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Brazil's Boom and Bust in Tanzania: A Case Study of Naivety?

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Keywords: Political Economy, Development, Dams, Infrastructure

Abstract

Brazil experienced a dramatic see-saw in relations with Africa in the first two decades of the 21st Century. Booming ties in diplomacy, development cooperation and trade saw Brazil established as a major partner for the continent under the leadership of Lula's PT administration. Subsequent governments increasingly dismantled many of the policies supporting this boom. However, this collapse, and what it signifies about Brazil's Africa relations, is still little understood and more widely, there are few detailed case studies of this trend. This chapter tackles both gaps with a study of Brazil-Tanzania, which mirrored the wider boom and bust. Its analysis demonstrates the degree to which the spread of ties beyond Lusophone countries was state-initiated, with diplomacy playing a central role, but then implemented by companies, who shaped what occurred 'on the ground'. This created a weakness in Brazil-Africa relations, given Brazil's presidential system and its influence over foreign policy priorities and development cooperation spending. Additionally, the chapter introduces the concept of naivety amongst Brazilian actors, as a misreading of Tanzanian politics prevented infrastructure companies from establishing projects. However, the chapter concludes by arguing that any understanding of Brazil-Africa must appreciate the crucial role of African agency. As demonstrated here by Tanzanian politicians and government officials, countries on the continent fundamentally shape the processes, activities and successes of Brazilian involvement.

1. Introduction

Brazil's booming presence in 21st century Africa has rapidly decreased in the past decade. From 2003, ties between country and continent soared: Trade experienced a six-fold increase between 2005 and 2015 (Stolte 2015), whilst spending on South-South Cooperation reached a reported ~\$700million in 2010¹ and the number of Brazilian embassies in Africa rose above that of Great Britain (Stolte 2015). Whilst trade was concentrated in Lusophone countries and Africa's larger extractive economies, Brazil's presence, particularly in diplomatic and development cooperation ties, notably spread across the continent to countries with little prior engagement. Collectively, this suggested that Brazil was becoming a major new power in Africa, joining China, India and other 'emerging' or 'rising' powers in meaningfully diversifying the continent's international relations. However, after a decade-long boom came a swift collapse, examined in this book's introduction. This retreat has been geographically unequal. Trade stabilised to an extent from 2016 at around \$12.6 (Seibert and Visentini 2019)², whilst Brazilian firms maintained a stronger presence in Lusophone countries: Odebrecht in 2017 employed 13,000 people in Angola- down from a 17,000 peak, whilst Vale continues operations in Mozambique after its \$9.5billion investment there (Stratfor 2017). This fall, and its geographic inequality, remain little understood. Indeed, the speed at which Brazil has withdrawn from many countries in Africa presents something of a puzzle: Given the degree of diplomatic support, development cooperation spending and corporate investment between 2003-2012, why didn't Brazil's activities embed beyond Lusophone Africa? Why have projects not been implemented whilst economic ties markedly reduced?

¹ Derived from a total South-South Cooperation spend of \$1.2billion (although this is disputed; see Carmody (2013, p. 127)) of which 60% supposedly went to Africa

² Figures from government agency APEX, reported on: <https://tradingeconomics.com/brazil/exports-to-africa> (accessed, 6/11/2019)

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This chapter analyses these questions through the case study of Tanzania. It is particularly interesting given Brazil's limited pre-existing engagement in the country before the PT's 2003 arrival in government and significant expansion between 2005-2015. This makes it exemplary of the Brazil-Africa boom which involved the country building ties with states across the continent that it had not had strong relations with previously. Since 2015 Tanzania also exemplifies the extent to which Brazil's presence in Africa beyond Lusophone countries has collapsed, as there are now almost no remaining Brazilian projects in Tanzania (with the exception of the Victoria Cotton scheme). Tanzania is therefore a good case study to empirically document the bust, as well as the boom, in Brazil-Africa relations. The chapter also makes a theoretical contribution to understanding the puzzle of Brazil-Africa's unravelling. As well as demonstrating known weaknesses in the Brazil-Africa relationship, such as structural economic limitations and an overly presidential control of foreign policy, the chapter advances a new concept of *naivety*. This refers to the way in which Brazilian actors lacked knowledge, or made misleading assumptions, about the political and policymaking environment of the countries they were working in. In part such naivety stems from structural issues in the Brazil-Africa relationship, such as the lack of historic ties, linguistic barriers or an intellectual tradition of studying the continent. Additionally, the concept of naivety covers assumptions seemingly made by a wide variety of actors, based on generalising from experience elsewhere on the continent, or from the rhetoric and policy vision of the Lula years that saw Brazil as a 'southern' brother to Africa, with unique knowledge of the continent.

2. Agency Versus Structural Factors in Africa's Emerging Power Relations

2.1 Explaining Brazil-Africa Relations

2.1.1 Structural Determinants

There are two dominant narratives posited to explain the boom and bust in Brazil-Africa relations. The first is more structural. Crucial here is the early-2000s to 2014 commodity boom. It peaked global corporate interest in investment in commodity extraction, including in Africa. Thus Petrobras expanded operations across the Gulf of Guinea, investing in new exploration blocks, including in Tanzania (Carmody 2013). Meanwhile, Vale, Brazil's mining conglomerate, built on existing political ties in Mozambique to become the major player in the large Tete mining project (Cezne 2019). The commodity boom also supported infrastructure building given the demand for infrastructure to enable commodity extraction, and given the way the commodity boom increased government finance for projects. Here the premier company is Odebrecht who, for example in Angola built the Lauca Dam - effectively Africa's joint largest by installed capacity to date³ - on the back of the country's explosion in oil wealth (Soares de Oliveira 2015). Additionally, smaller firms like Queiroz Galvão established themselves, for instance in Ghana where its own-petroleum driven boom between 2008-2012 helped pay for motorways in Accra and elsewhere⁴. The commodity boom was also a major bonus for Brazil, increasing the government's budget for diplomatic ventures, South-South development cooperation and subsidised loans for infrastructure (Carmody 2013; Seibert 2019a; Dye and Alencastro 2020). Equally, the bust in commodities in 2014 is an important factor explaining Brazil-Africa's fall, reducing the profitability of mineral and petroleum projects and squeezing the budgets of the companies and governments of Brazil and many of those in Africa (Marcondes and Mawdsley 2017). Wider BRICs-Africa trade, for instance, dropped 70% between 2013-2017 (Standard Bank 2017, p. 1), particularly after 2014, decreasing from \$26.7bn in 2014 to \$12.4bn by 2016 (Standard Bank 2017, p. 6). Responding to this and the fallout of the Lavo-Jato corruption scandal, Petrobras closed their Tanzanian office and sold a \$1.5billion Nigerian stake in a Vitoil-led joint venture (Reuters 2018); Brazilian firms have sold or downscaled participation in a copper mine in Zambia and an iron mine in Guinea Conckery (Seibert and Visentini 2019).

