferred to 'indigenous inhabitants'²⁶. This debate no doubt emerged in part because of suspicion and mistrust towards an English speaking elite with links to the erstwhile colonial administration. Furthermore, and as recently as the 1990s, legal changes made the acquisition of Tanzanian citizenship more difficult, especially for people from Commonwealth countries.²⁷ While this did not explicitly target any racial or ethnic groups, this had a direct impact on those of Asian heritage, with the result that Asian-Tanzanian citizens were seen as foreigners by some.²⁸ Is it worth noting that post-colonial nation building in Tanzania has played down the role of ethnicity, partly owing to Nyerere's introduction of Swahili as *lingua franca* and the establishment of centralized state institutions²⁹. As has been pointed out, 'whereas ethnic identification has formed the basis of politics and political organisations in [neighbouring] Kenya for more than thirty years, in Tanzania it has not'³⁰. Most contemporarily citizenship debates in Tanzania have instead centered on the idea of dual citizenship brought into view by an expanding Tanzanian diaspora, but it does so without reference to natural resource imaginaries. This paper seeks to add to this literature with a specific discussion of differentiated citizenship based on regional imbalances in Tanzania and an emergent identity politics in 'the south', particularly in relation to the ownership and (mis)management of natural gas. We thus view the contested meanings around natural resource discovery and management as both missing from existing discussions yet central to contemporary debates concerning citizenship in Tanzania.

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²⁶ For a fuller discussion of this and the history of Tanzanian citizenship policies see Aminzade, 'The Dialectic of Nation Building'.

²⁷ Ronald Amizande, *Race, Nation, and Citizenship in Postcolonial Africa. The Case of Tanzania* (Cambridge University Press, New York, USA, 2013).

²⁸ Ronald Amizade, 'From Race to Citizenship: the indigenization debate in post-socialist Tanzania', *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 38, 1 (2003), pp. 43-63.

²⁹ Ronald Amizande, *Race, Nation, and Citizenship in Postcolonial Africa. The Case of Tanzania* (Cambridge University Press, New York, USA, 2013).

³⁰ Barkan. *Beyond Capitalism vs Socialism in Kenya and Tanzania*. (Lyenne Rienner Publishers: Boulder, USA)

Whether parsed as ‘fractured’ or ‘differentiated’, understanding citizenship as unevenly experienced highlights that state technologies and modes of governing involve constructing ‘differences as a means of distancing people from one another’ and distributing differential treatment ‘to different categories of citizens’.³¹ This is both specifically evidenced – for example, in the struggles over sovereignty, citizenship and political identity in the first Ivorian civil war in the early 21st century³² – and in studies of autochthony discourses and identity politics in Africa more generally.³³ Taken together, it is clear that ‘defining the boundaries and meaning of citizenship’ remains ‘an issue of paramount importance in many countries’ facing up to the political opportunities and challenges enabled by resource discovery.³⁴ In the next section, we trace a politico-historical trajectory of resources and citizenship in Tanzania and delineate the contemporary significance of the ‘hidden agenda’ for understanding the outbreak of, and responses to, gas riots in the country. This follows an initial discussion of the history of natural gas in the country.

4. *Discovering natural gas and uncovering a ‘hidden agenda’ in Tanzania*

The production of oil or even natural gas has not been a prominent feature in Tanzania until recently. While BP and Shell first explored the Indian Ocean fields in the 1950s and 1960s, challenging ocean geography and preferable alternatives (e.g. cheaper options in the Middle East) saw extraction efforts abandoned until the late-

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³¹ James Holston, *Insurgent citizenship*, p. 5; p. 7.

³² Ruth Marshall-Fratani, ‘The war of “who is who”: Autochthony, nationalism, and citizenship in the Ivorian crisis’, *African studies review* 49, 2 (2006), pp. 9-44.

³³ Kevin C. Dunn, ‘Sons of the Soil’ and Contemporary State Making: autochthony, uncertainty and political violence in Africa’, *Third World Quarterly* 30, 1 (2009), pp. 113-127; Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Brilliant Mhlanga (eds) *Bondage of Boundaries and Identity Politics in Postcolonial Africa* (Africa Institute of South Africa, Pretoria, 2013).

³⁴ Dorman, Hammett and Nugent (eds), *Making nations, creating strangers*.

1970s when higher gas prices saw smaller companies revive exploration. More recently, however, rising global demand for natural gas coupled with cheap credit and surprisingly robust commodity prices following the Global Financial Crisis saw global exploration efforts increase. East Africa is one such area of exploration, with significant natural gas reserves recently discovered in the territorial waters of Tanzania and Mozambique. Regarding these discoveries one informant astutely remarked that ‘they wanted beer but they found soda’ with reference to the discovery of gas rather than oil.³⁵ However, global gas giants are now involved with BG Group, Statoil, ExxonMobil, and Petrobras (among others) heavily invested in the region. There has been great excitement at the magnitude of recent discoveries of natural gas in Tanzania, with the government setting the ambitious target of transforming Tanzania from a low to a middle income country with a high level of human development by 2025, with resources rhetorically linked to future ‘development’.³⁶

The combined reserves of the two historical finds in Tanzanian waters, at Songo Songo (Kilwa District, Lindi Region) and Mnazi Bay (Mtwara Region), are less than 5% of recent discoveries, while the existing gas at Songo Songo already provides 45% of total electricity generation capacity in the country. Furthermore, it is claimed, could ‘sustain 30-40 years of export production at a rate of between 10 and 20 million metric tons per year... a substantial boost to government revenue arising from the anticipated production-sharing contracts.’³⁷ Mtwara and Dar es Salaam are now connected by a 36 inch gas bore pipeline, which will eventually allow these more

³⁵ Interview, Ali Muhammadi, Bajaji driver, Mtwara Town, 10 August 2012.

