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Tanzania: Civil–Military Relations and Nationalism

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Summary

Why have there been no successful military interventions or civil wars in Tanzania’s nearly 60 years of independence? This one historical accomplishment, by itself striking in an African context, distinguishes Tanzania from most of the other post-1960 independent African countries and focuses attention on the possibilities and nature of successful civil–military relations in sub-Saharan Africa. Contrary to most civil–military relations theory, rather than isolating the military in order to achieve civilian oversight, Tanzania integrated the military, the dominant political party, and civil society in what one observer called a combination of “political militancy” and “antimilitarism,” somewhat akin, perhaps, to the Chinese model. China did provide intensive military training for the Tanzanians beginning in the 1960s, although this could in no way have been expected to ensure successful integration of the military with civil society, nor could it ensure peaceful civil–military relations.

Eight potentially causal and overlapping conditions have been outlined to explain this unique absence of civil–military strife in an African country. Relevant but admittedly partial explanations are: the largely salutary and national developmental role of the founding president, Julius Nyerere; the caution and long-term fear of military intervention engendered by the 1964 East African mutinies; Tanzania’s radical foreign policy as a Frontline State; its ongoing territorial disputes with Uganda and Malawi; concerted efforts at coup-proofing through the co-opting of senior military commanders; and the country’s striking ethnic heterogeneity, in which none of the 125 plus ethnolinguistic tribes had the capacity to assume a hegemonic dominance. Each factor has a role in explaining Tanzania’s unique civil–military history, and together they may comprise a plausible explanation of the over 50 years of peaceful civil–military relations. They do not, however, provide a hopeful prognosis for future civil–military relations in a system that is increasingly challenging the dominant-party state, nor do they account for Tanzania’s subsequent democratic deficit.

Keywords

- [civil–military relations](#)
- [Tanzania](#)
- [pan-Africanism](#)
- [radicalism](#)
- [Julius Nyerere](#)
- [national development](#)

- [military intervention](#)
- [military in politics](#)

Background to the Unique Development of the Tanzania People's Defence Force

Why have there been no successful military interventions or civil wars in Tanzania's nearly 60 years of independence? This one historical accomplishment, by itself striking in an African context, distinguishes Tanzania from most of the other post-1960 independent African countries, and focuses attention on the possibilities and nature of successful civil–military relations in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. It is especially significant that Tanzania has been among the poorest countries in the world.¹ This might be expected to put particular pressure on civil–military relations, if only because of the pattern, common in many countries, of military intervention as a means for military officers to achieve personal economic advancement. Poor countries in Africa have been among the most likely to experience full-scale military interventions (Jackman, [1978](#); Johnson, Slater, & McGowan, [1983](#); McKown, [1976](#)). As Abillah H. Omari put it in 2003, “The primary challenge is to find a model that can explain why a civilian regime has survived the behavioral changes and policy refinements that have taken place in Tanzania in . . . civil–military relations” (Omari, [2003](#), p. 89).

Tanzania managed to evolve into a relatively stable and largely peaceful single national culture despite its over 125 language groups and an even greater multiplicity of cultures. This points to Tanzania's uniquely successful creation of, and the long-term survival of, a single, culturally unified military establishment, the Tanzania People's Defence Force (TPDF), after 1964. Fifty years after the nation's founding, that force represented a professional and effective, if seriously underfunded, modern military establishment.

More than 50 years after the nation's independence, the TPDF, or Jeshi la Ulinzi la Wananchi wa Tanzania (JWTZ), was comprised of approximately 25,000 active military personnel and roughly 80,000 reserves. The reserves were drawn from members of the People's Militia (approximately 35,000) and the National Service, a conscription and volunteer force established under the National Service Act, Number 16, of 1964 (The United Republic of Tanzania Ministry of Defence and National Service, [n.d.](#)).² The military budget equaled about 1.21% of the GDP, a significant increase from the 2014 figure of 1.05% (United States Central Intelligence Agency, [n.d.](#)).

The TPDF was originally organized in three branches, the Land Forces Command, the Naval Command, and the Air Force Command. These three branches have been lightly equipped, with a continuing emphasis on Chinese military aid and equipment provision, including the addition in 2013 of 14 new Chinese J-7 jet fighters.³ The TPDF was said to be largely free of tribal rivalries despite the plethora (125 plus) of ethnic identities in the country. The religious balance in the TPDF was said to be about 50% Muslim and 50% Christian, although the national percentages for these affiliations were about 62% Christian and 35% Muslim. Although GlobalSecurity.com noted that “the TPDF lacks the ability to project military power,” it concluded that “the TPDF is a professional military that enjoys a good reputation with the general public” ([globalsecurity.org](#)).

It is arguable that it was through the creation and diffusion of this culturally unified national military organization that Tanzania's single, unified national culture emerged. This culture

has included the embrace of a single national language, a distinctive brand of African socialism, a relentless commitment to pan-Africanism and African liberation, and a tolerance and respect for tribal and religious differences as key constituents of that culture. In what was defined by Mazrui as a distinctive cultural militancy (Mazrui, [1969](#)), the TPDF and Tanzanian culture came together as one. This blending of the military institution with Tanzanian national culture, sometimes referred to as the “Chinese model,” characterized Tanzania’s nearly 60 years of independence. The *Chama cha Mapinduzi* (CCM—The Party of Revolution), the official political party in what was a single-party state after 1963 and for the country’s first 30 years (1961–1992), has been seen by some (e.g., Lupogo, [2001](#); Mazrui, [1969](#); Omari, [2003](#)) as a vital constituent of the peaceful civil–military relations that emerged.