Another structural issue limiting relations are the lack of physical connections between Brazil and Africa (Seibert 2019b). Few flights and shipping routes directly connect continent and country. Another key structural factor concerns Brazilian politics. Brazil's parliament, the Congress, is characterised by strong fragmentation. It is rare for any one party to get more than roughly a third of seats (Limongi 2006). Indeed, the Worker's Party (PT) never received more than a quarter of seats during their 14-year rule. This was an important limitation on President's Lula and Dilma, as it meant that neither could easily legislate for longer-term changes that might

³ At 2100MW it equals the High Aswan Dam

⁴ Interviews, Senior Itamaraty Diplomat, Sao Paulo, 2019

cement African relations and South-South ties. For instance, neither President was able to pass debt-relief, despite making repeated pledges about this on trips to Africa⁵. This was particularly true under President Dilma, who struggled in her relations with Congress, ultimately being impeached (Marcondes and Mawdsley 2017). This factor increased the degree to which foreign policy became Presidential, i.e. concentrated on the President's office.

2.1.2 Presidential and Corporate Agency

The second narrative concerns the agency of individuals, and especially Brazilian Presidents, in driving the trajectory and content of Brazil-Africa. As described in this volume's introduction, literature here highlights the central role of President Lula (2003-2010). He visited 29 countries during his presidency, making strident speeches extolling the brotherhood, partnership and new dawn of emancipatory world relations flowing from South-South Cooperation (Marcondes et al. 2017). Lula also increased the scale of finance for corporate operations in Africa. Under his direction, from 2007, BNDES extended credit for projects, which amounted to an accumulated \$2billion by 2012 (Carmody 2013) and reached a total of US\$12.6 billion for export services, largely related to infrastructure projects (Alencastro 2019). He also pushed for Brazil's development cooperation to become what Carmody (2013) cites as the largest development-cooperation spender by 2010: The budget for Brazil's Development Cooperation Agency, ABC, increased from \$120million in 2006 to \$1.2billion in 2010⁶. Comparison with Lula's successors strengthens this argument. President Dilma, although broadly maintaining Lula's Africa policy, slashed development cooperation by 50% in two years⁷ (Stolte 2015, p. 159) and only visited the six countries during her tenure. As this volume's introduction states, this trajectory dramatically accelerated with President's Temer and now Bolsonaro, who fundamentally shifted foreign policy attention away from Africa, including embassy closures (teleSUR 2019). Thus, Hochstetler and Inoue (2019) demonstrate that although development cooperation remained steady from 2015-2016, by the end of 2020, the number projects will decrease by 2/3rds as ongoing initiatives finish. A flagship cooperation initiative, the Ghanaian branch of Embrapa, Brazil's agricultural technological institute, closed in 2018. Moreover, Temer and Bolsonaro initiated an essential suspension of lending by Brazil's development bank BNDES, from 2016 (The Economist 2017). It had been the key Brazilian financier for infrastructure domestically and in Africa (Hochstetler 2014).

Such Presidentially-initiated shifts aren't new. The prioritisation and valuing of Africa in particular has consistently changed from President to President as they have taken different sides of the "*Americanismo vs globalismo*" debate about whether Brazil's interests are best served through relations with the industrialised world, and especially America, or with the Global South (Seibert 2019b). The period of 1961-1964, under President João Goulart, saw the first serious engagement with the continent, including the opening of 6 embassies, 4 consulates and a 1961 trade tour (Stolte 2015; Seibert 2019b). Following the military coup, a foreign-policy retreat lasted until 1974, when newly-installed President Geisel responded to the international oil crisis by initiating a foreign-policy era of 'responsible pragmatism', in which Brazil sought to diversify oil imports and internationalise its strong construction and manufacturing industries (Stolte 2015; Seibert 2019b). This involved oil-for-credit facilities financing infrastructure, a prominent example of this is the Capanda dam in Angola (Garcia and Kato 2015). Thus, Itamaraty (the Brazilian Foreign Ministry) stressed the importance of Southern ties and became the first country to recognise the MPLA regime in Angola, before its Soviet Russian backers (Seibert 2019a)⁸. During this era, Brazil also became a full member of the African Development Bank in 1983 (having joined as an observer in 1974). Foreign policy changed again from 1985, with democratic governments preferencing ties with America and Europe (Seibert 2019b). South-South Cooperation persisted, for instance through the institutionalisation of a technical cooperation agency, the ABC, but was given a far lower priority. Brazil's orientation towards 'Southern' developing countries and Africa has thus ebbed and flowed with changes in Presidents playing an important role.

Additionally, Brazilian companies' agency is itself significant. Whilst not the initiators of the PT's original Brazil-Africa vision, infrastructure and resource-extractive companies like Odebrecht, Camargo Correa, Queiroz Galvão, Petrobras and Vale were key agents shaping and implementing the PT Africa policy. They were increasingly seen by the PT as the agents capable of delivering the Brazil-Africa agenda (Dye 2018; Alencastro 2019; Dye and Alencastro 2020). Petrobras for instance, brokered many deals with minimal state support, arriving

⁵ For instance in 2010 and 2013 (Dye 2018 Chapter 7)

⁶ Although this is disputed; see (Carmody 2013, p. 127)

⁷ Falling to US\$ 396million in 2013 (Seibert 2019a)

⁸ Interview, Former Senior Official, PT Government, 2016

in Tanzania, for instance, before the embassy reopened in 2005. This point is especially pertinent in Angola, where Odebrecht's relations with President Dos Santos' regime were so well aligned (Soares de Oliveira 2015) that one interviewed diplomat commented that "Marcelo (the Company's currently-jailed former chief) is more important than the ambassador"⁹. To a lesser extent, Vale enjoys similar close political ties in Mozambique, having established mining operations since the 1990s (Cezne 2019).