³⁶ Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, ‘Tanzania’s Transformation and Vision 2025: Governing Economic Growth for Social Gain’, *Chatham House*, 31 March 2014, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/home/chatham/public_html/sites/default/files/20140331TanzaniaKikwete.pdf> (06 June 2016).

³⁷ Christopher Adam, ‘Tanzania: Turning natural gas into sustained growth’ in Ernesto Zedillo, Olivier Cattaneo and Haynie Wheeler (eds), *Africa at a fork in the road: Taking off or disappointment once again?* (Betts House, New Haven, CT), pp. 415-434, p. 418.

sizeable offshore reserves to be transported for processing and export. Confirmation of this pipeline led to major protests in the Mtwara region, a violent response to the seemingly inequitable distribution of gas revenues regularly framed within the historical discourse of a 'hidden agenda'.³⁸

There exists a widely held claim that the state, both in colonial and post-colonial times, has either ignored or has sought to deliberately marginalize the south of modern-day Tanzania, the so-called 'hidden agenda' referred to previously. Kamat argues that Mtwara remains 'Tanzania's most neglected and underdeveloped region'³⁹ and it is against this backdrop that contemporary claims for the just distribution of future gas revenues are made, thus bringing the politics of regional identity sharply into focus. This prominent sense of geographical injustice in 'the south' is noteworthy, especially given that Tanzania is often portrayed as a country not blighted by the ethnic tensions and political problems associated with other African states and especially those associated within neighbouring countries,⁴⁰ however this is historically informed, as discussed below.

This process of marginalization began more than a century ago. In response to the *Maji Maji* rebellion (1905-7) in the south of German East Africa (which largely resembles modern-day Tanzania), the colonial authorities decided that infrastructural improvements were to be abolished in order to limit the extent to which 'people in the area to organize themselves into an effective resistance group'.⁴¹ It continued when Tanganyika became a British Protectorate in the early 1920s, with 'preferences for other districts already established by their predecessors' consolidated by the new

³⁸ Seppälä and Koda (eds) *The making of a periphery*.

³⁹ Vinay R. Kamat, "'The Ocean is Our Farm': marine conservation, food insecurity, and social suffering in Southeastern Tanzania," *Human Organization*, 73, 3 (2014), pp. 289-298, p. 296.

⁴⁰ Paul J. Kaiser, 'Structural Adjustment and the Fragile Nation: the Demise of Social Unity in Tanzania,' *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 34, 2 (1996), pp. 227-237.

⁴¹ J.A.R. Wembah-Rashid, 'Is Culture in South-eastern Tanzania Development Unfriendly?', in Pekka Seppälä and Koda (eds) *The making of a periphery*, pp. 39-57, p. 47.

administration.⁴² While colonial rule tended to create opportunities in other regions, away from the south,⁴³ the Tanganyika Groundnut Scheme (1947-53) marks a noteworthy exception. Often seen to have been an abject failure when measured against the stated aims,⁴⁴ this Scheme created job opportunities for local residents and brought about major infrastructural changes, including the construction of a railway and the creation of a new port at Mtwara.⁴⁵ This represents a short-lived challenge to the 'hidden agenda', for some, although widely held views of significant post-colonial 'development' policies echo the general negativity of the colonial experience in the region.⁴⁶

In the late 1960s, the Tanzanian government sought to resettle the rural majority, ostensibly in order to: improve the provision of government services; increase agricultural outputs; and to foster a sense of shared (national) identity.⁴⁷ While initially voluntary, this became compulsory in 1973 with many people forcibly resettled which both destabilized the everyday lives of many in the rural majority and had a disastrous impact on the economy, with resultant food shortages commonplace.⁴⁸ A disproportionate number of these villages were established in Mtwara and Lindi, leading Killian to argue that southern Tanzania became a test ground for this government experiment in social reorganization,⁴⁹ with Mtwara the

⁴² Maia Green, 'Participatory Development and the Appropriation of Agency in Southern Tanzania', *Critique of Anthropology* 20, 1 (2000), pp. 67-89, p. 76.

⁴³ Bernadeta Killian, 'Villagers' perceptions of poverty: Kineng'ene village, Lindi District,' in Pekka Seppälä and Koda (eds) *The making of a periphery*, pp. 139-156.

⁴⁴ D.R. Myddelton, *They Meant Well – Government Project Disasters* (Profile Books, London, 2007).

⁴⁵ Matteo Rizzo, 'What was left of the Groundnut Scheme? Development disaster and labour market in Southern Tanganyika 1946-1952', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 6, 2 (2006), pp. 205-238.

⁴⁶ Author Reference, 2016.

⁴⁷ Leander Schneider, 'High on modernity? Explaining the failing of Tanzanian villagization', *African Studies* 66 (2007), pp. 9-38.

⁴⁸ Henry Bernstein, 'Notes on state and peasantry: The Tanzanian case', *Review of African political economy* 8, 21 (1981), pp. 44-62; Zaki Ergas, 'Why did the ujamaa policy fail? Towards a global analysis', *The journal of modern African Studies* 18, 3 (1980), pp. 387-410.

⁴⁹ Bernadeta Killian, 'Impacts of Finnish Aid in Forestry and Rural Development' (Report, Department of Political Science, University of Dar-es-Salaam Publications, May 2003), pp. 1-22

most intensively ‘villagized’ region in Tanzania.⁵⁰ This reinforces and supports the view that there has been a deliberate attempt to harm people in the south.