A number of excellent analyses of the Tanzanian accomplishment of civilian oversight and nonconfrontational civil–military relations have been published over the past 40 years (see Lindemann, [2010](#); Lupogo, [2001](#); Mazrui, [1969](#); Omari, [2003](#); Tungaraza, [1998](#); Zirker, [1992](#)). At least eight contributory explanations of Tanzania’s uniquely nonconfrontational civil–military relations are suggested in these works, and are worth considering:

1.

The charismatic and dynamic leadership of the founding president, Julius Kambarage Nyerere, who was originally identified with the “anti-army” group at independence (Lupogo, [2001](#)), and whose efforts at nation-building included the creation of the TPDF and the institutionalization of Kiswahili as the national language.

2.

National insecurity resulting from the East African mutinies of 1964.

3.

Strident pan-Africanism and an unbridled commitment as a Frontline State.

4.

Serious territorial disputes with Malawi (still ongoing in 2020) and Uganda (resolved through military engagement, invasion of Uganda, and overthrow of dictator Idi Amin), which lent a firm “orthodox military mission” to the TPDF.

5.

Nyerere’s radical political orientation, which led to a break with Western military allies, Germany and Britain, and the early military training and equipping of the TPDF by Israel, Canada, and, especially, China, which served as the model for the integration of the TPDF with civil society (Tungaraza, [1998](#), pp. 293–294).

6.

Apparently self-conscious coup-proofing by co-optation of senior military commanders through early retirement to comfortable CCM positions.

7.

The structural integration of the TPDF and civil society through National Service, the People's Militia, and the creation of political commissars throughout the military ranks; as well as the facts that active military personnel were allowed to run for political office, were mostly quartered at home, and represented a democratic force (Lupogo, [2001](#), p. 78).

8.

The original cultural heterogeneity of Tanzania, in which the largest ethnic group, the Sukuma, comprise only 16% of the population and have been especially slow to modernize (and hence to threaten their neighbors). Unlike Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and Burundi, Tanzania has little danger of a single ethnic group's being dominant or of several dominant ethnic groups' vying for power.

These eight partial explanations, while by no means exhaustive, offer clarification of what otherwise seems almost impossible: a sub-Saharan African country that engaged in conventional warfare, invading a neighboring country (not without provocation), that was nevertheless able to keep its military under civilian oversight and control, largely through integrating the military and civil society, for at least the first six decades of its existence after independence in 1961.

Most analyses of civil–military relations in Tanzania (e.g., Kingazi, [2006](#); Lindemann, [2010](#); Lupogo, [2001](#); Mazrui, [1969](#); Omari, [2003](#); Thomas, [2012](#); Tungaraza, [1998](#); Zirker, [1992](#)) have tended to focus on a unique pattern that continues, at least to some extent: the unusual, continuing, and largely peaceful integration of the TPDF with civil society in Tanzania. This process apparently originated in a post-1961 history of military threats (both internal and external), aggressive nation-building, political radicalism, and the ideological and material influence of China. Additionally, aggressive pan-Africanism and self-identification as a Frontline State were inconsistent at times with radicalism and socialism at home. The co-optation of senior military commanders through early retirement to privileged positions in the single legal party, the CCM, may have “opened” the political system while partially undermining its radical nature.

The Colonial Heritage: German Repression and British Military Practices

The German colonialism of the late 19th century was largely unexpected. Otto von Bismarck, Chancellor of the German Empire (1871–1890), only reluctantly and belatedly pursued the political foreign policies necessary to ensure the benefits of colonialism in earnest in the 1880s. Having been weakened by the Great Depression of 1873 and crippled by subsequent “national labor” tariffs, the German Empire had yet to become imperial at that point. Bismarck and the great German financial houses had doubted the economic viability of the German East African Company, founded by Carl Peters (von Strandmann, [1969](#), p. 150), the most capitalist and aggressive of the early German economic penetrations. The economic vulnerability, and even failures, of other trading companies cum “colonial ventures,” such as the South Sea Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, alarmed Bismarck. Nevertheless, colonial societies were able to convince him to adopt a supportive colonial policy, and aggressive companies with some support from German military units began engaging in cotton growing and mineral extraction with involuntary labor in the newly minted German East Africa. In 1884–1885, Bismarck organized the Berlin Conference of European powers in

order further to divide and to acquire African colonies. With the formal acquisition of Southwest Africa, Cameroon, and German East Africa, Germany soon began to compete with Britain and France in the scramble for African resources.

East and Central African experiences in enduring a militant, if apparently ambivalent, colonial metropole soon led to intertribal rivalries, attempts to grab territory, and open resistance to German colonial exploitation. Germany's martial colonial domination over the future Rwanda, Burundi, Tanganyika, and part of Mozambique, as the single entity German East Africa, was purposefully brutal and contributed to open conflict between tribes, which had been forced into slave labor and into competition for space with other tribes as well as those that would soon depend upon positioning themselves in territorial land grabs. The Wahehe Rebellion (1891–1898) was one of the early major conflicts, and it was followed a decade later by the well-known Maji Maji uprising of 1905–1907, in reality a series of anticolonial and intertribal armed conflicts (Monson, [1998](#)).

