BRIDES IN RAGS!
CONFLICT, POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, POLITICAL SETTLEMENTS AND UGANDA'S TRANSITION TO MULTI-PARTY POLITICS SINCE 1986

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Abstract. Following a long-drawn-out five-year insurgency (1981–1986), Uganda moved from a crisis to stability where political organizations were progressively transformed, albeit with institutionalized roadblocks. The former insurgent army – the National Resistance Army (NRA) and its political wing the National Resistance Movement (NRM) pursued a post-conflict transformation process, which was essentially driven by neo-liberal reforms, but metamorphosed into a dominant political party, undermining the hither to traditional political parties. Through historical interrogation, this paper seeks to bring to the fore reflections to the questions; "Why did the post war-NRA/NRM undertake a rapid shift in political ordering after the guerrilla war in 1986? Why did the new government pursue a pseudo neo-liberal agenda that sought free-market style policies and nested democratization after the guerrilla war?" These preliminary questions are asked for two fundamental reasons. One; it is common knowledge that in the early 1970s Museveni –The NRA warlord was a Marxist–Leninist and therefore in hot pursuit for socialism as a mode of statecraft. However, he became less of a socialist particularly at the end of his rebellion. Why? Secondly, post-war state-building theory, presupposes that after rebels have captured power following a civil war, their propensity to pursue liberal free-market type of politics is habitually low. Why then did NRA/NRM with extremely negative views for free-market style of politics undertake to institute multi-party politics? What political settlements did NRM pursue and how have they been institutionalized and instrumentalized overtime? What have been the attendant effects of these settlements in Uganda and how can these impacts be profiled in light of other war-to peace states in Africa?

Keywords: Democratization, Political Parties, National Resistance Movement, Political Organization and Political Settlements

HISTORICIZING NRM AND POLITICAL SETTLEMENTS IN UGANDA

Since attaining Independence in 1962, Uganda has witnessed over 20 varied intra-state conflicts. However, the most significant of these has been the five-year (1981–1986) conflict that brought a number of reforms aimed at the revamping the economy that was in deep economic depression. Following in the thinking of the Washington consensus, the new government embarked on a series of economic and political reforms, which among others included, currency devaluation and budgetary constraints, limited government spending and borrowing, disarmament, demobilization and re-integration of former war rebels, reducing the size of the civil service and the army and adopting the rule of law. Over the past three decades, Uganda's economy has been growing following a market-driven policy with a strong focus on private sector growth. The pursuit of economic liberalism was constructed as a stratagem for promoting international business engagement in the country, accentuated by an

on-going political economic structure to pursue political stability, buoyed by dominant political party power.

This article employs political settlement as an analytical approach to prop a comparative understanding of post-war state-building strategies amidst the changing global politics. In this paper, it is argued that the political settlement approach which has demonstrated reasonably growing influence in the academy of comparative politics, has increasingly devoted limited attention to understand how countries witnessing different political traditions and attendant external pressure, can move from crisis to stability. Using the Ugandan trajectory to democratic transition, we seek to demonstrate how such countries mediate the varying relationships between political power and externally instituted demands to structure government and political cohesion under war to peace transitions in Africa. The transition to democracy in any society is marked by five progressive stages. These include; formation, crisis, struggle, disruption and completion. In the same regard, the trajectories to a political transition take three distinct forms. These are: a) State-led transition b) society-led transition, and c) a negotiated transition. In the context of Uganda after 1986, transition to democracy took the form of a state-led transition, as illuminated by the NRM political program commonly known as the "Ten-point program". The political setting in which the NRM's political program was written helps to explain the importance that Museveni and other government leaders who were involved in the guerrilla struggle attached to it, and what their outlook of the political transition was anticipated to be.

Correspondingly, Museveni, who also doubled as the NRM ideologue, postulated that post-independence Ugandan political rulers had greatly aggravated the problems of economic distortion introduced by British colonial rule. In that respect the solution to these problems required a new political and economic strategy that was contained in the ten points. Among others, real democracy had to be organized at all levels from the village up by elections to "people's committees," by elections to parliament, and on the basis of a decent standard of living so that ordinary people could resist the flatteries of unprincipled politicians. Secondly, because insecurity in Uganda had been largely the result of "state-inspired violence," such violence could be eliminated through local democracy, "politicized army and police, and absence of corruption at the top." Thirdly, national unity could be consolidated by eliminating sectarianism. This would be done through the removal of politics based on religious, linguistic, and ethnic factional issues. Further, it was possible to stop the interference of foreign interests in Uganda's domestic concerns since independence, but this could only happen if the Ugandan leadership developed independent priorities based on Ugandan interests. Fifth, the most important protection for these interests was to construct an independent, integrated, and self-sustaining national economy that would stop the leakage of Uganda's wealth abroad (Museveni, 1986: 44-75).

In essence the Ten-Point program set the stage for future political settlements in the country. In variegated ways the post 1986 scenario in Uganda, borrows from Laws (2012) notions relating to political settlements. Laws argues that political settlements are ongoing political processes that include both one-off events and agreements-suggesting that there is need to question the extent to which players to the agreement respect the rules of the game. This confirms the view that parties to a conflict are tangled in a two-level game, that is comprising of horizontal negotiations between elites on one hand and vertical relations between elites and their followers on the other (Alina 2017). Expressively, political agreements negotiated by conflicting political players within historically specific periods of time is referred to in this paper as political settlements (Di John and Putzel 2009; Parks 2010). Political settlements may take the form of constitutions, peace treaties, and public policies,

public memorandums among others. The definition of political settlements has however come under extreme scrutiny for its conceptual inadequateness in definitive terms across the academy of conflict specialists, political scientists and economists. The concept has been flawed for ambiguity and impossibilities around measurement (Laws 2010).

The notion of political settlement does not fundamentally differ from institutions. Perchance, a useful discrepancy is that while a political settlement is a formal agreement negotiated among contending actors which in many ways defines the distribution of power, not all formal institutions are the negotiation outcomes of political disagreements (Di John and Putzel 2009). Examples of political settlements in this paper are the NRM and other political party elites after 1986 to form the broad-based government and the Constitutional agreements between indigenous political elites; 1993, and the 1995 constitutional agreements among political elites and citizens. Political settlement in this paper does not refer to 'on-going political process' (Laws 2010) or 'rolling agreements' (Parks 2010). Political settlement represents objectively verifiable political purposes and historical specificity to give it significant explanatory value in the historical analysis of development.