The damaging effects of villagization were tacitly acknowledged by Julius Nyerere on his retirement in 1985,⁵¹ with Tanzania’s first experience of structural adjustment under Mwinyi’s presidency the following year. Such processes had already brought about far-reaching political change and national competition for resources, and intensified a sense of regional injustice, in many African countries.⁵² Tanzania was no exception and the pain caused by structural adjustment, coupled with the damage caused by villagization, led the ruling CCM party (*Chama cha mapinduzi* – Revolutionary Party) to run a southern candidate, Benjamin Mkapa, for president in the first multiparty elections in 1995. During his tenure, he promised major infrastructural investments, not least the ‘Mkapa Bridge’. Completed in 2003, this bridge traverses one of the most perilous and inaccessible stretches of the Rufuji River and allows southern Tanzania to remain connected by road during the rainy seasons.

The following year, 2004, Mkapa signed plans for an Mtwara Development Corridor (MDC) a huge infrastructure project agreed to in conjunction with the leaders of Mozambique, Zambia, and Malawi in 2004.⁵³ A lack of funding meant that the MDC was not implemented until the African Development Bank provided loans in 2012 (following major gas discoveries). Nevertheless, the completion of the Mkapa Bridge and the inauguration of the MDC have led political leaders to assert that there is no

⁵⁰ Priya Lal, ‘Militants, Mothers, and the National Family: *Ujamaa*, Gender, and Rural Development in Postcolonial Tanzania’ *Journal of African History* 51 (2010), pp. 1-20.

⁵¹ Karl Maier, *Into the house of the ancestors. Inside the new Africa* (Wiley, New York, NY, 1998).

⁵² J.B. Adekanye, ‘Structural Adjustment, Democratization and Rising Ethnic Tensions in Africa’, *Development and Change*, 26, 2 (1995), pp. 355-74.

⁵³ *Southern African News Features*, ‘Four countries, one people, one development corridor: Mtwara’, January 2005 <<http://www.sardc.net/en/southern-african-news-features/four-countries-one-people-one-development-corridor-mtwara>> (03 February 2017)

credibility to claims that the south has been deliberately harmed. For example, former president Kikwete, that Tanzanians need to dispense with ‘the tale that people living in southern parts of the country were still Tanganyikans and those living in the northern part were real Tanzanians, that is now history’.⁵⁴ Yet, the continued failure to fully complete the paved road between Mtwara and Dar-es-Salaam, has been consistently seen as evidence of a ‘hidden agenda’,⁵⁵ and this narrative dramatically re-emerged in 2012. First with cashew nut farmers complaining that they were offered prices far lower than previously agreed upon,⁵⁶ but much further intensified over the issue of an inequitable distribution of national gas benefits, with promises made to southerners apparently broken.

5. Gas, Citizenship and the ‘Hidden Agenda’ in Southern Tanzania

First, the region should benefit [from gas revenues]. We should be attached to the national electricity grid and then the electricity, which should be created here, can be used here before helping in other regions. Development [maendeleo] would then happen here in Mtwara region as well as national development. But currently there is only the government developing themselves privately, there are no benefits for the people themselves.⁵⁷

This quotation, taken from a focus group conducted in Mtwara (January 2014), sees the management of gas extraction by the Tanzanian government through the lens of the aforementioned the ‘hidden agenda’. In nearly every interview that we conducted

⁵⁴ *The Citizen*, ‘Kikwete: Beware of foreign land grabbers’, 22 August 2009, <<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908220005.html>> (24 March 2016).

⁵⁵ S. Mesaki and J. Mwankusye, ‘The saga of the Lindi-Kibati road: Political ramifications’, in Pekka Seppälä and Koda (eds) *The making of a periphery*, pp. 58-74; Author Reference, 2016.

⁵⁶ *The Citizen*, ‘CUF Links Police with Mtwara Gas Violence’, 19 May 2013, <<http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/-CUF-links-police-with-Mtwara-gas-violence/-/1840340/1857564/-/t5cq4wz/-/index.html>> (03 June 2016).

⁵⁷ Focus Group, Muhammad Issa, Fisherman, Mtwara Town, 09 January 2014.

(51 out of 60), it is argued that the southern part of the country has been deliberately marginalized or ignored by central government. The seemingly sudden interest in the region is viewed with suspicion, as one informant astutely remarked: 'it has taken almost fifty years to complete the road from Mtwara to Dar-es-Salaam, but these [gas] companies arrive here and the road from the port to town is perfect and took less than a year to complete'.⁵⁸ This, in part, echoes previous findings where the mismanagement of the gas industry has fomented latent levels of unrest in the region.⁵⁹ Yet, going further, the local and historical modalities of identity are also important here, with respondents emphasizing that broken promises made by central government, both now and in the past, have belied a kind of dual citizenship that has posited an urban elite as superior and more 'Tanzanian, than a 'backwards' or 'inferior' south. This was nowhere more evident than the often cited construction of the pipeline from Mtwara to Dar-es-Salaam.

Rumours of the gas pipeline were widespread during 2012 when construction was, as yet, unconfirmed. Announcements toward the end of the year met with a great deal of hostility in the region and sparked protests across the Mtwara region, from December 2012 onward. A series of protests in late January 2013 saw seven deaths,⁶⁰ with the following months marked by sporadic protests. Of those interviewees that were involved in the protests in some way, the vast majority (20 out of 22) saw this as a necessity in response to the broken promises that the government had made to them: 'we have been told too many lies to keep quiet any longer, we needed to be heard and to show that we were angry'.⁶¹ In more general terms, nearly all interview participants

⁵⁸ Interview, Hamisi Ali, Port worker, Mtwara Town, 15 January 2014.

⁵⁹ Elise Must, 'From silence to storm,' p.24.

⁶⁰ Nicholas Bariyo, 'Pipeline Riots Leave Seven Dead in Tanzania', *Wall Street Journal Online*, 28 January 2013, <<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887324329204578269942829075484>> (06 June 2016).