However, it is also important to look beyond Brazil. A number of texts on Brazil-Africa (e.g. Stolte 2015; Seibert 2019b) largely overlook the agency of political elites in Africa. Africanist literature on the continent's wider international ties frequently seeks to dispel the ideas of the continent's economic and political elites as helpless and mere recipients. Whitfield and Fraser's (2009) edited volume similarly demonstrates the degree of agency governments in Africa have to shape terms, even if not all use it. Countries like Ethiopia and Rwanda, for instance, are noted for insisting that international donors engage on their terms, forcing such organisations to support and adapt to each regime's policies, despite receiving a significant percentage of their budget and GDP from donors (Whitfield and Fraser 2009). This point has also been made extensively with regards to the literature on China-Africa (e.g. Power et al. 2012; Mohan and Lampert 2013). The emphasis on agency is also relevant for understanding business relations in Africa: Particularly in more centralised authoritarian states with less transparent legal frameworks and in which the rule of law can be overridden, personal relations with key members of government are vital for Brazilian firms' operations, as again highlighted by the case of Odebrecht in Angola. Their close ties allowed the company to extend from core infrastructure competencies to mining, agriculture, supermarket management and public services (Soares de Oliveira 2015; Alencastro 2019). This chapter asserts that this African agency was less appreciated by Brazilian actors, leading to naivety that helps explain the downturn in Brazil-Africa ties.

2.1.3 Naivety in Brazil's relations with Africa

Naivety here refers to having limited knowledge about the complex variety of contexts in Africa. In particular, it focuses on an insufficient understanding of how to read the state-business environment in order to successfully implement projects, whether for development cooperation or for profit-making initiatives. In the case of Brazil, its naivety has a number of different underpinnings. Some of these are structural. A low level of prior relations between continent and country over the 20th century mattered. As indicated by the small volumes of trade in the 20th century, the variable foreign policy priority and the absence of connections like direct shipping, at the start of the push to Africa in the 21st century, there weren't a large number of businesses and individuals with experience of working in Africa (Stolte 2015). Language constituted another barrier to access and understanding. Given that English or French are the most spoken languages, Brazilian Portuguese does not unlock large swaths of Africa. Relatedly, the study of Africa within Brazil is limited. There is one Brazilian Centre for African Studies at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, and another Centro de Estudos Africanos da Universidade de São Paulo but these are little resourced and the former only started after a 2005 course¹⁰. Collectively these factors resulted in a limited pool of expertise and experience to draw on. Arguably, this weakness was aggravated by the PT's approach to Africa ties. Lula and many of his ministers asserted a narrative that the continent and country shared very similar economic and environmental challenges. Brazil was joined to West Africa in Gondwanaland, and resultantly has comparable plant species. Thus, parts of Brazil's north contain similar Savannah zones to areas of Africa (Seibert 2019a). Additionally, the Atlantic slave trade has generated some shared cultural roots in cuisine and music. These connections were used to validate a public discourse proclaiming Brazil as the 'brother of Africa', a country with the solutions for poverty reduction, economic growth and healthcare solutions (Carmody 2013; Stolte 2015; Marcondes et al. 2017). As Foreign Minister Celso Amorim used to quote, "for every African problem there is a Brazilian solution" (Dye 2018, p. 131; Seibert 2019a, p. 108). This rhetoric bred a confidence, echoed by those interviewed for this research, that Brazil's history and its environment equipped it to understand the continent¹¹. Despite the most experienced actors, Odebrecht and Vale, having only primarily worked in Angola and Mozambique respectively, Brazil's history was presumed sufficient. Interviewees, and political speeches of the time, asserted a familiarity with 'Africa'. This naivety, condensing the continent's complexity and contexts, is used in this analysis as a conceptual tool, alongside other structural and agency drivers, to understand the case of Tanzania and explain how Brazil-Africa relations failed to embed despite substantive state support. Whilst not using the concept, there are a number of academic publications which demonstrate instances of such naivety. For

⁹ Interviews, Senior Journalist; Itamaraty Diplomat, Brasilia, 2016

¹⁰ <https://www.ufrgs.br/cebrafrica/en/sobre/>

¹¹ As reflected by interviews with Senior and Junior Itamaraty Diplomats; Researchers and Senior Officials in Odebrecht, Queiroz Galvão, Eletrobras 2015-2016;

example, Cabral (2016) shows the way the Brazilian actors misunderstood the African context and the relevance of their policies, either when thinking about ‘family farming’ or in the export of tractors and other machinery to the continent. This chapter furthers these examples with the case of Tanzania.

3. Case Study Of Tanzania

3.1 History and Development Cooperation Projects

Brazil’s ties in Tanzania reflect the shifting status of Africa in the country’s foreign policy. Relations began in the 1970s, in the era when Brazil sought to increase ties with ‘southern’ and increasing engaged with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and G77 grouping of developing countries in the UN. Tanzania’s President Nyerere’s advocacy of Pan-Africanism and of greater South-South relations through the Non-Aligned Movement made the country prominent. Thus, Brazil opened an embassy in Dar es Salaam in 1982 and extended a line of credit for the upgrading of a major highway between the de-facto capital and Morogoro. Little cooperation or investment occurred after 1985 however, with the embassy closed in 1991. This was reversed under Lula and the PT. Tanzania was in the first tranche of embassy openings. Alongside historical links, senior interviewed diplomats indicated that Tanzania’s importance came from it being a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council at the time, which was strategic given Brazil’s long-held desire to gain a permanent seat at the Security Council (Stolte 2015; Dye 2018, chap. 2). It was also influenced by Brazil and Tanzania’s membership of the G15 group of countries that cooperate in WTO meetings for perceived developing-country interests¹². Whilst Petrobras already had an established presence in off-shore gas exploration, the re-founding of this embassy initiated significant further engagement. In 2008, a Brazil-Tanzania Technical Cooperation Deal was signed with the ABC agency (Ministry of External Relations and Brazilian Cooperation Agency 2010). Through diplomatic negotiations, a number of projects started around agriculture, primarily consisting of capacity building, knowledge exchange and the promotion of Brazilian products. An HIV/AIDS-prevention project was also initiated. These activities fit a wider pattern in Brazil’s development partnerships that primarily involve the export of its policies. Brazil’s agricultural transformation, especially its agricultural institute Embrapa and its seed and agro-processing technologies, are seen as globally exemplary (Cabral 2016). Additionally, Brazil’s response to HIV/AIDS is often regarded as relatively successful. Thus, Tanzania’s development projects echo a wider practise whereby it exports domestic policies and technologies to Africa, often using the same institutions.