The armed clashes were the result of intertribal competition and opposition to forced labor associated, in most accounts, with Carl Peters' German East Africa Company, and particularly the forced labor associated with road-building and cotton-production campaigns. Nevertheless, many of the clashes seemed to have had more to do with intertribal competition for land and resources (Monson, [1998](#)), although they led to deaths estimated to number in the hundreds of thousands.⁴ Tanganyikans, who bore the brunt of such clashes, and especially of the Maji Maji Rebellion and its aftermath, seem to have internalized a deep and almost cultural repulsion regarding civil war and internal conflict. Many of the tribesmen in the Maji Maji Rebellion fought against each other for their own territory, fought against German-organized troops, or fought on behalf of the German authorities. These only lightly rationalized conflicts, often conducted by tribesmen armed with little more than spears and what was thought to be magic water (von Strandmann, [1969](#)), were devastating. Many of the combatants believed, initially at least, to be able to turn German bullets into water (*water* is “maji” in Kiswahili). As Monson observed, the “*vita vya Maji Maji* is remembered as a time of dispersal and realignment” (Monson, [1998](#)), rather than as a unified rebellion. The futility of armed conflict, of chaotic civil war in this case, represented the primary recollection of Maji Maji for many, and it is this history that is thought to have engendered in many Tanganyikans a profound distaste for internal conflict of any kind.

Germany's loss of World War I resulted in the Anglo-Belgian Agreement of 1919, under the auspices of the League of Nations, and the division of Germany's East African territories into a British protectorate, Tanganyika, and into the Belgian Rwanda-Urundi (later Burundi) mandate, territory that Belgium had seized in 1916. Belgium later ruled under a League of Nations mandate. Portugal was awarded the Kionga Triangle in Northern Mozambique by the League of Nations Mandate Commission. The British exercised nominal control over their East African colonies and protectorate, employing the King's African Rifles, a troop of several thousand headquartered in Uganda, Tanganyika, and Kenya and commanded by British officers and NCOs.

British control over Zanzibar, which had become a British protectorate in 1890 and which continued to be semi-autonomously led by the Sultan of Zanzibar, lasted until the Zanzibar Revolution of 1964 and the consequent killing or expulsion of most of the Arab population. Tanganyika, which formally became a UN Trust Territory under British control after World War II, was given the first stage of independence in 1961, when its colonial and British-commanded army became the newly renamed Tanganyika Rifles. The army retained the

structure of the colonial King’s African Rifles, along with its British commanding officers, its British and African NCOs, and its African troops. The latter tended to be recruited from the largely misunderstood category of “martial tribes” (see Enloe, [1980](#)) in Tanganyika, the Kuria, Hehe, and Ngoni.

The British had also created the Field Force Unit (FFU) during the protectorate, a group of police and soldiers in SWAT teams designed to keep order (read: engage in political repression) in the protectorate. The FFU survived independence and the complete reorganization of the army and continued to be used for internal repression in Tanzania. During the ill-fated implementation of Ujamaa, Nyerere’s villagization component of his adaptation of African socialism, the FFU forced relocation of rural peoples to villages. Interestingly, almost no discussion of this unit is to be found in analyses and news reports over the past 30 years (see significant and unusual mention in Ng’wanakilala, [2018](#), and Saul, [2002](#), p. 196), although it has apparently been used frequently and may have contributed to some alienation of civil society from the military (Saul, [2002](#)).

War Fighting, Coups, and Rumors of Coups

Contrary to the image of Tanzania as an intervention-free country, rumored and confirmed coup attempts have periodically been noted. The history of modern Tanzanian civil–military relations begins, in fact, as the obvious clustering in the timeline demonstrates, with the 1960s, and the East African mutinies of 1964. The brutal experiences of colonial Tanganyika and the Zanzibar Revolution effectively set the stage for a national tendency to avoid open conflict, whenever and wherever possible, and to “muddle through” nonviolently in preference to war fighting, bloody armed resistance, and military coups. German capitalist and exploitative colonization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the intertribal conflict that it sparked, may have represented the first milestone in Tanganyika’s national consciousness and its largely peaceful history of civil–military relations. Later, a clustering of events, as indicated in the timeline in Figure 1, suggest that civil–military relations were not nearly as conflict-free as has been argued.