⁶¹ Interview, Baraka Juma, farmer and protestor, Mikindani, 23 June 2014.

Commented [JC9]: I added this bit to further strengthen the originality of our argument.

Commented [RA10]: Framing our work in relation to Must's paper.

across the three periods of fieldwork made reference to suspected mismanagement of the gas industry, and saw this as a result of corruption in some instances but overwhelmingly as evidence of a government disinclined to support the south of the country. This further reflects a perception that areas to the north, and especially cities, receive a unfair share of government revenues and support and also demonstrates an opponent against which a shared 'southern' identity stands.

22 May 2013 saw parliamentary confirmation of the decision to construct a pipeline from Mtwara to Dar-es-Salaam, where natural gas was to be processed and the vast majority of new jobs were to be created. This led to the culmination of these long running protests in Mikindani and Mtwara, since this went against certain guarantees that had previously been made to keep more of the benefits in Mtwara: 'when we first found the gas they told us "you will get the jobs, you will profit", but after the budget announcement we knew that this was not true and many of us felt enough was enough'.⁶² Major crowds protested outside of government buildings in Mtwara town, with offices and officials later attacked, police stations burnt down and officers targeted. This rioting targeted the apparatus of the state, as well as journalists seen to be too close to government and failing to report what was happening. This was informed by a subnational politics of resistance and contestation over what many view as 'our' resources, either locally or regionally. In the majority of interviews (24 out of 30) that took place after the riots, some specific reference is made either to 'our gas' or to the 'resources that we own', with clear reference to either the specific region (Mtwara) or to southern Tanzania in a more general sense.

Many informants do highlight a long history of regional marginalization, and it is clear that the response to decisions relating to the gas industry go far beyond what has

⁶² Interview, Selemani Kidume, farmer who protested in May 2013, Mikindani, 23 July 2014.

previously happened in southern Tanzania. These responses, then, are informed by a sense of injustice over resources that are yet to be extracted, indicating that the contestation over natural gas offers a more profound challenge to the order in post-colonial Tanzania. While Must views this through the lens of injustice over resource benefits spilling over into a conflict that would not otherwise have emerged,⁶³ we contend that this is more the crystallization of a series of long-standing grievances that have centred on the contested nature of citizenship. Of course, to some extent, mobilization efforts are enhanced by mobile phone technologies as well as the enhanced freedom to organise and express views that has not been the case historically. Nonetheless, we see this incipient challenge to the post-colonial order in Tanzania as the result of a continuing but uneven process of democratization, and technological change, as much as seeking to assert that resource discoveries are the only meaningful factor here.

In response to the protests, the government called in the riot police and the army, deploying tear gas in an attempt to disperse the crowds and, according to some informants, using live rounds of ammunition on gathered crowds. While this claim is rejected by the government, it has acknowledged one fatality in relation to the unrest, a woman that was seven months pregnant.⁶⁴ Few respondents openly support violent protests, yet it was the government response that agitated many: 'they say that only one died, but we know that it is many more than that. Three died here in Mikindani, and more than ten in Mtwara. Not only that, they keep taking people out of Mtwara and beating them'.⁶⁵ The rather heavy-handed nature of the response leads some to redeploy the notion of a deliberate attempt to mistreat the south and constituents

Commented [JC11]: I like the section. I did a bit of editing to it to help it read better.

Commented [RA12]: I have added this to engage more with Must's paper and to attempt to engage with the reviewer's comments. Please let me know what you think.

⁶³ Elise Must, 'From silence to storm.'

⁶⁴ *BBC News*, 'Tanzania Mtwara Gas Riots: Pregnant Woman Killed', 24 May 2013, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-22652809>> (06 June 2016).

⁶⁵ Interview, Hadija Ahmadi, cashew nut farmer who protested, Mtwara Town, 21 July 2014.

therein and it was not uncommon across the different fieldwork periods, for respondents to suggest that the political map of Tanzania's constituencies now adds further weight to the historical 'hidden agenda'. It was argued by a number of informants that there is effectively no incentive for the incumbent government to support the south: 'they have never helped us before and they know that we will not vote for them in the [2015 general] election anyway, so why would they help us now?'⁶⁶ Again the national political picture is used to assert that the south is continually mistreated, in spite of democratization.

This view is borne out by the results of the election, both in terms parliamentary seats and presidential vote share but most of the support for opposition party's maps onto the Mtwara urban district, as well as urban and rural districts in Lindi.⁶⁷ As discussed in the methodology, and elsewhere, most of the hostility towards process relating to future gas extraction emanated from those located closest to where the pipeline was to be constructed and those who had actually witnessed the port development and infrastructural changes.⁶⁸ Exposure to the changes linked to future gas extraction has cemented a clear sense of regional inequality, especially in Mtwara. We extend this somewhat however; it is not only that the post-colonial order is being challenged, but that this is a symptom of emergent process of democratization. Many of those that we consulted in Mtwara, especially those involved in the riots, link the removal of future benefits from incipient processes of gas extraction to regional and political patrimonialism and the favouring of other 'northern' regions. This is discussed in the context of differentiated citizenship below.

⁶⁶ Interview, Yusufu Masoudi, local Civic United Front (CUF, opposition party) representative, Mikindani, 10 January 2014.

⁶⁷ Nick Branson, 'Tanzania: Division and Derision in the United Republic', *Africa Research Institute*, 17 November 2015, <<https://www.africaresearchinstitute.org/newsite/blog/tanzania-division-and-derision-in-the-united-republic/>> (28 June 2017).

⁶⁸ Elise Must, 'From silence to storm.'