In light of the above postulations, it is equally evident that settlements can encouragingly be made and sustained if there is an achievable institutional set-up. Why? Because the form, nature, and performance of institutions is a substantial prerequisite to the enforcement of any political settlement.

Indisputably, where one of the parties to the settlement has unequal power to make or unmake the settlement, or possess the legitimate authority to change the rules of the game or use the military to enforce the settlement provisions will undermine the permanence of such a settlement (Hoddie and Hartzell 2005; Bell 2006; Lindemann 2008). In essence institutions and how people interact with them including the ways through which people organize around them, forms a cornerstone and/or foundation of every political order and can entrench political settlements (Kelsall, et al, 2022). But then we also need to inquire the extent to which parties to such settlements view each other (Lindemann, 2011). Do such parties view each other with respect or in denegation, suspicion and fear? Certainly, trust and confidence are key to securing an enduring settlement. Nonetheless it is noticeable Khan (2018) despises the role of trust and confidence in the exercise of political settlements. Khan, for example, argues that all that is needed for a political settlement to be reached, is securing a higher balance of power sufficient to produce a 'sustainable' level of violence. Khan's supposition stems from the notion that power of the victors is significantly important than the justice of the lesser powerful. Clearly, unequal power is seemingly a key feature of political settlements in many of the war-to-peace transitions, and where power is lacking, deceit and treachery become the foundation of the settlement, particularly where settlements are propagated by groups of unequal strength.

Therefore, as part of a wider scholarship on post-conflict state-building in Africa, this paper seeks to contribute to an on-going debate that relates to Uganda's own domestic policy over the last three decades. We seek to grasp why Uganda chose to undertake a rapid shift in economic and political ordering after the civil war in 1986. Why did the new government pursue a neo-liberal agenda that sought free-market style policies and perceived democratization after the civil war? These preliminary questions are asked for two fundamental reasons. To begin with, it is common knowledge that in the early 1970s Museveni was a Marxist–Leninist and therefore in hot pursuit for socialism as a mode of statecraft. However, he became less of a socialist particularly towards the end of his rebellion. Could it be true that the five-year bush war de-radicalized Museveni into a parochial capitalist? Or could it be a product of deeper reflection in view of continental politics and the wider global politics in face of the imminent failure of the communism? Why? Because after

the war in 1986, Museveni became increasingly a pan-Africanist and a darling of Western capitalist states. This reflection seems to direct us to the conception that; on second reflection, Museveni became aware that state-building is based on regional interdependence and wider global relations that demanded an ideological orientation that was less brutal to capitalism. Perhaps it was some search of western and/or global and continental legitimacy. Secondly, post-war state-building theory, presupposes that when rebels capture power after a civil war, their propensity to pursue liberal free-market type of politics is habitually low. For instance, Robert Mugabe in Rhodesia, was extremely radicalized by the liberation struggle and he became an extreme abhorrent of free-market style of politics. His incentive to democratize Zimbabwe was extremely low. This scenario is much comparable to the Maoist rebels on capturing power in Nepal, the Tajiks in Tajikistan as well as the Eriteria's Isias Aferworki after the war of independence with Ethiopia.

Since 1962, Uganda had witnessed three different ideological transitions. For instance, from 1962–1969 (The first Republic), Uganda practiced a bifurcated ideological policy. Practicing socialism at home, while preaching capitalism abroad. In the second republic, 1971–1979, under Idi-Amin. The country witnessed a flirtatious relationship with the Soviet Union, with an aim of growing indigenous capitalism at home. From 1986 to date, the country has courted Capitalism both at home and abroad. At independence, the country had a multi-party-political system comprised of three dormant political parties in the country including the Uganda Peoples' Congress, (UPC) Democratic Party (DP) and Kabaka-Yekka (KY), with each founded on specific ideological, religious and cultural interests. UPC, for example, represented the interests of the Anglicans; D.P represented those of Catholics, while KY represented the interests of the royalists in the Buganda Kingdom. Indeed, in the first four years of post-independence Uganda represented what can be termed as the real fruits of independence, depicted by steady economic growth and political stability. However, all this was short lived as disagreements between Buganda and Central government emerged, leading to the 1966 crisis.[1]

In 1971, Idi Amin took power after staging a military *coupd'tat*. His reign was characterized by military dictatorship. He ruled by decree. Amin and his administration centralized all appointments including those of provincial commissions, who were in most cases military officers who were given far reaching power Because of increasing domestic and international pressures, widespread brutality became a major facet of Idi Amin's reign. This culminated into his final overthrow by a joint force of Ugandan exiles and the Tanzanian People Defense Forces (TPDF) in 1979. The fall of Idi Amin in 1979 paved way for state reconstruction in Uganda, given the political and economic decline. As a result, the post Amin "umbrella" government organized the 1980 multi-party elections whose outcome was heavily contested after UPC was declared winner, giving birth to what is commonly known as the Obote II government. The disputed electoral results threw the country into a deep political divide. This political divide sowed the seeds for the rebellion in central Uganda, which remained a major pre-occupation of the Obote II government. The Obote II government was

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[1] In 1962, Uganda attained independence from Britain, with Buganda granted a federal status within a United Uganda. However, because of Uganda's "super state" nature, there was continued acrimony between Buganda and the Uganda government headed by the new Executive Prime Minister, Milton Obote, a Langi from Northern Uganda. This acrimonious relationship climaxed with the 1966 political crisis which led to the attack on the *Kabaka's* Palace in Mengo, the headquarters of the Buganda Kingdom and seat of *Kabaka*. The monarchists had asked Obote to take away his central government from the capital Kampala to another location outside Buganda. They even called on the *Baganda* for mass defiance against the Milton Obote administration. In short, the Buganda called for a secession, which culminated into the invasion of Mengo in 1966 and subsequently, the abolition of all the kingdoms by the Obote government that were by then existing in the country.

overthrown in 1985 by another coup led by General Tito Okello. Tito Okello's reign was short-lived as it was also overthrown by the NRA rebel army in 1986.