Table 4.1 Development Cooperation Projects in Tanzania

Project Title	Brazilian Agency	Content
Improvement of Tanzanian Cashew Nut Postharvest technologies	Embrapa	Promotion of semi-mechanical harvesting techniques
Improvement of Tanzanian Vegetable Nut Postharvest technologies	Embrapa	Promotion of semi-mechanical harvesting techniques
Development of the Tanzanian Cattle Production Capacity	Embrapa	Assessment and knowledge transfer activities
Strengthening of HIV/AIDS Response in Tanzania	Ministry of health	Training, policy knowledge exchange, civil society capacity building
Cotton Victoria (\$9 million)	ABC	Training, Education, Technology Dissemination
Compiled from Official Reports (Ministry of External Relations and Brazilian Cooperation Agency 2010)		

Cotton Victoria is the largest development cooperation scheme, echoing other international schemes around the continent like Shire Zambezi, Cotton 4 and Pro-Savannah (Seibert 2019a). It stems from a WTO settlement whose proceeds were mandated for African cotton development projects¹³. Brazil decided to locate one of these centres in Tanzania, with others in Mali and Zambia. The so-called Cotton Victoria project is also supposed to

¹² Interviews, Senior Diplomats, Itamaraty, Rio de Janeiro, Dar-es-Salaam

¹³ Interviews; (World Food Programme 2017)

serve Uganda, Kenya and Burundi, and involves a demonstration centre that aims to improve cotton yields with training alongside technology dissemination. Whilst Tanzanian civil servants and politicians did not reject the project, interviewed Brazilian officials reported their engagement as minimal, with the Tanzanian government taking a long time to approve decisions whilst also providing little policy input. This is reflected in the time taken for implementation of a relatively simple project: Cotton Victoria started in 2017¹⁴ despite its conception and initial approval in 2012¹⁵. Cotton Victoria, like the other ‘cooperation’ projects in Tanzania, was thus essentially Brazilian-initiated, conceived and pushed by the ABC and Itamaraty diplomats. Limited interest from the Tanzanian state then resulted in a long implementation delay. Interviews in Tanzania¹⁶ reinforced this perception, citing Brasilia’s control over decisions, with staff in Dar-es-Salaam given little autonomy. Given this overriding role of the Federal Brazilian government, the decrease in funding for the ABC, and Dilma’s greater emphasis on economic rather than development cooperation ties (Marcondes and Mawdsley 2017; Hochstetler and Inoue 2019), ‘aid’ projects in Tanzania petered out by 2015¹⁷. Only Cotton Victoria remains functional today. This demonstrates the fall in Brazil’s relations with Africa, which petered out following the end of Presidential diplomacy from both sides in 2013 and cuts to Brazil’s development cooperation budget. This underlines the importance of both governments’ actions in sustaining Brazil-Tanzania and the role of broader structural constraints.

3.2 Private Sector Infrastructure Projects

3.2.1 Odebrecht In Tanzania

Infrastructure projects however, demonstrate a more complex mix of agency. On the one hand, there is evidence of Brazilian diplomats’ important role. As one senior diplomat explained, “Kikwete (The Tanzanian President)], he extended an invitation to Brazilian companies to work on energy, infrastructure and agriculture [his three priority areas]” which matched the Brazilian competencies Itamaraty was supposed to support¹⁸. Following this meeting the ambassador “identified Energy, Mining and Logistics” and sent out invitations and briefing notes to companies in Brazil accordingly¹⁹. Brazil’s largest construction company, Odebrecht, responded. Its representatives visited Dar es Salaam in November 2009, demonstrating the firms’ resources to engage in new ventures in Africa. The embassy’s efforts, particularly in relation to development projects, were strengthened by the visit of Foreign Minister Celso Amorim, who held meetings with senior government figures, raising the profile of Brazil in the country. This is partly because diplomats sought to secure agreements that could be announced during his trip, a factor that helped initiate and push the agriculture and HIV/AIDS cooperation projects cited above. Lula’s high profile trip also enabled senior company introductions. As one diplomat explained, such backing is significant in Tanzania as without it, you can have a “very hard time”²⁰. This shows that, in a country with almost no pre-existing business relations with Brazil, Itamaraty’s diplomats and high-level political visits played a major role in raising the profile of Brazil-Tanzania relations and initiating development cooperation and corporate projects. For instance, an Odebrecht official explained that it influenced their investment choices: We were “looking at the market before in Kenya ... then Lula came (to Tanzania) and when you are in Dar es Salaam, you see the opportunities ... we talked to people ... Ministry of Energy and Minerals ... Stiegler’s Gorge [was apparent] as a priority project”²¹. This role of the Brazilian state in initiating projects contrasts with the Lusophone countries Angola and Mozambique where Odebrecht and Vale’s longer-standing ties to members of the ruling party meant that they operated far more independently from the Brazilian state (Soares de Oliveira 2015; Capi and Viana 2016; Alencastro 2019).

However, overtime, Odebrecht’s role in driving infrastructure projects in Tanzania became more prominent. The company chose to open an office in Dar es Salaam and engaged in regular meetings from 2011. Their efforts brokered an agreement on the Stiegler’s Gorge Dam with the responsible government agency – Rubada (the Rufiji

¹⁴ Signed off in 2016

¹⁵ Itamaraty Press Statements; Interviews with Senior and Junior Itamaraty and Tanzanian Diplomats, 2015-2016

¹⁶ Conducted in 2015-2016

¹⁷ Interview, Diplomat, Itamaraty, 2015

¹⁸ Interview, Senior Diplomat, Itamaraty, 2016

¹⁹ Interview, Senior Diplomat, Itamaraty, 2016

²⁰ Interview, Senior Diplomat, Itamaraty, 2016

²¹ Interview, Senior Official, Odebrecht, 2016

Basin Development Agency). In 2012 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two gave Odebrecht responsibility for the project's construction, with a first step of producing an updated feasibility and design report whilst Rubada would undertake an environmental impact assessment (EIA). A further future EIA was envisioned that would meet the criteria of UNESCO (United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organisation) requirements, given the Stiegler's Gorge project resides in the Selous UNESCO World Heritage Site. In addition, the company, without the initiation of Itamaraty or a high-level visit, also entered discussions over the construction of a larger airport at Mtwara, the base for Tanzania's new off-shore gas industry. This would facilitate the dam project by increasing staff in the country and by building experience of operating in Tanzania. Odebrecht therefore began talks with the Ministries of Finance and Works to pursue the airport.