The fieldwork conducted in 2014 clarified the fact that few were surprised by the unrest relating to the pipeline, while rumours of this during the fieldwork in 2012 were rife but, as yet, unsubstantiated. This, it was consistently suggested to us, is the outcome of poorly managed expectations: 'we have been made promises but experience tells us that they will not be kept. For example, the road [to Dar es Salaam] is unfinished and jobs go to outsiders. Now we hear that a pipeline is coming, the profit will leave our region'.⁶⁹ Of particular significance here is the timing of this comment, which precedes final confirmation of the pipeline but frames expectations in relation to gas discoveries as unlikely to be met. It illustrates the notion of differentiated citizenship, or at least a different articulation of such in relation to the assumption that the profits from resource discoveries will, and were always going to, be used to benefit other parts of the country.

Once again, this refers to the more economically prosperous 'north' of the country and particularly the commercial capital of Dar es Salaam. As such, figurative boundaries are drawn around southern Tanzania and while these sometimes differed between informants, they offer a common language of difference in relation to 'the north' or to Dar-es-Salaam, and echoing a rural-urban distinction in the mode of Mamdani. Moreover, they allow for a sense of differentiated citizenship which confers the sense of a lesser status on southerners (*Wakusini*) who therefore need to provoke action in order to receive what they 'deserve'. In this formulation, natural gas is enabling an articulation of citizenship 'as a political identity' from below⁷⁰ and challenges the nationalist position of the (Tanzanian) state. Moreover, it again seems that these protests have challenged the post-colonial order in Tanzania in a more profound way than at any time previously, especially in the south.

⁶⁹ Interview, Habiba Selemani, market vendor, Mtwara Town, 10 July 2012.

⁷⁰ Gabriela Valdivia, 'Governing Relations between People and Things: Citizenship, Territory, and the Political Economy of Petroleum in Ecuador', *Political Geography* 27, 4 (2008), pp. 456-477.

Respondents interviewed in Songo Songo Island, on the mainland at Kilwa Kivinji and at Kilwa Masoko all displayed a high degree of resentment at the way gas extraction has been managed, with some adding that the same fate would befall those in Mtwara: ‘we have seen this before, they told us that we would get the jobs, that we would get the infrastructure, that *we* would get the technology, but we only got a few jobs as drivers, chefs, and manual labourers. We do not even have electricity other than in town’.⁷¹ The longitudinal nature of this research, coupled with the wide geographical reach, lends additional layers to these findings and demonstrates the role that the circulation of narratives along the Tanzanian coast played in forewarning Mtwarans of the likely construction of the pipeline. A third of informants in Mtwara in 2014 (10 out of 30), all of whom had protested the previous year, made specific reference to gas extraction at Songo Songo island in Lindi region: ‘we knew that our people [*wenzetu*] in Kilwa did not benefit from the gas and that they built a pipeline to Dar. It should not have been such a surprise to us and we were stupid to believe the government’.⁷² While the experiences in Kilwa might have helped to predict the unrest before it happened, the size and scope of the protests in Mtwara were unheard of during the post-colonial era, indicative of the fact that broken promises around gas extraction are seen as more significant than are failures to meet other expectations..

These concerns also presage a further concern that that the very commodity produced – gas – would be principally used to produce electricity and yet most stakeholders in Mtwara (other than those in the main town) lack access to its supply. In the following quotation, the issue of injustice comes through very strongly in the argument that residents local to the physical infrastructure of gas extraction, the emerging pipeline and the redeveloped Mtwara port, ought to benefit from the

⁷¹ Interview, Aridi Basha, market trader, Kilwa Kivinji, 01 August 2012.

⁷² Interview, Ally Adeni, restaurant chef, Mtwara Town, 25 July 2014.

Commented [RA13]: Again, linking this to Must and trying to offer more depth to the analysis.

Commented [JC14]: I took out the last sentence which directly references Must. It should be clear by now (I hope) that we are moving beyond her argument. Explicitly mentioning her all the time is a bit of overkill I think.

electricity generated: ‘You are here, look around, very few people have electricity. Soon Tanzania will export gas all over the world, to China, India and even Europe, but we will not get it here. When they finish the pipe, electricity will be exported, even though we need it here’.⁷³ Many respondents suggested that this compared negatively with other regions in Tanzania and other parts of the world.

Once again the ‘national’ picture – concerned with future gas exports and (from the previous quotation) electricity generation for the national grid (which does not stretch to Mtwara and Lindi regions) – dominates, seemingly at the cost of any semblance of regional or ‘local’ benefits. An even more common trope, among most respondents in 2014 (22 out of 30 interviewees), was the juxtaposition of Dar-es-Salaam and Mtwara, when it comes to access to electricity: ‘The pipe will take this gas to Dar, they will have the jobs and the electricity but we will not. We are citizens (*raia*) but we have no rights (*haki*). Are we Tanzanian, or not?’⁷⁴ The issue of citizenship is brought explicitly into focus here and is widely reflected in the narratives of the protestors that we consulted, many of whom made reference to the fact that their mistreatment was at least in part owing to a lesser in comparison to their fellow Tanzanians from other regions. Moreover, it is a view that is not exclusive to the group that felt that they had ‘lost out’ through the construction of the pipeline and the mismanagement of the gas industry but rather was shared by some who, superficially, seemed to have benefited. A concern with fragmented citizenship, in other words, transcended the allocation of costs and benefits (the distributive justice) derived from gas extraction.

Commented [JC15]: I added this bit.

The view that Lindi and (in particular) Mtwara regions should receive specific benefits from the development of the gas infrastructure and, more importantly, from

⁷³ Interview, Bashir Lisingi, logistics officer, Mtwara port, 11 January 2014.