OUTLOOK OF THE POLITICS AND THE REBELS BEFORE COMING TO POWER

Before coming to power, the NRA waged a five-year insurgency war against the Obote II regime. The rationale for the up-rising was based on the notion poor governmentality including gross human right abuses, state-inspired criminality, failure in the rule of law, poor civil-military relations and overall state-failure. There was outright state sanctioned violence, social unity sacrificed by functional hostility, while economic decay compounded the national despair. Uganda was a clear case of an African failed state. The immediate pre-text and timing of the civil war was occasioned by the outcome of the December 1980 General elections. The elections were superintended by the Military commission, which declared UPC the winner. This declaration was alleged to be a deep electoral fraud, and was construed by the opposition DP as a stolen victory. This was predicated on early voter returns which indicated that DP had won the elections. However, under legal notice no. 10, returning officers were instructed not to announce any further returns. Consequently, final results showed that UPC had won the presidency, with 72 seats in the House, compared to DP's 52 seats. The Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM) the political arm of Front for National Salvation (FRONASA) forces that had aided the over throw of Idi Amin in 1979, secured only one seat (Mutiibwa (1992). When Obote seized power on December 12, 1980, a number of forces started considering the question of armed struggle to remove the dictatorship. There were two lines of thought that emerged on the strategy that should be adopted. Some advocated a coup *d'etat* while others advocated a protracted people's war.

Consequently, the return to power of UPC's Milton Obote and his cohorts Paul Muwanga, Tito Okello and Oyite –Ojok cast a gloomy picture especially in central Uganda where, the majority of Baganda (especially the DP loyalists) demonstrated open disdain for UPC and Obote, to which they responded with outright bitterness. This animosity complicated politics as it also further sacked in the old ethnic divide between north and south (Kisekka-Ntale 2007). UPC was largely supported by the Anglican church and ethnically linked to the northern leaning Nilotic tribes. The DP was on the other hand supported by the Catholic and Southern-Bantu tribes. Milton Obote's second return to power commonly referred to as Obote II, presided over a quite unruly military, that participated in extra judicial killings and brigandage. This negative state of civil-military relations would later contribute to civil disobedience, which created a justification for civil war in the south, led by the National Resistance Army (NRA) under the command of Yoweri Museveni.

In 1981 the NRA rebels launched their clandestine activities after attacking Kabamba Army garrison in Mubende and later established themselves in the central districts of Luwero, Mpigi and Mubende in central Uganda which came to be referred to as the Luwero Triangle. This protracted civil war was based on popular local support – a strategy where popular forces, are supported by the masses, to wage a protracted war against those in power. Indeed, the NRA forces started off with a weak military unit of 27 men in terms of numbers, with limited weaponry and organization, they used this strategy to enlist community strength to overcome their weaknesses in contrast to that of the UNLA forces. The strategy helped to draw localized support, create a buffer for the rebels through local concealment, supplying of war commodities including food rations, provide local intelligence and the much needed for fighting labor. This protracted people's war entailed operations carried out by small units-sections, operating almost independently and launching short, ambushes and executions of notoriously anti-people elements. In order to cope with these attacks, the UNLA forces tried

to spread out their forces by fragmenting their army into numerous small units, often committing widespread mass killings of local communities, leading to international outrage and concern.

The NRA strategy of a protracted people's war had been previously used with great success in many of the communist countries including China, Cuba, Mozambique, Vietnam, Algeria. Therefore, having had an ideological framing of a socialist tradition, particularly from Tanzania and Mozambique, the NRA rebels and its leader Yoweri Museveni, had acquired the tools of communal engagement that aided it to wield massive support. According to documentation from the Africa Centre for contemporary records, it is well highlighted that apart from the local Baganda, Banyankole, Basoga, Batooro and Bakiga supporters, the rebel leader also enlisted support of the Rwandese refugees who had also been part of the original FRONASA rebel outfit in the 1970s. The utilization of the bantu leaning tribes was strategic as it provided two political strands. The first being an ethnic one, whereby being bantu, and able to communicate in *luganda*, the rebels related well with the local communities in the Luwero Triangle. Secondly, the Rwandese refugees had also integrated among the local Baganda communities and hence provided desired social cohesion. The other political aspect was linked to the North-South dichotomy, on which Ugandan politics has been structured. These two strands would later become the cornerstone of organization and guerrilla-marketing during and after the civil-war.

Furthermore, the military discipline exhibited by the guerrilla outfit ingratiated them to the peasants. This was in sharp contrast to the violence and plunder unleashed by the government forces. The rebels' discipline further endeared them to the Ugandan exiles who in varied ways viewed them as the beacon of hope to free Uganda of maladministration, dictatorship and state failure. NRA observed a strict code of conduct that forbade fighters from stealing from the community, not even sugarcanes or sweet bananas. Raping of women and other forms of abuse to civilian were completely outlawed and severe reprimand including execution were meted to offenders. It is thus plausible to argue that this discipline was strategic for winning the peasant support. For, it enhanced local political support and extensive institutional state-building during its five-year guerrilla war. Based on this, the NRA and its political wing, the National Resistance Movement (NRM), was widely found acceptable. For that reason, the rebels established a system of administration in the form of Resistance Councils (RCs) in many of the liberated areas projected them as capable of running the affairs of the state.