Odebrecht's independent actions in Tanzania also included their attempts to secure UNESCO's approval for the Stiegler's Gorge Dam. The company faced a similar obstacle when working on a viaduct-bridge construction project that would damage the Viejo cultural World Heritage Site in Panama City. Odebrecht helped circumvent the committee's objections through the production of extensive reports about the road's ability to enhance the site (something the UNESCO secretariat derided) and through supporting extensive lobbying efforts on the committee's constituent national representatives (Meskell 2018, pp. 103–108). In Tanzania, Odebrecht proposed sanitising the dam by creating an additional levy on the hydroelectric plant's tariff. With the dam's feasibility assessment indicating a price of \$0.0435 per kilowatt-hour (KwH), below the national average of \$0.065kwh, an additional cent (\$0.01) could be added and reserved for a ring-fenced Selous conservation fund (Odebrecht 2013)²². In addition, Odebrecht started soliciting finance for the dam. With the project envisaged as an Independent Power Plant (IPP) between 2005-2015, Odebrecht and Rubada were made responsible for securing finance for construction. Reportedly, Odebrecht began approaching partners for such funds, including the World Bank²³, European Development Banks²⁴ and, with the support of the Brazilian ambassador²⁵, the Canadian government. Although with continued background support from Brazilian diplomats in Tanzania, these initiatives again underline the role of Odebrecht itself as an important actor advancing projects in Africa. Indeed, Odebrecht was particularly capable of undertaking this scale of dam building, as it led the consortium constructing the similarly sized ~2,100MW Lauca Dam in Angola.

3.2.2 Queiroz Galvão In Tanzania

A similar pattern emerged with another Brazilian company, Queiroz Galvão. Whilst they had not come on President Lula's 2010 trip, they agreed an MoU with Rubada in 2012 to build another hydropower project, the Mnyera Dam. They set up an office earlier than Odebrecht and conducted feasibility and construction studies in 2012. This included a re-design of the project to increase its hydropower capacity, entailing a large dam at the top of a cascade of 6 run-of-river hydropower stations. Collectively, Mnyera hydropower project is projected to produce a maximum of 670MW, with the large upstream reservoir regulating flow to reduce seasonal fluctuation in power production (Construtora Queiroz Galvão 2012). Queiroz Galvão then paid for hydrological research from 2013-2017 in order to underpin feasibility studies²⁶. They also spent money on an EIA for the dam that was completed in 2014 and approved by the Tanzanian environmental regulator²⁷. This underlines the degree to which Queiroz Galvão invested in this Tanzanian infrastructure project from an early stage. Like Odebrecht, Queiroz Galvão additionally entered negotiations over an airport to build Tanzanian experience and increase the number of staff in the country. They were interested in airport expansion at Dodoma, officially the country's capital city²⁸. Using their European subsidiary company, Queiroz Galvão also began to actively solicit finance for this dam. Reportedly, this included meetings with the UK's Export Credit Agency²⁹. So far, these sections highlight the importance of the Brazilian government and the infrastructure companies in forging increased ties with Africa. However, this group of actors were unable to move the dam and airport projects to implementation. To understand this, the chapter analyses the other important set of actors in Brazil-Tanzania relations in greater detail,

²² Interview, Senior Official, Odebrecht, 2016

²³ Interview, Senior Official, World Bank, 2017

²⁴ Interview, Senior Official, Odebrecht, 2016

²⁵ Interview, Senior Diplomat, Itamaraty, 2016

²⁶ Interview, Senior Official, Queiroz Galvão, 2016

²⁷ Interviews, Official, Rubada, 2016-2015; The regulator being NEMC

²⁸ Interview, Senior Official, Odebrecht, 2016; Interview, Senior and Junior Officials, Itamaraty, 2015-16

²⁹ Interview, Senior Official, Odebrecht, 2016; Interview, Senior Diplomat, Itamaraty, 2016

that of the Tanzanians. The following section demonstrates the way in which their role was often misread, using this to explain how Brazilian naivety contributed to the down-turn in Brazil-Africa.

3.3 Misreading the Tanzanian State

The downturn in Brazil-Tanzania ties was strongly influenced by conventional factors highlighted in the literature above. Changes of the Brazilian president, and their degree of power, mattered, especially in Brazil, where lessening interest decreased the amount of high-level diplomatic support and resources. Additionally, the worsening global economic climate contributed to Petrobras reducing its investment and activity in Tanzania. Equally, analysis below demonstrates the significance of the Brazilian Congress' blocking of debt relief until 2017 as this prevented access to Brazilian subsidised credit. However, the other crucial factor behind the trajectory of the countries' ties was the way in which Brazilian governmental and corporate actors failed to appreciate Tanzanian agency. Odebrecht and Queiroz Galvão, and to a lesser extent, Brazilian diplomats, tended to see themselves as primary drivers, and thereby as capable of overcoming blocks to implementation. In terms of gaining further support from the Tanzanian government, both the Stiegler's Gorge and Mnyera stalled by 2014. Whilst Stiegler's Gorge and Mnyera were prioritised as medium-term (5 year) projects in the 2009 and 2012 Power System Master Plans (Ministry of Energy and Minerals 2009; United Republic of Tanzania 2013), in the 2016 Master Plan (United Republic of Tanzania 2016) both dams were pushed into a longer term, 10-year, planning horizon. This lowered status began in 2012, with a new Minister for Energy and Minerals, Dr Sospeter Muhongo, preferring fossil fuels: As one informant stated, from 2012 "the minister [of energy was] oppose to hydropower"³⁰. He publically asserted that gas was the priority energy-generation technology, followed by coal and then hydropower (Makoye 2015). In meetings with Brazilian counterparts, he reportedly had little interest in either the Stiegler's Gorge or Mnyera Dams. This contrasted with the former minister of energy, who expressed broad support (Dye 2018, Chapter 7). Additionally, in 2012, deep-sea exploration found significant reserves of natural gas. Consequently "people started saying why are you going ahead (with the Stiegler's gorge when we have gas)?"³¹. This point was made especially pertinent by the frequent black outs experienced in Tanzania during droughts, where insufficient rainfall caused a shortfall in hydropower (United Republic of Tanzania 2016). Such droughts worsened during the 2000s and 2010s, creating scepticism about further dam building (Dye and Hartmann 2017). Rather than investing in hydropower then, the national energy utility Tanesco, built gas plants at Ubungo³², Tegeta³³ and Kinyerezi³⁴.