⁷⁴ Focus Group, Juma Ali, shop owner and protestor, Mikindani, 05 August 2014.

future extraction, is echoed in the sentiments of many in southern Tanzania. This is similarly articulated by those that have, at least on an individual basis, benefitted from the burgeoning gas industry:

‘There is a big gap between what is said and what is done. The government makes many promises, they say a lot of things but they do none of them. They told us we would benefit from the gas project, that we would clean [process] the gas right here in Mtwara. Then we found out that it would all happen in Dar, after they have built the gas pipe; this made many people in Mtwara angry’.⁷⁵

Given the widespread mistrust of the government in southern Tanzania and the belief in a ‘hidden agenda’, it is perhaps unsurprising that many agree the benefits of gas extraction, and especially the jobs associated with the processing of natural gas, would not be created in Mtwara. Moreover, the government openly acknowledges that in spite of the fact that the natural gas is located in Mtwara and Lindi: ‘national resources can[not] be restricted only to the place where they are found’.⁷⁶ This offers a clear divide between state actors and their Southern constituents who want regional or ‘local’ benefits. While ‘localism’ is a contested notion,⁷⁷ it is important to emphasise the lack of recognition that many in Southern Tanzania feel, and articulate in relation to gas discoveries and their potential impact on the locality and the broader region. Once again, this can be seen as part of an ongoing struggle for recognition but one that, through active protest and unrest, is subtly challenging the post-colonial order in Tanzania, and questioning the extent to which previous nation-building efforts have been an unqualified success. Moreover, this again points to an idea of

⁷⁵ Interview, Musa Fikiri, offshore gas rig worker, Mtwara, 13 January 2014.

⁷⁶ Balile, ‘Protest over gas pipeline in Mtwara turn violent’.

⁷⁷ See, for example, Giles Mohan and Kristian Stokke, ‘Participatory development and empowerment: The dangers of localism’, *Third World Quarterly*, 21, 2, pp. 247-268.

southern identity and belonging, a subnational political imaginary that asserts both resistance to a process deemed unfair and rights to be treated more equally in relation to other regions.

[This 'localism' stands in sharp contrast to the way in which 'local' is used by national (and international) discourses on resource management, most notably through 'Local Content Policy'. Created in 2014 created, Tanzanian local content policy identifies 'local' as anything from within 'the Tanzanian mainland and its people'.⁷⁸ While it is acknowledged that this is international terminology in the extractives sector, this version of 'local' was viewed ironically and with anger by dissenting voices. This view, articulated most clearly by the former head of a prominent Tanzanian NGO and critic of resource policy in Tanzania, described it as 'not local, without content, and lacking genuine policy direction!... They take "local" to mean "national" based on the view that a sophisticated industry requires sophisticated, meaning foreign people. This is what Professor Muhongo [then Minister of Energy and Mineral] wants'.⁷⁹ When coupled with the residual belief in a 'hidden agenda', a range of alternative possible futures are proposed by informants in Mtwara, some of which are altogether more radical.

6. *The Politics of the Possible: Gas and alternative citizenships*

The belief in a deliberate attempt to marginalise southern Tanzania goes some way to explaining the gas protests highlighted above. However, they are also framed by a fragmented and disconnected sense of citizenship which has provoked more radical

⁷⁸ United Republic of Tanzania, 'Draft One – Local Content Policy of Tanzania'.

⁷⁹ Interview, Anonymous Participant, Dar es Salaam, 18 July 2014.

Commented [JC16]: I added this bit to better set up and respond to the editors' comment.

Commented [JC17]: I did some more editing and clarification here.

Commented [JC18]: Changed the title to lend more coherence to the new line of argument

imaginaries. One of these relates to the potential for the ‘southern’ region to secede from the Tanzanian state which have been given a focal point following the discovery of natural gas. For example, one participant sees seceding from the state as a potential option for Mtwara, in the wake of South Sudanese independence: ‘here in the south [of Tanzania] we are different and we need to be respected and to get a good deal with this gas. If not, we need to take a lesson from what South Sudan did last year’.⁸⁰ The argument followed that if the Southern Tanzania region fails to get a ‘good deal’ the possibility for secession ‘is a serious one’, while other informants referred to the Arab Spring in a similar manner and sought to enact something closer to this (although on a fraction of the scale) this through their protest. In other words, if the region fails to benefit sufficiently, with change through the ballot box unlikely since few in the region votes for CCM, then an uprising might be necessary to ensure that the benefits of gas extraction remain. Always framed by the question of citizenship, the anti-state tone of respondents during research periods has hardened since protests were so ruthlessly suppressed in 2013.

Commented [JC19]: Some more editing here, to get citizenship in again.

The fieldwork conducted closest to the Mtwara protests, in January 2014, provoked the most hostile responses and anti-state rhetoric perhaps given that this was within seven months of these troubles and these had continued with extrajudicial beatings and abuse by state actors seemingly commonplace (and articulated by several interviewees), especially against political opponents in Mtwara.⁸¹ One focus group interaction highlights the fragmented nature of Tanzanian citizenship in the context of secessionism:

⁸⁰ Interview, Basana Saidi.

⁸¹ *The Citizen*, ‘Shock of Mtwara Torture’, 20 July 2013, <<http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/-/1840392/1920690/-/efte9qz/-/index.html>> (08 June 2016).

People in other parts of the country think that we are different to them, before they thought we were just poor and uneducated. They still don't think we are the same but now it is because they think we are violent and greedy. All we want is to benefit from this gas, not to continue suffering...