In view of the above, the rebels were able to capture much of the territories in central, south and south-western Uganda, and were able to control the coffee, cattle and *matooke* exchange. This was in addition to the international media outlook that the external and local reporters gave to the rebels. For instance, the Observer and the Guardian newspapers in the United Kingdom gave the NRA a positive image of a force driven by the desire to subdue lawlessness and gross abuse of human rights and put the country on to democratic path. In part this can be situated in NRA's own ability to use its external-political wing as well as the leadership's skills in conducting an internationally appealing campaigns particularly to the Ugandan diaspora in Western Europe, Canada and North Africa.[2] Yet in utilizing this

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[2] Prior to the attack on Kabamba barracks in 1981, Museveni, the leader of the Rebel pack dispatched a political/international mobilization team to Nairobi that came to be known as the External Wing. These were largely professional elites who initially comprised of Mathew Rukikaire, Amama Mbabazi, Eriya Kategaya, Sam Katabarwa among others. The External Wing was also charged with recruitment of fighters, reception and specialized treatment for injured fighters, procurement and delivery of arms, diplomatic recognition, propaganda among others. Therefore, external help played a major role in the survival of the NRA. Libya's Gaddafi offered training to some fighters and supplied arms more than once. Nigeria's Chief Abiola provided cash. Rwanda's

positive image, more pressure piled on the opposition forces who were increasingly getting fractured and functionally weakened. This further contributed negative credibility due to the spiral of violence and lawlessness both in war ravaged zones as well as the urban area in the Kampala, the Capital City. It's on account of this international acceptance that equally attracted extra funding for the rebel movement particularly from Libya's Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.[3]

In terms of ideological outlook, the NRA rebels had a clear Marxist-Leninist predilection. This was not in any way accidental given the nature of leadership. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni who led the rebel pack was an ostensible Marxist-Leninist, and an ardent believer in Marx and Lenin's thoughts on the management of state and society. Yoweri Museveni did not only study about Marxism when at the Dar-es–Salaam University College of the University of East Africa, in Tanzania, he also involved himself in revolutionary ideas such as those espoused by anti-colonial crusader, Franz Fanon. He was further involved with the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO), by actively participating in Mozambique liberation war. This impacted on Museveni the student, Museveni the exiled, Museveni the rebel leader. The influence of FRELIMO was reasonably useful when the time was ripe for launching of the NRA guerrilla war because the same skills were applied during the five-year war. This is in addition to the views of the armed freedom fighting as espoused by the anti-colonial writings of Fanon Frantz, could have inspired his radical views on oppression. Equally so the writings of Walter Rodney and Regis Debary tutored Museveni's thought on political economy and statecraft. It is right to suggest that this formed the background to NRA's war-time state-building in plan and the preparation for postwar politics. For instance, the NRA instituted the Resistance Councils (RCs)as institutions of local governance, primarily to consolidate political base and legitimacy in secured rebel territory. The Resistance Councils (RCs) were constituted as a nine-member committee who were directly elected by villagers at the village level. The NRA also gave jurisdictional powers to the committees to adjudicate over key decisions as the rebel leadership restrained itself from overturning such decisions.

In many ways the RCs framework was a political forum to discuss the war, check on community collaboration, mobilize the community recruitment, ensure easy supply of war materials including food among others. However, it is also obvious that the RCs were conduits for promoting war propaganda and promoting positive and progressive views about the rebellion. This observation is made in light of the above scenario, it logical to question; how can a violent rebellion give spaces of civilian voice and seemingly civilian democratic control? This view is collaborated with Kasifir's (2005) observations that while the peasant looked willing to cooperate, their cooperation was of mixed feeling because many felt under captivity and felt at high risk. Most of the peasants felt an underlying sense of coercion even if they were not open about it since all activity was under rebel surveillance (2005: 285). The war-time state-building and institutional machinery founded on the peasant mobilization also came under severe criticism especially in the post-war period. It came under great scrutiny specially by the West who were uneasy with the former rebels who were now in power. In one of the international briefings with the Guardian Newspaper (The Guardian 23 August 1985), Yoweri Museveni pointed out that; "We have been labelled Marxist radicals but of

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Habyarimana offered a safe passage for supplies and top officials into the NRA liberated zone in the western region. Burundi's Bagaza entered and executed illegal contracts with the NRA that gave rise to the Controversial Picfare deals to support the rebellion.

[3] Indeed, on January 28, 1986, three days after Museveni captured power, Gaddafi on the eve of the new President's "fundamental change" inaugural speech, sent a congratulatory message in which he derided the West as "fascist usurpers" who had been "crushed" by the NRA victory. By implication the cold war in many ways played in favor of the NRA rebellion.

course such labels do not matter." There is no doubt Museveni wished to use his Marxist thought in statecraft.[4]

THE INHERITED ECONOMY AND ITS ADJUSTMENT TO THE WASHINGTON CONSENSUS

Without doubt NRA's capture of power was in many ways professed as "Second liberation" of the country since independence, given the political and economic experience the country had witnessed since Amin's takeover of power in 1971 for, the regime was characterized by economic sanctions and international isolation, partly due to the regime's response to domestic and external pressures. The country went into rapid political and economic decline. To illustrate this, in 1972 Amin expelled over 80,000 Asians. This was followed by the expulsion of Europeans and Jews from the country, as part of the regime's wider anti-western strategy. This eventually gave birth to the notion of a black economic emancipation project and as a result, farms and factories that formed Uganda's economic spine were seized and re-distributed among the Uganda blacks. Due to lack of critical skills in managing enterprises and industries, this strategy failed and gave birth to two important features of Amin's economy – *Magendoism*[5] and *Kondoism*.[6] This already bad situation was combined with Amin's massive military spending, external borrowing and external regional aggression, culminating into bad regional relations, and in part accounted for the demise of the East Africa Community in 1977. All the above conspired to have an increase in external debt, sending the economy into free fall. The overthrow of Idi Amin in 1979 paved way for the return of Obote in 1980 through a highly disputed general election, marking the seconding coming of Obote II regime. During the Obote II regime there were significant efforts to right the economic wrongs and move the country away from state failure. This was done through encouraging foreign direct investment, seeking donor support, largely through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in exchange for floating the Uganda shilling, removing price controls, increasing agricultural producer prices, and setting strict limits on government expenditures. The Obote II regime further encouraged formerly expelled Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) to return and revamp their formally nationalized businesses and industries. These initiatives created some economic growth between 1980 and 1983 (BoU,1983). Yet lack of foreign exchange became a major constraint on government efforts to revamp the economy as well as encourage new investments. This became a pressing problem particularly in 1984 when the IMF ended its support for re-organization following a disagreement over budget policy.

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[4] The Intelligence Agency (CIA) dossiers why Washington spurned Museveni's 1981 request for arms, but the cable contains accounts of America's unease about the rebel leader's closeness to the then Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi who the West considered unfriendly. In the cold war period which formally lapsed with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, three years after Museveni seized power; the Americans worried that the new "nationalist, non-aligned" Uganda President, a scholarly Marxist-oriented individual, would gravitate toward the Soviet Union and impinge the spread of capitalism. "The survivability of his government would take precedence over all other considerations and make Museveni susceptible to potential offers of Libyan or Soviet military assistance," the CIA wrote in a memo to guide Washington's political decisions, including by the then President Ronald Reagan.