Overlooking this weakening interest and scant evidence of substantive support, Odebrecht and Queiroz Galvão appeared to believe that the official development plans amounted to concrete action plans. More than that, they trusted assurances made in high-level meetings. One common refrain cited during interviews to demonstrate Tanzanian interest, pointed out the President's desire to implement the hydropower projects, (e.g. "Kikwete keen on hydropower"³⁵). Equally, meetings held with Rubada and in the ministries where their dam and/or airports were discussed were claimed to be proof of intent in interviews. Crucial significance was also ascribed to the initial engagements between senior Tanzanian officials and Brazilian politicians and company representatives between 2010-2012. Indeed, Senior Tanzanian officials were also responsible for bringing in the two Brazilian companies. As noted above, President Kikwete raised energy and infrastructure projects with the Brazilian ambassador, and reportedly President Magufuli specifically brought up Stiegler's Gorge with the new ambassador in 2016, saying "oh this is a very fundamentally important project for us, pivotal for us"³⁶. After President Lula's 2010 visit, Tanzania's foreign minister, Bernard Membe, reaffirmed interest with a trip to Brazil. This was followed by Prime Minister Mizengo Pinda, whose visit specifically focused on dam infrastructure³⁷, including the head of Rubada and Energy Minister Williams Ngeleja in the delegation. President Kikwete also advanced Brazil-Tanzania ties by making a trip in 2012: "Kikwete went to Brazil and he went to meet these companies ...

³⁰ Interview, Senior Official, Itamaraty, 2016

³¹ Interview, Senior Official, Itamaraty, 2016

³² Ubungo I (2009); Ubungo II (2012)

³³ Tegeta Gas (2009)

³⁴ Kinyerezi I (2015); Kinyerezi II (2018)

³⁵ Interview, Senior Official, Queiroz Galvão, 2016

³⁶ Interview, Senior Diplomat, Itamaraty, 2016

³⁷ For instance, visiting the Itaipu Dam, Odebrecht offices and the Ministry of Energy.

he brought Queiroz Galvão³⁸, inviting them to undertake studies and preparation for the Mnyera Dam as well as discussing the Stiegler's Gorge and other energy, agriculture and mining projects³⁹.

Thus, when asked about the dams' implementation issues, interviewed officials did not blame decreased governmental interest. Rather, they primarily cited problems with Rubada, the institution responsible for developing dams in the Rufiji Basin. Typically, such Brazilian officials highlighted the organisation's extremely limited capacity, signified by the fact they only had one key qualified engineer. As such a hamstrung institution, Rubada thus relied on companies to advance their projects and needed the energy Ministry's permission to sign deals. Additionally, given its incapacity Rubada was unable to uphold its side of the dam deals, requiring the two Brazilian companies to spend money on studies and reports. For instance, Odebrecht "realise[d] that the client (Rubada) does not have the know-how or technical ability to do these studies" (as agreed in the MoU). Thus, Odebrecht paid a local company to produce the initial EIA but then "[had to] hand it to another group of 20 people in Brazil at our headquarters to improve the document created by the local company". In Rubada's absence, both firms therefore realised the key power to advance their power purchase agreements for the dams, or allocate preparatory funding, lay with the Ministry of Energy and Minerals. Here the scepticism of the aforementioned 2012-2015, 2015-2017 Energy and Minerals Minister Sospeter Muhongo was noted, particularly in contrast to his predecessor: (there was a minister not keen on hydropower⁴⁰; now "have a minister oppose to hydropower!"⁴¹). One official reported the contrast between positive meetings with this minister when he bought a senior company executive over from Brazil, only for little action to follow. However, none of the interviewed officials saw Minister Muhongo as an immovable block, believing that the Tanzanian government wanted this project to go ahead. Officials counted on the validity of publically proclaimed infrastructure and development plans, seeing this as proof that their projects would ultimately prevail. One stated that "I can feel and see the possibilities of many projects to be implemented ... with the industrialisation agenda of the new government. [Unlike] Brazil in the 80s going round in circles, hopeless at building infrastructure ... not like Tanzania. The agenda of the new government [is rooted in an] ... understanding of the lack of infrastructure"⁴². This led to a belief amongst company officials and involved diplomats that the large hydropower dams had to "accompany industrialisation"⁴³; really, the Tanzanian state would support dam building.

Evidence from the last two decades questions this understanding of Tanzanian politics, particularly when applied to public-private infrastructure deals. Until 2018, the only electricity projects to have progressed are the government-owned thermal plants cited above and two corrupt private-sector plants; the Richmond-Dowans plant involved in a 2009 scandal and Independent Tanzania Power Plant Ltd (ITPL), which has been involved in numerous rounds of corruption as it slowly progressed and changed ownership from the 1990s to the 2010s (Gray 2015). The exception is the Songo-Songo Gas project although (perhaps as a result of being less corrupt) it suffered a 13 year-long negotiation. Numerous other private-sector led projects were listed by the government between 2009-2016 covering gas, coal, wind and hydropower generation technologies (United Republic of Tanzania 2016). The closest to get to implementation, with finalised agreements and some degree of financing secured, were the Ruhudji, Malagarasi and Kakono Dams, and Kinyerezi III and IV gas plants. However, none reached construction. This indicates the Tanzanian government's limited ability to support private sector projects through to implementation and the difficulties faced by the Brazilian companies in implementing their dams. Such projects require multiple legal agreements from different government agencies, most central of which is the Power Purchase Agreement with Tanesco. However, even with this achieved, Tanesco's low credit rating – stemming from its history of not paying the aforementioned IPPs⁴⁴ – requires investors to get further government guarantees in order to raise the necessary finance for construction. This was particularly problematic for the Brazilian companies, as until 2017, Tanzania's outstanding debt to Brazil ruled out the extension of government finance through an export-credit agency like BNDES, the bank which has unlocked other projects including the Lauca Dam in Angola. This latter point reinforces the importance of the political structural constraint of Brazil's fragmented Congress, which failed to sign-off on Tanzania's debt relief.