[Interjection from another participant] ... but we ARE different. Truly. Many of us would be happy with a separate country here. Maybe Mtwara, Lindi and Ruvuma, maybe the north of Mozambique too because we are the same, they are our people [*wenzetu*]. People in the north of the country do not know us, our own new country would be good.⁸²

From late in 2012 until May 2013, it was common for generally peaceful protestors to display signs with messages such as '*gesi ibaki [huku], au tugawane nchi*', and '*gesi kwanza, vyama baadae, hapa hakitoki kitu*'.⁸³ Both sentences articulate an alternative position with the fault lines of Tanzanian citizenship exposed by calls for secessionism if the gas does not remain in the region. They suggest that it is gas itself which offers the opportunity to debate the meaning of both sovereignty and political identity in contemporary Tanzania.

Although, these examples highlight a radical politics of secessionism as a response to the inequitable distribution of gas revenues, their motives are less clear. It may be, for example, that it is more of a tactic to attempt to gain a better deal for the region rather than a serious demand to rupture Tanzanian political ordering. What is clear however, is that 'Tanzanian' citizenship is no longer being confined to national boundaries. For example, the contemporary experiences of the people in northern Mozambique are also highlighted by some to demonstrate that similar problems exist within a bordering country, and one that has close ethnolinguistic ties to southern

Commented [JC20]: I altered this bit.

Commented [JC21]: I've rejigged this too, in order to strengthen the citizenship framing. The editors want this whole section to be more conceptually led, which is why I think we need to consistently bring it back to our citizenship bit...

⁸² Focus Group, Issa Abdulahi, university student, and Kritopha Mwangi, cashew nut farmer, Mikindani, 05 August 2014.

⁸³ The first sentence translates as 'the gas must remain [here] or we must divide the country'. While the second states: 'gas first, political parties later. Nothing should be leaving here [Mtwara].

Tanzania given the preponderance of Makonde people across this frontier.⁸⁴ ‘Just like ‘our people’ [wenzetu] in Mozambique, we have suffered in the past and we suffer now. They have gas and do not benefit, just like us, and they have oil too. We should be together and look after these resources, but our governments scare us into silence’.⁸⁵ This suggestion of unification along ethnic lines across a political border uses natural resources as a means to recalibrate political identity away from national citizenship and towards alternative configurations seen as oppositional to both national state actors and multinational corporations.

Commented [JC22]: I added this too.

Beyond the high level reimagining of political identity wrought by calls for secession, more everyday manifestations of citizenship were imagined in the light of employment patterns in the nascent gas sector. For many respondents, these have been marked by the favouring of foreign workers as well as Tanzanians from other regions of the country: ‘Of course, we know that most people in Mtwara cannot dig for gas and oil, we do not have the skills and education, but we can cook and we can be the drivers. Why do these jobs always go to people from Dar and the north?’⁸⁶

Commented [JC23]: A new introductory bit.

Both prior to and following the major protests, Mtwara Port itself emerged as a socio-material terrain of struggle and activism. This was informed by a strong sense of inequitable distribution of employment opportunities within ASCO, the British firm that has run the Mtwara port which took over operations at the port in September 2013. One informant argued, for example, that: ‘they [ASCO] promised jobs and training, but people from Mtwara just work with our hands [manual labour]. The

Commented [JC24]: Added this

⁸⁴ Marc Sommers, ‘Urbanization and its discontents: urban refugees in Tanzania,’ *Forced migration review* 4 (1999), pp.22-24.

⁸⁵ Interview, Fatuma Mohammedi, protestor and cashew nut farmer, Mtwara Town, 7 July 2014.

⁸⁶ Interview, Ali Muhammadi, teacher, Mikindani, 26 June 2014.

government must force them to do more. We want more jobs for people from here so we went on strike. We will do it again'.⁸⁷

An anonymised British logistics expert working at the port added that one of the key demands of the striking workers, which accounted for the majority of Tanzanian nationals employed at the port, demanded the removal of a number of expatriate managers from Europe, North America, and Australia alike. While some historical research in the region has suggested that exploitation by global capitalism is preferred to the marginalization of the region,⁸⁸ the targeting of foreign workers is crucial, since it outlines the complicity of the state with global capitalism. This echoes corollary work of Emel et al. elsewhere in the extractives sector, wherein 'the national' framing within the Tanzania gold mining industry is quite clearly articulated alongside foreign capital.⁸⁹ This adds further nuance to the idea of a coherent Tanzanian political identity and competing political imaginaries are always dynamic. At the state-level emphasis is placed on natural resources as part of 'national' wealth while at the regional level, in Lindi and especially in Mtwara, gas discoveries are seen through the lens of unequal historical treatment. Many interviewees assume that this will continue in future and some feel vindicated for their violent responses to the parliamentary confirmation of the pipeline, given that this is seen as a contemporary manifestation of the historical process of northern regions being favoured.

The decision to attack government offices and police stations is significant since it crystallizes opposition to the pipeline as explicitly anti-state. State discourse has consistently framed natural gas as a 'national' resource and government actors have suggested that nefarious 'foreign elements' fuelled the unrest. In 2013 John Cheyo, a

⁸⁷ Interview, Mika Masoudi, Port worker, 18 January 2014.

⁸⁸ Author Reference, 2016.

⁸⁹ Jody Emel, Matthew T. Huber and Madoshi H. Makene, 'Extracting sovereignty: Capital, territory, and gold mining in Tanzania', *Political Geography*, 30, 2 (2011), pp. 70-79,

Commented [JC25]: Is the reference you?

member of the opposition UDP, questioned the motivations of protestors questioning whether: 'this chaos is just about transferring natural gas from Mtwara to Dar es Salaam. There are certain forces behind the Mtwara chaos.' Aden Rage, MP for Tabora Urban for the governing CCM, added that: 'in the Mtwara saga some global powers are out to show China that they can thwart any project that is not in their interest', since Chinese loans funded the construction of the pipeline.⁹⁰ These suggestions were not pursued in this research, owing to its scope, but whoever the forces behind the "chaos", respondents in the protests themselves framed their futures in terms of citizenship struggles, regional politics and history rather than geopolitics.