[5] *Magendoism* is a term used to refer to the black-market situation that resulted from the country's isolationism for the international economy leading to the scarcity of essential commodities such as sugar, fuel milk, salt and meat during the Amin Tenure. The period was also characterized by hoarding of commodities, creating artificial scarcity leading to astronomical prices of commodities. By 1980, *Magendoism* accounted for 50% of the GDP. For it was associated with a new class of people that were commonly known as *Mafutamingi.*

[6] *Kondoism* on the other hand referred to the general state of lawlessness, brigandage and civil-disorder that accompanied the *magendo* economy.

During the brief regime of Tito Okello-Lutwa in 1985, the economy nearly slipped out of control as civil wars extended across the country. Out of political depression, a five-year rebellion escalated and the intervention of neighboring Kenya did not help much. It is in the above context that Uganda came to be referred to as failed/collapsed state, to the extent that when the rebel outfit, the National Resistance Army (NRA) took over power in 1986, it was largely seen as a unique event in Eastern Africa. For, the NRA was able to capture power mainly through winning the confidence of the population. The economy however was in depression, characterized by hyperinflation, failed industry, collapsed infrastructure and poor supply of essential and non-essential goods and no exports to talk about.

STRATEGIES USED TO ADJUST TO THE EXISTING INTERNATIONAL ORDER

As earlier pointed out, following seizing of power, the NRM government published a "political program known as the Ten-Point Program" drawn up in the days when the NRM was an army of anti-government rebels. The Ten-Point Program emphasized the importance of economic development, declaring that an independent, self-sustaining national economy was vital to Uganda's interests. The manifesto also set out specific goals for achieving self-sufficiency by diversifying agricultural exports and developing industries that would use local raw materials to manufacture products necessary for development. The Ten-Point Program also set out to improve basic social services, including water, health care, and housing; to improve literacy skills nationwide; to eliminate corruption, especially in government; to return expropriated land to its rightful Ugandan owners; to raise public-sector salaries; to strengthen international ties in the region; to develop markets among East African nations; and to maintain a mixed economy combining private ownership with an active government sector. What is clear however, is that the NRM was pretty opposed to the IMF programs and argued that the deteriorating economic situation in the country was a result of the first IMF sponsored structural adjustment programs (World Bank 1983).

In that regard, the NRM favored statist strategies for economic development including allocation of economic goods, controlling of prices among others. The NRM government proposed a major Rehabilitation and Development Plan (RDP) for fiscal years 1987-88 through 1990-91 with IMF support; it then devalued the shilling and committed itself to budgetary restraint. This four-year plan was intended to stabilize the economy and promote economic growth. Other goals were to reduce Uganda's dependence on external assistance, to diversify agricultural exports, and to encourage the growth of the private sector through new credit policies. The NRM's commitment to poverty reduction and political stability; attracted remarkable encouragement from donors, making the economy grow at an average growth rate of 6% in the 1990s.

In accordance with the move to the West, the NRM government accepted economic reform programs and in May 1987, the Government initial steps to economic programs under the IMF/ World Bank as well as other agencies of the European Commission were initiated. This was born out of the dire need for substantial economic restructurings to overhaul the collapsed state. This included removing price controls, floating the exchange rate, and tightening government spending (Brett, 1995). Owners of expropriated firms and properties were encouraged to return. With IMF support the NRM undertook major economic reforms aimed at encouraging private sector growth and diversifying Uganda's agricultural exports. Uganda's over-reliance on a small number of agricultural exports, notably coffee, had left the economy vulnerable to fluctuations in production and swings in global commodity markets. Under these early reforms, the Ugandan shilling was devalued and budgetary constraints were adopted. Inflation, which had peaked at 190% 1987, was brought down to 26% by 1991.

As pointed out in the NRM Government reform prologue, there was need to improve on the NRM's own performance and to deliver on the NRM's promise of restructuring as espoused by the protracted people's revolution. This was intended to enhance the performance of the public service to achieve good governance and optimum resource utilization that caused the misrule of the past regimes. As a result of the Economic Recovery Programs (ERP) initiated in 1987, the first set of reforms were characterized by the restructuring of the Public Service including ministries, the police, the judiciary, prisons service teaching institutions, health serving institutions, and military-based commissions. With external assistance, the Government of Uganda began a process of demobilization in 1993. Through this process, ex-soldiers were reintegrated into their homelands, as the government committed to building a small, modern and professional army (Brett EA 1998). However, since 1996, there was a reversal in the demobilization efforts. In this respect, the reform of the public service which actually started in 1997-2002 was indicative of the identification of the short falls of the earlier reforms (GoU,1994). The main tenets of the program were to develop the Public Service that delivers timely, high quality and appropriate services aimed at developing and facilitating growth of a wealth creating private sector. To operationalize this mission, the components of the reform program included; Enhanced management of the Reform, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness, Management information and control systems, Developing human resources, time management, organizational discipline, and good governance.

INSTITUTIONALIZING POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS AND THE TRANSITION TO THE NO-PARTY STATE AFTER 1986

Conventionally, political parties play a significant role in any democratic process. Political parties play the role of mobilization of the population for political participation, civic education, political socialization and regime oversight among others. While popular revolt, popular resistance as the case of the NRM can lead the fall of an Authoritarian regime, only well-mobilized political parties can complete the process of a transition to Democracy. For political parties to be able to perform this role, they should have a strong organization base within society. They should be able to influence and conduct political activities with the locus of law and order. In the Ugandan context however, the post-war transition was met with a ban on political party activities (Mujaju 1997).