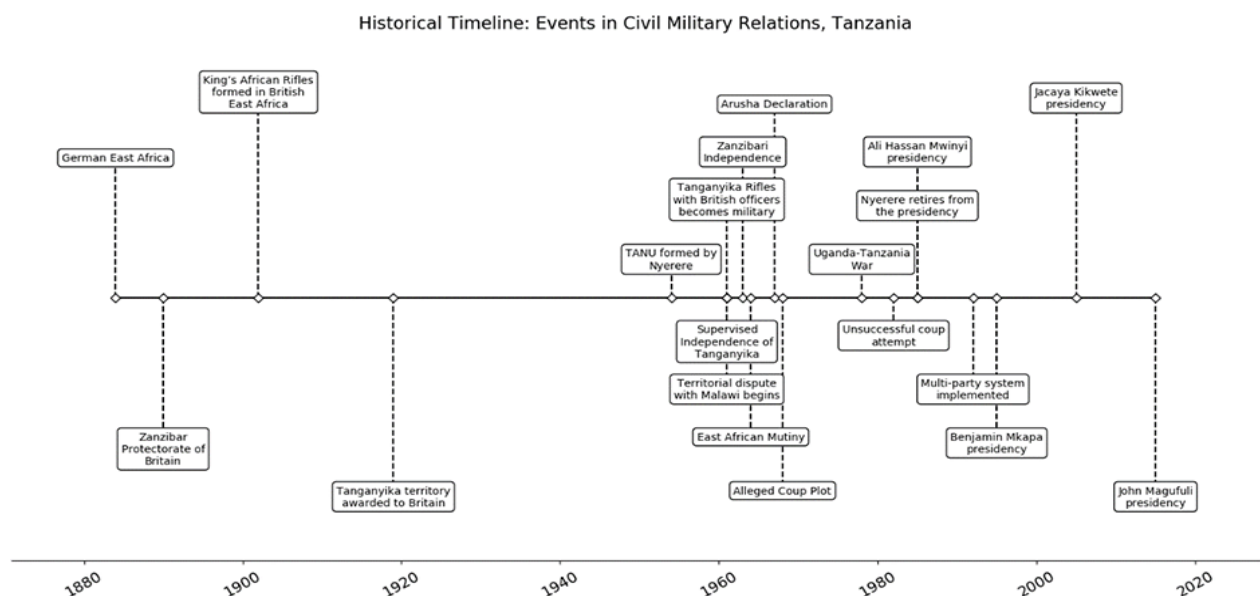


Figure 1. Historical timeline of events in civil–military relations in Tanzania. Created by the author, original and unpublished

The CCM originated during the late British protectorate period as the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), and it was coupled in 1964 with its confederal partner, Zanzibar's revolutionary party, the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP). These became the only legal political parties in the newly formed Tanzania. They were amalgamated in 1977 into the CCM, the single party in the confederation, and the single-party state remained in place until the advent of multiparty politics in 1992. The single-party state, then, which nevertheless featured open and competitive elections, allowed for the integration of military and political institutions in a way that an early adoption of multiparty competition might have precluded.⁵ The military became thoroughly and systematically politicized, while at the same time civil society became, as Ali Mazrui put it, "militarized" (Mazrui, [1969](#)). Rather than isolating the military from political radicalism, the military recruitment patterns were preeminently ideological, beginning with founding President Julius Nyerere's total rebuilding of the army as a response to the East African mutinies of 1964. The mutinies were a regional military intervention that affected Tanzania far more directly than they affected Uganda and Kenya, their other two focal points.

The mutinies began in Tanganyika on January 20, 1964. The issues were primarily a dispute over pay and promotions and, especially, a strident disagreement regarding the plans for "Africanizing" the Tanganyika Rifles, the country's military establishment, which was still led by British officers and which had maintained internally repressive colonial duties, including the FFU (and it was functioning as a repressive force as late as the 2020s). The three-country (Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya) mutinies were most threatening to the power structure in Tanganyika. Nyerere was compelled to go into hiding and to call in British troops to put down the mutiny, which they did on January 26, 1964. This counter-mutiny force was led by British Brig. Patrick Sholto Douglas, the former commander of the Tanganyika Rifles. Twenty people were initially killed on January 20, when the mutiny, described later as more of an "industrial strike" (Lupogo, [2001](#)), broke out at the Colito Base, 10 miles north of Dar es Salaam. There was some coordination with similar outbreaks in Uganda and Kenya. As Nyerere was reported to have said, in Kiswahili, at the time, "No popular government can tolerate an army that disobeys its instructions. . . . An army that does not obey laws and orders of the people's Government is not an army of that country. It is a danger to the whole nation" (quoted in "British put down African mutinies in three nations," 1964).

By January 26, 1964, during what became the first British military deployment on the continent of Africa after the Suez Crisis of 1956 ("British put down African mutinies in three nations," 1964), the mutiny had quickly spread across Tanganyika and threatened to become a coup. On January 26, the British aircraft carrier *Centaur* and its accompanying destroyer, *Cambrian*, fired blank cannon rounds on Dar es Salaam while 60 British commandos overcame 800 mutineers in Colito Base in a brief assault. British paratroopers were dropped on Tabora Base, 450 miles west of Dar es Salaam, and on Nachingwea, 260 miles to the south ("British put down African mutinies in three nations," 1964). The troops, as noted above, were under the command of Brigadier Douglas.

Nyerere, besides suffering the humiliations of calling in the British to put down the mutiny and of going into hiding, relinquished direct negotiations for ending the mutiny to his long-term colleague and First Minister of External Affairs, Oscar Kambona. By most accounts, Kambona met with, and stood up bravely to, the mutineers. He subsequently received credit as well as public thanks for ending the crisis from an embarrassed Nyerere. However, a deep ideological rift subsequently developed between these two best-known early political leaders, with Nyerere becoming a radical and Kambona a procapitalism moderate. The public boost

that Kambona received from his perceived heroic response to the threat of military intervention played itself out in the rivalry between the two leaders.⁶ As a result, Kambona ultimately went into self-imposed exile in 1968. Nyerere had reacted by this time by completely abolishing the Tanganyika Rifles and establishing a wholly new and radical TPDF. He published a call in the local newspapers to radical youth to join TANU, the National Service, and, simultaneously, the new army: “I call upon the members of TANU Youth League, wherever they are, to go to the local TANU office and enroll themselves. From this group we shall try to build a nucleus of a new army for the Republic of Tanganyika.”⁷ The new Kiswahili-speaking and radical TPDF was born. Its largely invented quasi-ethnic identity (Zirker, [1992](#), [2015](#)) would soon become dispersed across, and entrenched in, Tanzania as the basis of the new national culture.