Commented [JC26]: This needs a reference.

Commented [JC27]: Reworked this last bit.

7. Concluding Remarks

The discoveries of gas in Tanzania can be seen as only one of many examples of the ways in which the frontiers of extraction are changing across Africa. Global energy markets are shifting unpredictably in response to multifarious forces and take place in various political economic configurations and at different speeds. As Bridge and Le Billon argue, these places might be rendered 'unconventional' on account of their extreme geographies (such as deep sea mining and the Arctic) but also because extraction occurs in places where 'state capacity...and civil society are in a fledgling condition'.⁹¹ In other words, the matter of resource politics is always geographical; the 'stuff' of resources like gas moves across space, through pipelines and so forth. Moreover, geographies of investment in resource extraction are also changing on

⁹⁰ *The Citizen*, 'Why Mtwara Violence is Beyond the Gas Pipeline', 23 May 2013, <<http://www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/Why-Mtwara--violence-is-beyond-gas-pipeline/-/1840392/1861170/-/ctbqen/-/index.html>> (08 June 2016).

⁹¹ Gavin Bridge and Philippe Le Billon, *Oil* (Polity, Cambridge, 2013), p. 13.

account of governments renegotiating the terms of access to ‘national’ resources.⁹² However, for all the new attention that resource geographies have attracted, little has focused on their links with citizenship in the African context.⁹³

The example of Tanzania presented in this paper attends to these dynamics. It goes beyond offering one of the first analyses of the political economy of gas in Tanzania and interrogates the political geography of citizenship *within* the country. Framed in the context of a ‘hidden agenda’ in which Tanzania is conceptualised by protesters as a divided state, we have shown how the politics of resource conflict actually serves to extend the fragmentation of Tanzanian citizenship itself. Furthermore, this fragmentation or ‘differentiated’ nature of Tanzanian citizenship also serves to reveal the fault lines of national claims to distributive justice. To make clear, the government’s assertion that gas related protests are not in the ‘national interest’ and that resources should ‘belong to the nation’, and not to proximate communities, is founded on the idea that state territorialisation of resources is the legitimate and *fairest* way of configuring the national economy.

What our study has shown is that not only is this national framed claim to fairer distribution contested and challenged by a differentiated citizenship, but also that it belies both a misrecognition of affected communities (as ‘anti-state’ and lacking patriotism) and a sense of procedural injustice in which community access to information is lacking and government corruption remains problematic. Concern over corruption has been witnessed across Tanzania for some time and was expressed in the context of the emergent gas industry throughout the fieldwork periods represented here: ‘the government agrees these contracts [with multinational companies] but we

⁹² *Ibid.* p. 61.

⁹³ For recent summaries/reviews of this literature, see: Gavin Bridge, ‘Resource geographies I: Making carbon economies, old and new,’ *Progress in Human Geography*, 35 (6), pp. 820-834; Gavin Bridge, ‘Resource geographies II The resource-state nexus,’ *Progress in Human Geography*, 38 (1), pp. 118-130.

do not see them. They develop themselves and we just suffer... We knew about the pipeline before it was announced but we could not stop it, all we could do was respond with *vurugu* [violence]'.⁹⁴ Here, gas's physical manifestation as a pipeline serves to further fracture an already differentiated citizenship with many in Mtwara who see the state more enabling for flows of international capital than as a commitment to distributive justice. This has echoed subsequent national-level debates which were a central theme of the most recent presidential election and won by Dr. John Magufuli who stood on an explicitly anti-corruption platform and was duly elected in October 2015.

There are unquestionably tensions, when it comes to claim-making over gas, between what we might refer to as the national and the local/regional scales in Tanzania. This is the case whether we focus on the distribution of revenues, the sharing of information relating to gas extraction, and the recognition of the discrepant historical experiences of citizens from different region. In this instance the focus is on the southern Mtwara (and to a lesser extent Lindi) region illustrating a further fracturing of the 'national' picture in Tanzania and perhaps reflective of a 'differentiated citizenship'. Moreover, this has led to the articulation of an array of alternative ways of imagining the political and economic future of gas extraction with radical alternatives from further protests to secessionism forwarded as possible solutions.

There is clearly a strong sense of regional affiliation and long-term identity-based politics which are significant in Mtwara. These are both intensified by past marginalization and are likely to be reworked and reasserted in relation to gas extraction. To a certain degree, the fateful combination of ethnicity and resource-

⁹⁴ Interview, Hamza Yusufu, Port worker and protestor, Mtwara Town, 08 August 2014.

based conflict can be seen elsewhere on the continent, with a large range of examples found especially in the Niger Delta.⁹⁵ However, much of this literature bypasses the role of citizenship in explaining and analysing the dynamics of conflict. Instead, there is a tendency towards analytical primacy for approaches that centre on classical geopolitics or international political economy. These dimensions are important for the present study too; how precisely these impact upon resource-based development policy at the national level is unclear, particularly in a global context in which commodity prices for natural gas have steadily fallen since 2014⁹⁶. What we argue however, is that studies of resource conflict should pay more attention to the contested nature of citizenship and go beyond an uncritical national framing.

⁹⁵ Cyril Obi and Siri Aas Rustad, *Oil and Insurgency in the Niger Delta: managing the complex politics of petroviolence* (Zed Books, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, London, 2011).

⁹⁶ Although there has been a recent upturn, prices fell by over half from 6USD/mmBTU at the beginning of 2014 to 2.07USD/mmBTU in May 2016. See, *US Energy Information Administration*, 'Henry Hub Natural Gas Spot Price', 10 June 2016, <<https://www.eia.gov/dnav/ng/hist/rngwhhdm.htm>> (10 June 2016).