Under a gentleman's agreement between the NRM and traditional six political parties, it was agreed that all parties were to be assembled in a broad-based government-hereafter known as the Movement. This gentlemen's agreement constituted a foremost political settlement. Kisha (2015) defined it as an elite Bargain "When elite players and interest groups settle for a specific politico-economic system, a relatively enduring social-political order is created until punctured by external shocks or internal contradictions" (2015: 163). This political settlement was promoted as the foundation for new democratic order and transformation in the Ugandan Society. However, this kind of political settlement led to the complete regression of the parties' relevance for, the broad-based system encouraged individual merit principle ahead of a political party (The Movement Act 1997). In essence the political restrictions set in motion a no-party state in Uganda. Constraints and roadblocks in political activities in Uganda can be located in what can be termed as "Museveni Political theory of no-party politics." President Museveni sponsored the notion of political restrictions on the basis of the country's past political troubles. He reasoned and continues to reason that the country's past political complications were a result divisive and sectarian politics, championed by political parties. His theory postulated that as a cure a "Movement" or "No-

party" political system in Uganda was the answer. For, Museveni hypothesized the "Movement" or "No-party" system of government, though comprehended as an unorthodox political arrangement, was a perfect substitute to a multiparty system, and a corrective remedy to the toxic and sectarian tendencies historically associated with political parties in Uganda (Museveni, 1997). This new political renovation was championed as a local African solution to an African problem.

The movement was purportedly, all-inclusive movement in which individual candidates would run for elections based on their personal merit. It is based on democratically elected resistance councils from the village level to the National Resistance Council (Parliament). It was founded on participatory democracy which enables every person to participate in his or her own government at all levels of governance. It was an all-embracing in its approach and vision. It has no manifesto of its own, apart from the commonly agreed upon program. It does not recruit members, since all people in Uganda are presumed to be members of the village resistance councils. At all times it aimed to give expression to the people's sovereignty. During elections people vote for candidates based on their own merit and not on the basis of their party affiliation. It is clear that the NRC presented a new form of representation for the post conflict state. To many, this presented an opportunity to rebuild the transition to democracy. But how representative was the NRC? Clearly, the NRC represented the youth, the women, the workers, the Army and other groups which emerged through the direct representation. But was this representation adequate especially using indirect system of elections from the RCII up to the national assembly? What is clear is that the NRC was the foundation for the promotion of an overbearing presidency as it perpetuated absolute presidentialism in present day Uganda. The President used his power of patronage to influence the vulnerable legislature. Indeed, the closed-door sessions of the NRC offered an opportunity for the President to prevail over the legislature.

Further, Museveni, articulated the view that most societies in sub-Saharan Africa were still in a pre-industrial stage, and have not yet developed the "economic class differentiation" which he maintained, formed the basis for the diverse political parties found in industrial nations. Having rooted for peasantarisation, Museveni's submitted that political maturity of the peasants who form the majority of the population in Uganda and Africa were unappealing. Using a Marxist-Leninist consideration, Museveni argued that because people in peasant societies lack a class identity, they are prone to ethnic and religious polarization, easily exploited by politicians who are "messengers of perpetual backwardness" He espoused that societies at this stage of development tend to have vertical polarizations based mainly on tribe and ethnicity. This means that people support someone who belongs to their group, not because he puts forward the right policies. Museveni's theory seemed to resonate with Kuenzi and Lambright's perception that political parties, are a disruptive force that promotes particular mode of thought and have the capacity to undermine national unity and the political order (Kuenzi and Lambright 2001: 348).

It therefore emerged that Museveni used the political history of the country to create an institutional justification for political restrictions. However, discussions with key informants revealed that the act of instituting political restrictions aimed at benefiting from the narrative of the past and creating a wrong impression about the political consciousness of Ugandans. Such generalizations failed to consider the notion that many Ugandans had over the years, past 1986 moved beyond their own ethnic associations as definers of their political awareness. Fear of the return to the past and sectarianism was used by the government to justify present restrictions yet the Movement in many ways illuminated features of a prebendalist and sectarian outfit. Critical reviews such as those presented by Sebaana-Kizito a former Minister of Cooperatives in the NRM government and later a DP presented independently pointed out

thus; " in its real sense the Movement was constructed as a forum for propagating political treachery and promoting deceptive international image to gain local and foreign legitimacy'' Indeed, Wasswa-Ziritwaula another DP Stalwart representing Kampala Central as RCV in the walked out of the National Resistance Council (NRC), in 1989, when the Movement chose to extend the transitional rule by another three years.[7] He described the action as complete deceitfulness and reneging on the original transitional plan. According the NRC Proceedings, Ziritwawula argued that the Bill for the extension of the NRM tenures was fraudulently processed and did not follow the rules of the House. He further argued that Ugandans cannot guarantee that they can take control of the external factors which disrupted the implementation of the NRM program. He thus warned that NRM was repeating the same mistakes committed by Milton Obote in 1967, when he abrogated the 1962 constitution. On that account, this was a red-light that Ugandans should have scrutinized with total concern because the NRM as a broad-based government comprised of individual with divergent views who were collected by the President and therefore lacked the legitimacy to decide for the people on such an important decision. To Actors like Ziritwawula this was furthering the stay of the no-party rule in Uganda. Clearly the new government lacked the know-how on political organization and was taking time to build its own statecraft, using the goodwill and experience of politically affable actors. Undeniably the international actors especially the development partners were enthusiastic with such a mode of governance. They were equally concerned with the prolonged moratorium on political parties. for it became apparent that the new establishment and thinking made it difficult for the rebirth of competitive politics. The Movement side used the organizational structure of the state, to conduct political activities including elections.

FROM THE MOVEMENT POLITICS TO MULTI-PARTY POLITICS WITH ROADBLOCKS

The freeze on political parties was legally consolidated in 1995 with the promulgation of the Constitution, which under Article 71 adopted the movement as an alternative system of governance. Although there have been several reasons advanced for the Movement governance system such as the need to uphold national unity, the system came under severe criticism for suffocating political rights and freedoms (Tripp 2004; Oloka-Onyango 2007, Mukwaya 2003). It was partly a result of such criticism that in 2004, a referendum on political parties/movement was held and citizens voted for a return to the multi-party system. The constitution recognizes the right to political organization (Art. 29) and the right to form political parties (Art 269). Although parties were allowed to form, even though they opposed the Movement system (Art.73), there remained massive restrictions on their political activities as proscribed by Article 269.

