

The main problem intended to be solved is to define the forms of advocacy of the women's movements in Tanzania and the role of these groups in the political sphere of the state. The research subjects are the women's movements represented by the main urban NGOs with political advocacy in their statutes. The project will be conducted by means of a literature analysis and subsequently, field research in Tanzania, in which an in-depth interview method will be used. The information gathered during research project will be analysed and elaborate, what will allow for the formulation of final conclusions. The results will be presented to academics. The proposed studies are the basic research refers to the field of Social Sciences and to International Relations.

The history of raising non-governmental sector in Tanzania is connected with liberal reforms in the 1990s along with Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which were initiated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and were focused on reducing fiscal imbalances in developing countries. As a result of implementation of the SAPs, the one party state system ended in Tanzania and simultaneously, space for the autonomy of non-state actors was created. However, this space for non-governmental entities was formed in a neopatrimonial political culture. Along with these liberal changes the discourse on empowerment was also strengthened. Tanzanian women's movements reacted enthusiastically on international struggle to equality and took up politically sensitive issues, like violence against women, land reform, children's rights, environmental concerns, and constitutional reform. It is worth noting that these issues were rarely addressed by both the ruling party as well as opposition. On the one hand, the women's movements represented the social demands and the basic needs of ordinary people. On the other hand, by dealing with political issues they involved the risk that they would perceive as too 'political'.

Although, as history shows, most of the new generation of organisations were comparatively independent of the party and the government. However, at the same time the fact is that they faced huge pressure for cooptation. When in the early 1990s, the Tanzanian government and ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party began the process of liberalisation, they were convinced they would be able to maintain the central position in the state and to manage oppositional and NGOs activities for their own purpose. It should not be surprising then, that the NGO sector experienced a numerous of restrictions, such as abandoning or slowing down the process of registration. Women's groups were one of the first who started the struggle against the neglected social demands and policies of the government. Subsequently, they were the first who met huge restrictions on their activities.

Previous research has led to two opposite conclusions. On the one hand, it is widely assumed that a neopatrimonial political culture influences all kinds of activities in the state, including the NGO sector. On the contrary, it has been stated that women's movements act independently and represent social demands in the political sphere. Therefore, the author proposes the preliminary research hypothesis: the autonomy of the women's movements in Tanzania is determined by the forms of advocacy used by them.

As has been mentioned above, throughout this project the phenomenon of women's movements has been restricted to the main urban NGOs, with political advocacy in their statute. This choice has been dictated by several reasons. Nowadays, the academic field of African Studies has been growing in interest and recognition, and the phenomenon of the NGO sector and its role in the state is a topical research problem of great importance to international relations. However, there is very limited information about the forms of advocacy used by these entities. Research on the activities of women's groups has focused primarily on the problems of discrimination against women, while little attention has been paid to their role in the political sphere. As a result, there is a space to conduct original research in this field that will have cognitive significance on an international scale and will fill this gap.

There are several reasons for choosing the women's movements in Tanzania, as the most suitable and representative entity for this project. Firstly, Tanzania has been perceived as one of the best examples of the formation of a strong social movements in the sub-Saharan Africa region. It stands out especially in comparison with its neighbours. Kenya is considered as an example of a country in which women's movements are indeed numerous, but at the same time are deeply involved in interdependences with the state authorities. In Uganda, there is a weak representation of women's NGOs and seriously strong governmental oppression against women rights. Rwanda is a country with a well-organized women's movements sector and with pro-equality policies from the authorities. However, the literature on women's issues in Rwanda is much more extensive than publications devoted to Tanzania. Therefore, conducting research in Tanzania is more reasonable and will help to fill this gap. Secondly, women's groups have the strongest social voice in the state and were the first one who has started the struggle for changes in political sphere in Tanzania. Thirdly, the wide spectrum of various differences between the women's NGOs in rural areas and urban women's groups (a basic distinction relates to the targets of action, size, and groups of recipients) allows or even suggest that they could be examined as separate research subjects. Therefore, due to the nature of the study presented in this project, the more suitable group is urban NGO. Furthermore, this project refers to the women's movements in mainland Tanzania, excluding women's groups in Zanzibar. The situation of women's movements in Zanzibar is different and could be the subject of a separate study.

The project proposes a novel approach to the study of women's movements in several aspects. Previous research has been conducted primarily based on feminist theories. Therefore, this project is innovative because almost no prior research has been based on international relations theories - including social constructivism, which is proposed by the author of this project. This research will help to fill this gap and will be a reference point for subsequent projects on forms of advocacy and NGO sector activities in the political sphere. Obviously, the situation of women's movements is different in both various parts of sub-Saharan Africa as well as various parts of the world, but the research questions and theoretical approach presented in this project may be used as a subsidiary tool in other countries.