³⁸ Interview, Senior Official, Itamaraty, 2016

³⁹ Interview, Senior Official, Queiroz Galvão, 2016

⁴⁰ Interview, Senior Official, Queiroz Galvão, 2016

⁴¹ Interview, Senior and Junior Officials, Itamaraty, 2015-16

⁴² Interview, Senior Official, Odebrecht, 2016

⁴³ Interview, Senior Official, Odebrecht, 2016; Interview, Senior Officials, Itamaraty, 2015-16

⁴⁴ Namely the Richmond-Dowans, ITPL, Sogas Plants

Brazilian actors appear to have misread these hurdles in their pursuit of dams. A key reason behind the lack of power-project construction were the deep divisions in Tanzania's ruling party that prevented the necessary joined-up decision making across government. Such divisions have their roots in the shift towards a private sector-led economy that began in 1985, and were furthered with transition to democracy in 1995 (Coulson 2013). Both changes lessened party discipline and the hard separation of politics from business (Collord 2018). Thus, political office was increasingly used as a business platform to capture contracts, engage in grand corruption and carve out protected economic monopolies for self-enrichment and political finance (Gray 2015). Indiscipline over such practices, alongside competition for rent seeking, increasingly fractured the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi party into rival groups that occupied different ministries, especially during Kikwete's 2006-2015 tenure (Gray 2015; Collord 2018). Consequently, cohesive policymaking of the type required to support private-sector investment, particularly on the scale needed for dams, was absent. Moreover, the lack of central coordination and intra-party competition meant that Ministers were particularly powerful. Thus, even if President Kikwete supported the Mnyera or Stiegler's Gorge projects, his ability to advance them was limited, especially when a hydro-sceptic Minister of Energy was in post. In contrast to the Brazilian firms, other companies recognised this. For instance, Aldwych, a British energy firm, realised that its Ruhudji project was all but shelved in 2012⁴⁵. Whilst continuing to monitor the situation, they withdrew from further substantive action. Sinohydro, after completing studies of the Mpanga Dam by 2012, also took no further steps. Advisory consultants, finding none of their clients successful in electricity projects, reported in interviews that they tell clients to avoid investment until substantive, legal government support was given. Brazilian companies and diplomats therefore seem to have misunderstood policymaking in Tanzania by underestimating the disconnects within government. In particular, they did not appear to grasp the extent of disconnect between stated policies and actual implementation. Rather, there was a belief that if the President invited a company in, and if certain high-level meetings were positive, the Tanzanian state (assumed to be a unitary body) wanted implementation. Ultimately, the necessary support would prevail. This apparent naivety could be rooted in the companies' experiences of other countries in Africa. For instance, Odebrecht's major work in Africa is in Mozambique and Angola, highly centralised and strongly presidential governments with more pyramidal systems of decision making. There, if the President and senior officials approve a project, it is more likely to indicate support across the state and carry through to decision making throughout government and its agencies. Given that Tanzania also follows an authoritarian model of holding elections but having a dominant ruling party, Brazilian actors could have assumed that the Tanzanian state functioned in a similarly-pyramidal way. The reality, in contrast, was a fractured government of powerful ministries and ministers.

Another instance of seeming short-sightedness concerned Odebrecht's belief that it could gain UNESCO WHC approval for the Stiegler's Gorge Dam. The project will lie in the heart of this protected reserve, flooding over 3% of its area. More importantly, it will entail significant downstream effects for its key ecological area. A number of different studies by WWF (Dye and Hartmann 2017), and by academics modelling potential flood releases (Duvail et al. 2014) show that the infrastructure will have inevitable trade-offs with the marshland area immediately below the Stiegler's Gorge. This area is the reserve's most biodiverse habitat and also its main tourist site. The dam will also undermine the biophysical processes sustaining agriculture and fishing downstream, and the ecology of the Ramsar-protected river delta. Construction, by bringing-in constant traffic and workers, will itself entail risks concerning poaching, logging and pollution in the reserve. Although such risks were established by past environmental impact studies in the 1980s and consistently cited in IUCN monitoring reports, Odebrecht officials refuted the idea of fundamental trade-offs: "I believe there is a good chance (of the EIA gaining approval) ... the few conversations I have seen show that there is a good understanding of the positives (amongst the WHC)". "Careful attention", such as a "conscious drive on anti-poaching (would) ... minimise impacts and create benefits [to the park]"⁴⁶. In contrast, UNESCO's WHC has issued strongly worded statements since 2012 (e.g. World Heritage Committee 2013) and reactive monitoring missions have made stark warnings of the risks of the dam (Jaeger et al. 2014). Since President Magufuli's attempts to construct Stiegler's Gorge Dam, opposition has increased, as exemplified by the official warnings given by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and UNESCO (UNESCO WHC 2018).

Odebrecht's calculation around UNESCO and the Selous therefore indicates another way in which Brazilian actors seem to have overestimated the ease of implementing projects in Tanzania whilst also misreading the