Although the Movement system was expected to be an impermanent governance system, through which a future political system would be crafted according to the willpower of Ugandans, the system was severally prolonged. The Movement continued as the system of governance for 20 years following a 2000 referendum on political systems. Conversely, in 2005, following a second referendum, Ugandans opted for the introduction of a multiparty system, with the NRM emerging as dominant party (Kisekka-Ntale 2008). It is almost two decades since the reversion to multi-party democracy, the fruits have not fully been evident.

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[7] The reasons advanced for the extension of the Movement System included the insurrection in North-Eastern Uganda. Secondly was the threat from non-friendly countries, thirdly the deterioration in the national incomes due to the decline in the country's external earnings. Further the country was also in the process of making the new constitution. Lastly the Members of the NRC members also argued that their mandate had been made for six-month yet it was mandated to be for two-years.

The NRM, continues to enjoy unmeasured state-linked advantages including the use of financial resources. Undeniably, Ofwono Opondo, the Executive Director of the Uganda Media Centre has various highlighted that sustaining a financial advantage over the opposition is a key consideration for the NRM. During national elections the ruling party financially supports its national candidates. This is in sharp contrast to the opposition candidates (Mbaziira, and Kisekka-Ntale, 2010). Like elsewhere in Africa, ruling parties have turned into dominant political parties and often work to shrink the political space for the opposition parties (Bogaards 2006). Such parties achieve that by continuously eroding the power of competitors to carry out political mobilization and political socialization of their members (Basedau 2005). In so doing they stifle interest articulation and interest aggregation. In the Ugandan scenario this has been procured through continuous institutionalization by sponsoring a number of legal and policy frameworks (Makara, 2009). Among others these include the Political Parties and Organizations Act (PPOA), 2005, the Public Order Management Act (POMA), 2013 and more recently Public Health guidelines established under the COVID-19 pandemic.

An appraisal of the intentions of the framers of the above three institutional agendas reveals that, they were framed with the latent intention of curtaining freedoms of assembly and association particularly with regard the opposition parties. For instance, the PPOA defines and regulates the financing and functioning of political parties and organizations including their formation, registration, membership. While the Act reaffirms the constitutional right of every citizen to form or join a political party of his or her choice (section 3(2), the same act presents strictures to political organizations. For instance, Article 6(1) demands that a political party or organization shall be registered in accordance with the act and shall pay fees as prescribed by the Minister, by regulations made under section 27. This section presents a major stricture to parties wishing to register especially if its promoters are perceived to be a threat to the ruling party. The 2021 registration National Unity Platform (NUP), the leading opposition party in Uganda, clearly illustrates this scenario.[8] Aware of the potential and existential barriers to the registering of their new and popular party, the NUP promoters led by Robert Kyagulanyi, Mathias Mpuuga (Current Leader of Opposition in Parliament of Uganda) and Medard Ssegona did not openly register their new party. Rather the promoters had to register it through an alternate party, the National Party for Unity and Reconstruction (NPUR), later renamed the NUP. Indeed, the official registration of the NUP followed a major restructuring of the Electoral Commission, the body responsible for the registration of political parties under the PPOA. Perceptively, President Museveni deemed the leadership at the Electoral Commission of negligence, opposition infiltration and abuse of office. Yet the Electoral Commission has for all different accounts (overt and covert) been deemed by the opposition parties a key factor in the numerous NRM electoral victories. For example, 2016 the Electoral Commission failed to deliver polling materials to the many urban constituencies in Kampala and Wakiso on time, a factor deemed to frustrate the populous opposition strong holds (Gibbs 2016).

Following the transition from the Movement system to multiparty politics in 2005, Political parties were projected to be the new power centers within the context of a multi-party-political arrangement. The Political parties were expected the perform their rightful functions. The key functions here include providing citizens with a stable and distinctive set of ideas and goals and project their expectations about democracy, adjust them in a general way towards national policy options, and make them feel part of the process of collective

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[8] Prior to its registration as political party, the NUP was referred to as People Power, a youthful political movement through with initial support was coalesced.

choice actions in a country (Thelen 1999). The underlying consideration is that the political parties must have the capacity to aggregate the interests and aspirations of a substantial percentage of the citizenry by directing the expectations of the varied categories their members, supporters and wider citizenry including the families, clubs, firms, associations, and movements through their internal processes and producing a program that mixes public policies in such a way as to satisfy the general demands of their constituents (Tavits 2005). Another intriguing aspect around political parties, is that they are also expected to structure the electoral process by identifying and nominating competing candidates for office. This is done through socializing, training and classifying persons to actively participate in campaigns, hence offering to citizens aggregated in territorial constituencies a choice between alternative sets of leaders (Mainwaring and Edurne 2007). Lastly, once political parties, have competed in the electoral process, should be capable of assembling a government and/or providing an internal structure to the legislative process – whether they do it alone or through an alliance (Manning 2005).

It is almost twenty years since the re-introduction of political parties, in Uganda. However political parties in the country continue to suffer from state persecution and numerous restrictions. Apart from the ruling party-the NRM, other parties cannot effectively mobilize citizens for effective aggregation of their demands. In most cases, political party efforts are constrained by the POMA. For example, political parties and their supporters to hold a public rally or a community hall meeting, they need a letter of authorization from the Inspector General of the Uganda Police (IGP). Even where such a letter is granted, it is not sufficient and a rally or meeting can be dispersed. It is on account of this that, Human Rights Network Uganda, Indigenous Voluntary Associations, FIDA, Butambala County MP Muhammad Muwanga Kivumbi and Bishop Zack Niringiye petitioned the Constitutional court in 2013 they asked the justices to quash the entire Public Order Management Act. Indeed, in a 4-1 majority judgment late February, 2020, the Constitutional court justices struck down the dreaded section 8 of the Act, used by police over the years to block and disperse opposition gatherings. Clearly, this was not the first time the opposition had sought the courts of law as was in the case of Attorney General V Paul, K Ssemogerere (2004). While Section 8 of the POMA, (which gave authority to the IGP to disperse political gatherings) was quashed, Political Parties still face the same strictures, and at times met with the full force of the army and other private vigilant groups such as the *Kiboko* Squad and crime preventers (Makara, 2010).