A putative coup attempt in 1969, reportedly foiled by the TPDF (Omari, [2003](#)), was publicly linked Kambona as well as a number TPDF officers and well-known politicians (Omari, [2003](#), p. 97). Kambona’s popularity, even in his lengthy absence from Tanzania, his liberalism, and his opposition to the Arusha Declaration, which had quickly become the formal expression of Nyerere’s compulsory Ujamaa (African socialism) policy, as well as Kambona’s publicly expressed opposition to growing Chinese influence in Tanzania, were in direct opposition to the newly developing national culture.

His public expression of opposition from exile ultimately led to Kambona’s political vilification and political downfall.⁸ Shortly after his openly expressed opposition to the Arusha Declaration and prior to his voluntary exile, amid rumors of his alleged corrupt practices, Kambona’s passport was temporarily seized. After it was returned to him, Kambona went into voluntary exile, where he spent the next 25 years. He continued to oppose the Nyerere government from the United Kingdom, and he expressed his views in speaking tours in other countries in Africa, including Nigeria, a country that had provided many of the troops used to put down the East African mutinies. Somewhat dubious charges that a military coup was planned for 1969 led to rumors that Kambona was the coup leader. The coup attempt was said to have been a response by the capitalists (read: Kambona). Six air force officers apparently stole a military plane as charges were being made and flew it to the Comoros Islands (Tungaraza, [1998](#)). A trial was held for the arrested “coup plotters,” who were subsequently convicted and imprisoned. Kambona was not charged.

In 1972, the president of Zanzibar and constitutional first vice president of Tanzania, Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume, was assassinated, reportedly by Zanzibari army officers. This was portrayed at the time as a relatively minor, and personality-related, event (Omari, [2003](#), p. 97). In retrospect, it did appear to be a coup attempt in Zanzibar. Significantly, it was linked at the time to Zanzibari political culture, the implication being that had it been left to Zanzibar alone (without TPDF support), it might well have turned into a full-blown military intervention. The TPDF, in fact, put it down, and this was regarded as further evidence of the functionality of the new system. As Omari later noted, had Zanzibar not been linked politically to Tanzania, this would likely have been a successful coup *in Zanzibar* (Omari, [2003](#), p. 97, *emphasis added*).

The war in Uganda resulted from a long-term mal-entendu between Nyerere and General cum President of Uganda Idi Amin, who, in seizing power, had removed Nyerere’s friend and close colleague, Milton Obote, from the Ugandan presidency in 1971. Unlike Tanganyika, Uganda had acceded to all of the 1964 mutineers’ demands (Decalo, [1976](#), pp. 203, 206), apparently paving the way for Amin’s later seizure of power in a coup in 1971. Increasing

hostility to Amin in Tanzania, apparently following Nyerere's lead, and culminating in his public vilification in the Tanzanian press, heightened tensions to the breaking point. Amin was frequently referred to as *Amini haini* ("Amin is a traitor") in official Tanzanian news service releases (Lupogo, 2001, p. 83); it should not have been surprising, then, that voluntary TPDF conscription numbers soon increased. War was apparently in the offing. In 1978, Amin sent soldiers into Tanzania after repeating long-term territorial claims and apparently bogus reports of Tanzanian incursions into Uganda (Mambo & Schofield, 2007). The rapid buildup to war on the Ugandan side was at least partly a political diversion as Amin lost the last vestiges of his popular support.

Tanzania's national mobilization intensified as the TPDF grew from 40,000 to 100,000 soldiers in a matter of several weeks (Lupogo, 2001, p. 83). War ensued after Amin's shelling and brief seizure of Tanzanian territory, and Uganda was quickly defeated both in battle and in world opinion (Avirgan & Honey, 1983). In short, Amin had found it impossible to mobilize his country for war against Tanzania (Avirgan & Honey, 1983). It is difficult to understand Amin's rationale for invading Tanzania at the time, although the creation of a political diversion at a time of economic crisis and rapidly flagging legitimacy is one cogent explanation (Mambo & Schofield, 2007).⁹ In any event, Amin's brutal military dictatorship was overthrown, and Amin went into exile. The Tanzanian occupational forces, moreover, impressed the Ugandans as "generous, sympathetic, easy-going, and gentle" (Lupogo, 2001, p. 84), a sharp contrast with the civil-military relations that had pertained under the Amin dictatorship. The long-term territorial disputes with Uganda and Malawi represented an "orthodox" *raison d'être* for the existence of the TPDF, moreover, and likely increased its collective sense of self confidence.

An apparently more serious Tanzanian coup attempt reportedly took place in Dar es Salaam in 1982 after a series of property nationalizations under Ujamaa. The anti-Ujamaa action was described as ineffectual, supposedly because Nyerere was forewarned by the head of his security detail (Tungaraza, 1998) and had fled the statehouse at a key moment. On the other hand, it was described in an interview with the author in 1990 as having been a tense standoff in the statehouse, a moment in which Nyerere effectively talked his way out of his possible assassination by angry officers (Zirker, 1992). Army officers, as many as 20 soldiers, and 8 civilians were implicated and subsequently were charged with treason (Daily News of Tanzania, "Charged with treason," 1983, p. 1). There appeared to have been little planning, however, and relatively little political or military impact resulted from the failed venture.

A putative plan to take over Zanzibar in 1984 was supposedly initiated by a foreign mercenary group with the support of a foreign power. It was apparently intended to split Zanzibar away from the confederation, although the plot was discovered before it reached the stage of implementation (Omari, 2003, p. 97) and was quietly crushed.

