



Zanzibar — Va-PoReg Country Report

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10/19/1856 Start Autocratic Monarchy [semi-sovereign, external affairs under United Kingdom]: Zanzibar was incorporated into Oman's overseas territory in 1698 after Oman's victory over the Portuguese in Mombasa. Said bin Sultan moved to Zanzibar in the early 1800s and established a ruling Arab elite, promoted clove plantations with slave labor, and attracted Indian traders.¹ His sons Majid and Thuwaini fought over control, leading to the separation of Oman and Zanzibar. On 10/19/1856 the Sultanate of Zanzibar was created.² Zanzibar then became a British protectorate on 07/01/1890 after the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty between the United Kingdom and Germany.³ In 1886, the British government encouraged William Mackinnon to increase British influence in the region, leading to the formation of the British East Africa Association and the Imperial British East Africa Company. However, the company failed, and the British government proclaimed the East Africa Protectorate in 1895. In 1902, the administration was transferred to the Colonial Office, and Uganda was incorporated into the protectorate.⁴ Zanzibar is in this period a borderline case between a de facto colony and a protectorate with a say in its inner affairs. During the British rule, they exercised their power thru an indirect rule. The Sultanate was allowed to continue, however, it had less power.⁵ V-Dem's PCLI classifies political liberties as absent until 1952 and as not really present from 1953 onward. In 1963, LIED identifies political liberties as absent, but it does not include Zanzibar in its data before 1963 and between 1965 to 2024. Until 1925, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were moderate, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were absent. From 1926 to 1959, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were moderate, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were limited. For the remaining years, V-Dem's JCE and LCE are both interpreted by us as indicating moderate constraints on the executive.

12/10/1963 Continuation Autocratic Monarchy [as independent country]: On this date, the United Kingdom terminated the protectorate over Zanzibar, which had been in place since 1890. Although the United Kingdom never had sovereignty over Zanzibar, the Zanzibar Act of 1963 ended the protectorate status and allowed for Zanzibar to have full self-government as an independent country within the Commonwealth. Zanzibar became an independent monarchy within the Commonwealth under the Sultan.⁶ According to LIED multiparty executive and legislative elections were absent in 1963.

01/23/1964 End Autocratic Monarchy/Start One-Party Autocracy: On this date, a month after Zanzibar's independence, a rebellion ousted the monarchy and brought a repressive autocratic regime led by the Afro-Shirazi Party to power (Lansford 2012a: 1411, Zolberg 1968: 82). After the Zanzibar Revolution, the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP)⁷ and Umma parties formed a Revolutionary Council to serve as an interim government, with Abeid Karume as the President and Abdulrahman Mohammad Babu as the Minister of External Affairs. The country was renamed the People's Republic of Zanzibar, and the new government immediately banned the Sultan, as well as the Zanzibar Nationalist Party and Zanzibar and Pemba People's Party.⁸ In this period, LIED identifies political liberties as absent, while V-Dem's PCLI is likewise classified by us as showing that political liberties were absent.

04/26/1964 End Zanzibar [One-Party Autocracy]: On this date, Zanzibar merged with mainland Tanganyika. The new country was then named the “United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar”.⁹ ASP leaders agreed to union with Tanganyika to buttress their own position in Zanzibar. The union of Zanzibar and Tanganyika consolidated ASP's control over Zanzibar. Irregularities and violence have continued to plague Zanzibari elections.¹⁰ In 1964, Tanu's tolerance of opposition also declined. It began to coerce the civil servants and police to join Tanu, and citizens had to produce a TANU card to get medical care or crop selling privileges (Burton/Charton-Bigot 2010: 208). In 1964, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also absent. FH does not provide data for Zanzibar.

For the time after 04/26/1964, see Tanzania.

Notes

¹ <https://academic.oup.com/book/33093/chapter-abstract/282271632?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_sultans_of_Zanzibar

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heligoland%E2%80%93Zanzibar_Treaty

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sultanate_of_Zanzibar

⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sultanate-of-Zanzibar>

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sultanate_of_Zanzibar

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afro-Shirazi_Party

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%27s_Republic_of_Zanzibar

⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanzania#Modern>

¹⁰ <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2843.htm>

References

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