The question that rise then why then would a system of Multi-party-politics place huddles on political parties not fulfill their mandate? Why a party that has enjoyed close to four decades in power would feel so powerless? Why the continuous procurement of violence in the political space? The answers to these questions lie in the general thinking that the NRM suffers from a loss of legitimacy. This loss of legitimacy stems from a rise in the young population, and a decline in the old population from who the NRM owed unfettered support. The young people have never known war and related violence of the 1960s, 70s, 80 and the 1990s. What the young people have known is extreme unemployment, poverty and a bleak future. The young people also feel cheated that that they are superintended by a collective the dominant party leadership with no interest in their future (Kristof 2019). Indeed since 2011 elections, there have been mounting urban protest and a new politics of defiance. Among others these protests were the walk-to work protests speared headed by the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) or the *Togikwato* protests by DP, FDC and other political activists. In this regard opposition political parties are view as vehicles that perpetuate dissent and increasing civic competence. In many localities, political parties are perceived as a creation of members of the opposition formed with the sole objective of blaming government for all the

economic, social and political problems the country is facing. To many people, a multi-party system entails choosing between good and bad leadership, good leadership being the ruling party and the bad being the opposition. There is a deliberate plan to kill all mechanisms for awareness creation among the youthful population with regard to how government works under a multi-party arrangement. This is well illustrated by the introduction of a new tax on social media in July 2018. This came as a response the increased role of social media and online information. Without doubt social media and the internet have become a new engine of political mobilization especially for the young people also known as Museveni grandchildren (*abazukulu*) both in the urban and rural spaces. Certainly, the new tax sparked off a series of street protests in the urban centers.

The above state of affairs has been documented by several Country Self-Assessment Reports under the auspices of the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The APRM reports have severally spoken about this state of governance in Uganda. To be specific the 2008 Report noted that in societies already preoccupied with ethnic .and social divisions and with no clear political platform, voting patterns inevitably generally reflect ethnic, regional and other primordial loyalties rather than a true exercise in democratic preferences. Patronage, political violence, the absence of a credible alternative to the ruling party, lack of an independent media and a weak civil society are some of the major obstacles to the deepening of the democratization process in Africa. The 2009 APRM Uganda report underscores the mounting corruption, strategic weakening of the opposition parties, the rising cost of living, a general decline in social indicators, political violence and eroding public confidence in politics as clear signals that more effort is required to dismantle the inherently repressive and antidemocratic state structure that has pervaded much of Africa in the post-independence era (APRM 2009: 285).

CONCLUSION

This paper sought to make an evaluation of political organization in Uganda following the 1986 political transition and the attendant neo-liberal reforms. From this engagement, it emerges that Uganda's pursuit of economic liberalism under the NRA/M has overtime been constructed as a scheme for promoting dominant political engagement in the country, accentuated by an on-going political economy structure to pursue political stability, in the country buoyed by dominant drive for regional and continental political power. In that light comprehensible Uganda's political transition has been monolithic in nature and essentially state-engineered. In this regard, the NRM has been at the heart of this transition and still remain albeit with a shrinking political legitimacy. The state-engineered RC system of top-bottom approach to political transition became the bedrock of long-term consolidation of future decentralization as policy of governance. All these long-term advantages gave NRM a present-day dominant party status, a kind of unequal partner in these political settlements. We have also observed that most of the groups with whom these, settlements were executed, were in a lesser position and unlikely to be identical to the NRM. Rather, NRM encompassed both elites and non-elites, and had the power to make or unmake the settlement, possessed the constitutional authority to change the rules of the game (either directly, through law-making, or indirectly, as in a democracy, through voting); and equally possessed considerable military and other violent capabilities. Although the 2005 Constitutional amendment reinstated multi-party democracy, transition to full multi-party democracy has been slow, hurdled and frustrating. A number of factors account for this. All political parties have failed to streamline their structures and establish themselves as vehicles of political ideology founded on internal democracy and transparency. As a result of the above, besides the NRM, political parties have

failed to penetrate the local government terrain and establish grass-root structures. This is mainly because local government structures, practices and administration are structured alongside the Movement system yet no deliberate steps have been undertaken to transform the terrain to reflect the ethos of a multi-party system.

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НЕВЕСТЫ В ЛОХМОТЬЯХ!
КОНФЛИКТ, ПОЛИТИЧЕСКАЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ,
ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЕ УРЕГУЛИРОВАНИЕ И ПЕРЕХОД К ПОЛИТИКЕ
МНОГОПАРТИЙНОСТИ В УГАНДЕ С 1986 г.

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Аннотация. После долгих пяти лет повстанческого движения (1981–1986) Уганда перешла от кризиса к стабильности. В новых условиях быстро трансформировались политические организации. Бывшая повстанческая Национальная армия сопротивления (НАС) и ее политическое крыло Национальное движение сопротивления (НДС) прошли процесс постконфликтной трансформации, который в основном ознаменован неолиберальными реформами, и превратились в доминирующую политическую партию, подорвав прежнее влияние традиционных политических объединений.

В данной статье на основе исторического исследования автор пытается ответить на вопросы: почему послевоенное объединение НАС/НДС быстро осуществило существенное изменение политического режима после завершения партизанской войны в 1986 г.? Почему новое правительство проводит псевдонеолиберальную повестку, направленную на осуществление политики в стиле свободного рынка и демократизации после партизанской войны? Эти вопросы возникают по двум фундаментальным причинам. Во-первых, общеизвестно, что в начале 1970-х гг. глава НАС Й.К. Мусевени был марксистом-ленинцем и потому стремился утвердить социализм в качестве модели государства. Однако он становился все менее приверженным социализму, особенно к концу восстания. Почему? Во-вторых, теория послевоенного государственного строительства предполагает, что после того, как повстанцы берут власть по итогам гражданской войны, они, как правило, не имеют особого желания проводить политику либерального рыночного типа. Тогда почему НАС/НДС с крайне негативным отношением к политике рыночного типа обязуется ввести многопартийность? Как НДС осуществляло политическое урегулирование и как оно было институционализировано и инструментально реализовано с течением времени? Каковы были сопутствующие эффекты этого урегулирования в Уганде и как они могут быть оценены в свете опыта других африканских государств, переходивших от войны к миру?

Ключевые слова: демократизация, политические партии, Национальное освободительное движение, политическая организация и политическое урегулирование