⁴⁵ Interview, Senior Official, Aldwych, 2016

⁴⁶ Interview, Senior Official, Odebrecht, 2016

politics involved in undertaking their activities. Collectively, this suggests that Brazilian actors were naïve in their engagement with Tanzania. They overestimated the openness of doing business in the country, the degree to which formal institutions and official communications could be trusted. The obstacles presented by the government's fragmented policymaking, particularly for private sector projects, were not sufficiently understood, nor was the international sensitivity around the Stiegler's Gorge Dam. However, rather than acknowledging this, interviewees cited above blamed blockages on specific Tanzanian government agencies -frequently Rubada- or on the withdrawal of support from Brazil. As one explained Brazilian infrastructure projects had not been implemented because "after Lula, there was a loss of interest (in the Brazil-Africa policy)" ... "I think at the end of the Lula [era], government completely overstretched. Announcing too many projects and not being able to implement them". This point is further reinforced by the latest developments under current President Magufuli (2015-). He stopped a drift towards gas generation and firing Minister Muhongo in 2017 and abolishing Rubada, the President has delegated development of the Stiegler's Gorge Dam to a trusted Minister, Medard Kalemani⁴⁷. From this point, the government actively pursued Stiegler's Gorge Dam, even making it a flagship project (Luhwago 2017). This time, the government plans to finance the dam itself through the national budget, which can speed up implementation and allows pronouncements by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee to be ignored. However, the latest progress sidelined Odebrecht. The company entered the bidding rounds in 2018 and 2019, making it to the second round 2019⁴⁸. Despite the company having the most knowledge about the project, including its preparation of detailed feasibility, design and EIA reports, the Tanzanian government appointed an Egyptian consortium made of Arab Contractors, to lead civil works, and El Sweeney, for the electromechanical works. This is deeply surprising as seemingly, neither contractor has any experience leading dam design and construction⁴⁹. For Odebrecht to be frozen out of this process, despite their position of strength, reinforces the impression of their inability to form alliances with key brokers and to read Tanzanian politics and decision making processes. Again this suggests Odebrecht's inability to read and manage Tanzanian politics.

4.0 Conclusion

Through the case study of Tanzania, this chapter has demonstrated how a combination of drivers pushed Brazil's dramatic see-saw trajectory and why it retreated beyond Lusophone Africa so dramatically. The commodity-price downturn reduced the attractiveness of investments in natural resources and governments' budgets. However, the chapter also identifies particular Brazilian weaknesses. One of these stems from the structural political issues of Brazil's fragmented Congress. It hampered debt relief for countries in Africa, thereby blocking access to concessional finance. Typically, such BNDES finance was an important key to unlocking economically-risky infrastructure, as was the case in Tanzania. Equally, the influence of Presidents are noticeable. President Dilma's lesser prioritisation of Africa decreased South-South Cooperation spending and decreased the supportive Presidential diplomacy that had previously driven Africa ties, especially beyond a Lusophone core. Allocation of resources and support for relations with Africa has further decreased with Presidents Temer and Bolsonaro. This degree of Presidentialism in foreign policy creates a structural weakness in terms of building 'new' international relations. In addition, Brazilian companies were key agents in themselves.

But such agency and structure factors do not sufficiently explain why Brazil's Tanzania relations suffered to the extent they have. The steep decline differs from other countries in Africa. European finance and other investment sources could have plausibly offered a way of implementing Odebrecht and Queiroz Galvão's infrastructure projects. Therefore, this chapter argues that, given the degree of Presidential diplomacy and the resources of the Brazilian government and companies, one could expect more successfully implemented projects. To understand their failure requires appreciation of an additional weakness, here conceptualised as naivety, which describes Brazilian actors misreading of policymaking and politics in Tanzania. Brazil's diplomats and companies did not appear to fully appreciate the priorities and processes of the relevant Tanzanian politicians and civil servants. Nor did they appear to have access to expertise that could have given them a more critical appraisal of decision making. Assuming that their experience in Mozambique and Angola could serve as a guide, they also failed to appreciate the weakness and fragmentation of the Tanzanian regime and the effect this had on policymaking. Collectively, and in contrast to other companies in the energy sector, Brazilian firms appear to have misread the policymaking process to a greater extent. Thus, this chapter argues that the concept of naivety makes

⁴⁷ From the same constituency as the President and reportedly a family relation.

⁴⁸ Personal correspondence: Academics, December 2018; February, 2019.

⁴⁹ <https://www.arabcont.com/English/>

a useful contribution to understanding the foreign relations of Brazil in Africa, and perhaps the emerging powers more widely. Along with other structural and personality factors, it explains the rapidity of Brazil's decline in engagements in the continent and its lack of embeddedness beyond a Lusophone core. In making this point, the chapter also contributes to two debates about the emerging powers in Africa. One is the role of African agency in determining foreign relations, as this case evidences Tanzanian's crucial role in shaping Brazil-Tanzanian outcomes. Additionally, the case demonstrates the significance of companies and corporate agency in the foreign policy of the emerging powers in Africa, which the literature has not always given sufficient recognition to. Although the Brazilian state was the primary actor pioneering and supporting relations in Tanzania, both firms did play an important role here in advancing each project and investing in construction preparations.

Finally, in drawing this chapter to a conclusion, it is worth reflecting on how the boom and bust looks in retrospect. Certainly in non-Lusophone countries like Tanzania, Brazil's presence as a serious international partner appears more of a blip. This is also arguably true of those states who saw more successful relations like Ghana, given the current near absence of Brazil firms and closure of development cooperation projects in that country. Without causing significant ill will towards itself, beyond Lusophone Africa, there is little evidence of a longer-lasting Brazilian impact. It seems unlikely that this will change in the future. The Lula-era's inability to address underlying structural weaknesses meant that it did not set-up Brazilian companies and NGOs for a renaissance. Rather, in countries like Tanzania, Brazilian actors will be essentially starting from scratch. Prerequisites to future engagement would likely include a sustained programme of subsidised governmental credit and a development-cooperation agency that is more independent, legally-institutionalised and bureaucratically-capable, as this would allow it to sustain projects to build in-country experience. However, under present circumstances a renewed African agenda looks unlikely. For Tanzania, any country that can provide finance and support for President Magufuli's agenda of infrastructure building and industrialisation would be welcome, in all probability. Bolsanaro conversely, looks uniquely unsuited to engagements based on listening to the aspirations of African leaders, especially given his relatively singular foreign policy position seemingly focused on the person of President Trump. More potential therefore likely resides in the interests the activities of other parts of the state and private sector. Here, the fact that key companies are still reeling from the Lavo Jato scandal and economic travails of the last five years limit potential. Despite that, strategic interests in the Atlantic for trade and security, could lead to some activity, particularly given the military's current prominence in federal government. Additionally, the longer history and greater embeddedness of Brazilian actors in Lusophone Africa should mean ties continue there to some extent, regardless of changing political tides. However, with the current Covid-19 crisis undermining global engagement and particularly affecting Brazil, a return to the 2000s boom appears far-off.

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