Theories of Civil-Military Relations, Tanzania, and the Chinese Pattern

The patterns of strict institutional separation, institutional isolation of the military, and reliance upon military "professionalization" to prevent interventions became the preferred academic prescriptions for stable civil-military relations in Latin American and Africa after 1960. Western academics argued, incorrectly as it turned out, that these measures, initially directed at major developed countries, would also prevent military intervention in developing countries (Finer, 1962; Huntington, 1957; and even Janowitz, 1971, to some extent). However, some observers (e.g., Schiff, 1995, 2012) allowed for the possibility of political

integration of the military with civil society as a more effective means of coup-proofing military establishments. This “concordance theory” was criticized as too encompassing (Schiff, [1996](#)), although it briefly played out successfully in several systems besides Tanzania. In Guinea and Ghana, for example, something akin to concordance developed, although in the absence of a collectivist ideology, it was doomed to failure.

The Chinese civil–military model, however, which Tanzania appears to have borrowed, and which seems to fit at least the outer limits of the concordance paradigm, involved a thorough integration of military and civil society. Ruling party membership among senior officers and the open co-optation of senior commanders with political party offices upon retirement represent key elements of the model. As China demonstrated, a system under the party-integration model can remain stable at least as long as the single-party state remains intact. This is largely counterintuitive in the context of African civil–military relations, however. In a very poor country like Tanzania, the individualistic coup-proofing incentives, comfortable CCM positions for field commanders after early retirement, and the open co-opting of potential individualistic coup leaders seem to fly in the face of African socialism, if not Tanzania’s unique focus upon collective and traditional values. Nevertheless, prevention of coups must be the highest priority in socialist system maintenance, as the coup and assassination of Captain Thomas Sankara demonstrated in Burkina Faso in 1987.

Eight Possible, if Partial, Explanations of Tanzania’s Largely Peaceful Civil–Military Relations

There are at least eight possible explanations for why apparently peaceful civil–military relations have persisted as long as they have in Tanzania. The first, most prominent explanation is the unique role of the charismatic visionary and founding national president, the late Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922–1999). He continues to be known to his people, in Kiswahili, as *Mwalimu* (“Teacher”), and *Baba na Taifa* (“Father of the Nation”). His decisive and adroit nation-building leadership included a series of steps that he tried out in the new TPDF and the universal adoption of a single African national language, Kiswahili, which had a great influence on the subsequent culture of the new nation. Nyerere remained open and vocal about his mistrust of national armies, and this played out in his public, if occasionally inconsistent, advocacy of a strong and independent pan-African military force and the creation of a very small and civilian-dominated national army (Lupogo, [2001](#), p. 77).¹⁰ Furthermore, while Nyerere consistently espoused African socialism, he fought for small-scale, self-reliant local national development.¹¹ These views were coupled with an insistence upon respect for religious freedom, religious tolerance, and support of all ethnic groups in Tanzania, even to the point of mandating quota hiring in some government and university positions.

Nyerere was the paramount leader and national visionary of Tanzania from its independence in 1961 to (and beyond) his voluntary retirement from the presidency in 1985. He became the architect of a national culture that was first implemented in the new military, the TPDF, in 1964. His most basic and successful policy, the adoption of a single African national language in the country, was coupled with adherence to principles of equality best expressed in universal education, particularly of women, and celebration of Tanzania’s ethnic mosaic. These emphases were ultimately institutionalized and widely accepted in Tanzania’s increasingly unified national culture after 1964. The adoption of Kiswahili as the national lingua franca went to the heart of these views and is universally recognized as very successful.¹²

The military and civil society were, to some degree, fused culturally as the Tanzanian national culture emerged. This single national culture, in a country of more than 125 traditional cultures, was effectively piloted in the TPDF (Thomas, [2012](#)). It is difficult to overestimate the critical and positive role that subsequent civil–military relations played in the formation of a Tanzanian national identity. Moreover, it is relatively easy, given the very positive press that Nyerere received during his presidency, to ignore the importance that coercion played, particularly in what eventuated as flawed and failed economic (Ujamaa) policies. The instruments of coercion, the TPDF and the national police, joined at times in the FFU, became part of the cultural transition. The abolition in 1964 of the remaining colonial army, the Tanganyika Rifles, and the restructuring of national defense policy to create the TPDF gave Tanzania and Nyerere himself a unique opportunity and incentive to address both security and nation-building through the formation of a new military force.

The subsequent creation of the openly ideological National Service, eventually the basis of national conscription, further reinforced the immediacy of nation-building through recruitment into the TPDF. Nyerere emphasized this cultural transition, first in the new TPDF, and then, apparently through cultural diffusion and concerted policies, across the country. His Kiswahili language policy is widely regarded as the emblematic grounding of cultural transition, and this new culture was consciously averse to military intervention.¹³ Nyerere had effectively designed a workable model for the radicalization of nation-building in Tanzania after 1964. He did this by completely reconstructing the military, by recruitment of socialist youth through the national political party, TANU (later the CCM), and through National Service, the People’s Militia. An emphasis was placed on equality and education, and on the designation within the new military of a single African language, Swahili. In the 1990s, after the execution of the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu (Anglin, [1990](#)), multiparty democracy became a likelihood in Tanzania as well as in more than 20 other sub-Saharan African states. In the mid-1980s, Ceaușescu had made a triumphal and celebrated visit to Africa as the leader of a successful and “nonaligned” single-party state that was purportedly a model of single-party statehood. His overthrow and execution in late 1989, the emblematic failure of the model single-party state, triggered the so-called African perestroika (Anglin, [1990](#)). Tanzania’s CCM, and over 20 other African governments, soon went into secret debates, and they subsequently moved to adopt multiparty systems. Nyerere, still the leader of the CCM, but in full voluntary retirement as a former president, issued a public statement at the time in which he accepted this change, but he hoped that the additional parties that emerged would all be socialist. He was prescient. As John S. Saul noted in 2002, the change to multiparty politics has “facilitated a deepening pattern of elite corruption and opportunism and of wasting interethnic and religious rivalry of precisely the sort Nyerere may have feared” (Saul, [2002](#), p. 198). Since 2002, the growth of authoritarianism, the last backstop to the breakdown of national cultural norms, has proceeded apace.

Second, Nyerere’s early skepticism about the loyalty and public spiritedness of the British-commanded military, the Tanganyika Rifles, was apparently justified at a key historical juncture. The East African mutiny was most intense in Tanganyika, and when it exploded, mostly over a pay and promotions dispute, as well as resistance to the form of Africanization of the military that had been proposed, Nyerere was personally threatened, and he became graphically aware of the need for a total restructuring of the force. He went into hiding, and his colleague and, increasingly, ideological adversary, Oscar Kambona, initially “handled” the Tanganyikan end of the East African military revolt until British military forces had to be called in to put an end to it. The resultant revolutionary military culture that Nyerere proposed soon intentionally effected a national culture along the same lines, modeling in the

TPDF what could (and did) become a single national culture, with a somewhat embarrassed condemnation of the very British colonial military officers who had rescued the day in January 1964.

The insistence upon Kiswahili as the single language in the military, the recruitment of soldiers from all levels and geographical locations, and the insistence that all inductees into the TPDF come out of National Service and adopt a radical commitment to Ujamaa and African socialism rapidly spread into the wider society. As one observer noted, “The political transformation of Tanzania was fostered in the military by the explicit politicization of the army” (Thomas, [2012](#), p. 147). The barracking of most soldiers in their homes facilitated this dispersion of a new national culture, one that centered on Kiswahili and African socialism.¹⁴ The 1964 East African mutiny had driven home the potential for neocolonialism to manifest itself in an independent and interventionist army. It is not surprising in this context that Nyerere continually expressed a strong preference for a small and radical national army, even while he was extolling the virtues of a UN (or Organisation of African Unity, OAU) standing military force. As Mazrui observed, this intense domestic antimilitarism spawned a “political militancy” across Tanzanian society (Mazrui, [1969](#)). The result was the establishment of a political and cultural military within the TPDF, which adopted a single African language, Kiswahili, African socialism as a required ideology, and an emphasis upon self-reliance. These were soon disseminated across Tanzania as the bases of a single national culture.

Third, Nyerere’s strident pan-Africanism was expressed in his consistent and radical support for southern African liberation as well as his support in principle (often publicly expressed by his brother, Joseph Nyerere) for the creation of a pan-African, or OAU, military force, which the brothers argued should be directed by multilateral African leadership. Although this force never eventuated, Nyerere embraced the creation of the Liberation Committee of the OAU in 1963, urging that it be focused on the anticolonial liberation of Southern Africa. It soon came to be headquartered in Dar es Salaam, despite British officers’ command of the Tanganyika Rifles, the extant Tanganyika military at the time. This neocolonial arrangement was bound to fail, and it was especially inappropriate for the emerging task (Lupogo, [2001](#)).

Fourth, the persistent external military threats to Tanzanian sovereignty posed by Malawi and Uganda necessitated, at least in principle, the creation of an effective Tanzanian military establishment. The threats ultimately clarified the TPDF’s ongoing *raison d’être*, the establishment of which became a key feature of healthy civil–military relations. The Uganda threat was largely resolved by 1979. The Malawi threat continues, however, and is in mediation (Xinhua, [2018](#)).

Fifth, Nyerere’s radical foreign policies were ultimately responsible for the early and significant reliance upon military aid provided to Tanzania by Canada, Israel, and, particularly, China. Vital military support to Tanzania was given a boost in March 1963, when the OAU established the Liberation Committee, headquartered in Dar es Salaam (Lupogo, [2001](#)). Nyerere’s radical external involvement grew dramatically thereafter, and, beginning in 1964, Tanzania broke its close military and foreign military aid ties with both West Germany (over the Halstein Doctrine, which prohibited recognition of East Germany to all West German aid recipients) and the United Kingdom (over Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence, or UDI), thus signaling Tanzania’s decision to serve as a Frontline State. Tanganyika (as it was still officially known at that time) had become one of the earliest African states to recognize Beijing, in December of 1961, and this initiated a

multifaceted Chinese aid program at precisely the moment that the West Germans and the British had abandoned theirs (Baily, [1973](#)).

Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai visited Tanganyika in early 1964, and China provided some military assistance in support of resistance to the East African mutiny (Shangwe, [2017](#)). China's military aid to Africa and to Tanzania, in particular, grew exponentially over the next two decades, and it has been at least matched by Chinese economic development aid over the past six decades, China's initial exercise in "soft power" (Benabdallah, [2018](#)). China soon became Tanzania's largest development donor. Over the past decades, visits by Chinese leaders, including those by Hu Jintao in 2009 and Xi Jinping in 2012, have further cemented political and economic ties between the two countries (Shangwe, [2017](#)). The one major caveat, particularly relevant to civil–military relations, is Tanzania's adoption in 1992 of multiparty politics. As Shangwe concluded in his 2017 analysis, this move is likely, sooner or later, to impact the unique cultural and military ties between the two countries (Shangwe, [2017](#), p. 100), a point that was raised by Zirker nearly three decades ago (Zirker, [1992](#)).

China's initial emphasis upon nonmilitary aid to Tanzania, beginning in earnest with the Tanzam (or TAZARA) railway line to Zambia, changed after 1965, when Tanzania reported the loss of £12 million in West German economic and military aid and another £7½ million from Britain. China had already pledged economic and military aid to Tanzania of £11 million, but China stepped in with an additional £3 million (in 1966) and another £4 million (also in 1966; Baily, [1973](#), pp. 20–21). China thus became the country's most important military aid donor, and by late 1964 China was training a marine police unit, had provided six patrol boats (the bulk of Tanzania's naval vessels at the time), was training military pilots in China, and even was building an air base (Baily, [1973](#)).

Nyerere recognized that China was the only powerful country that would likely support Tanzania's radical Frontline State participation. Chinese military instruction, moreover, an aspect of its projection of soft power in Tanzania (Benabdallah, [2018](#)), reinforced Nyerere's emphasis upon the integration of the TPDF with civil society. This was, in some respects, a less controlling and less ideological version of the Chinese model, but nonetheless it was dependent upon a positive international example. China, more so than Romania, became Tanzania's successful example of integrated civil–military relations.

A sixth possible explanation of Tanzania's peaceful and enduring civil–military relations is the further effort at coup-proofing the country through integration of civilian and military identities. While perhaps inconsistent to some extent with the Chinese quasiosocialist model, the co-opting of senior military commanders with prestigious political retirement positions in the CCM provided a kind of practical backstop. It should be noted that this directly violated the radical collectivist views implicit in Tanzanian socialism and nationalism. The offering of personal incentives to military elites to refrain from intervention was simply anathema to the extant forms of African socialism. It was apparently effective, however. It removed the incentive for upwardly mobile officers to overthrow the government for personal reasons and provided senior officers' oversight of junior officers and NCOs, if only in the interest of maintaining their comfortable party prospects. However, it seemed to require the retention of the single-party state, the guaranteed source of this patronage, or at least the continuation of the dominant-party state, and single-party dominance has been the case since the *de jure* legalization of multiple parties in 1992. A gradual weakening of the CCM ("Conflict triggers defection of over 1,700 members," 2015; *The Citizen*, [2019](#)) may explain the emergence of intensified authoritarianism in the past decade (Rosen, [2019](#)), if not its directed and

instrumental use of anticorruption legislation (“Over 6,400 corruption cases pending trials in courts,” 2017).

A seventh possible explanation for Tanzania’s consistently peaceful and integrated civil–military relations involves the continuing structural integration of the military into Tanzanian society through its close association with the National Service, the People’s Militia, and the CCM, as well as the establishment of largely civilian military commissars within that party structure (until 1992), the encouragement and recognition of citizen soldiers, and the quartering of most soldiers in their homes—the serendipitous and salutary cultural outcome of what originally had been merely a shortage of barracks (Lupogo, [2001](#), p. 76).

An eighth possible explanation, the historical multiplicity of ethnic groups in Tanzania, where no single group is likely to claim political dominance, hence ethnopolitical struggles are unlikely, has traditionally dominated explanations of civil–military peace in Tanzania. This explanation lacks historical perspective, however, and, perhaps more to the point, it neglects one simple fact: the multiplicity of relatively small ethnic groups would not stand a chance in a competition with a culturally, or “quasi-ethnically” unified national military force (Zirker, [2015](#)), such as existed in Tanzania by the late 1960s.

The apparent drift after 2015 toward authoritarianism in Tanzania holds unpredictable implications for the future of its civil–military relations. Although Tanzania manifested a limited, pseudodemocratic dominant-party culture prior to 2015, including competitive elections (even if they were limited for the 28 years of single-party statehood solely to candidates from the CCM, and after that primarily to the dominant party, again from the CCM), this single-party or dominant-party democracy has had at least two important effects: First, it has circulated, and frequently removed, leadership, and especially leadership cliques, including military cliques, associated with individual presidents.¹⁵ Second, it served to legitimize the state. Absent the dominance of a radical, if single-party, democracy, a military establishment with deeply radical origins may yet become unwilling to carry out repressive authoritarian acts at a neoliberal government’s behest.

The changes wrought by Tanzania’s legalization of multiple parties, part of a much larger trend referred to at the time as the African perestroika, while allowing for manipulated single-party dominance under the CCM, has required that more support to the dominant party be afforded by military commanders. At the same time, less co-optation and fewer incentive structures for field commanders are possible. The apparent result is that a growing tendency toward overtly authoritarian tactics from the ruling party and greater reliance on the FFU are apparently required (see Ng’wanakilala, [2018](#)). These inevitably have directly affected the government’s interactions with, and dependence on, the military. Hence, although it was duly noted in 1998 that multiparty government had little effect on the military-oriented and affiliated high schools, such as Tabora Boys’ and Girls’ Secondary Schools, or on the People’s Militia (Tungaraza, [1998](#), p. 304), a breakdown of controlled democracy seems to be inevitable under the emerging circumstances.

Descent Into Dictatorship? Implications for Future Civil–Military Relations

An apparent descent into dictatorship in post-2015 Tanzania, and a possible surge of antimobilizational authoritarianism, may trace back to a radical clique within the CCM, one that could be expected to attempt to turn back the liberal reforms of the Mwinyi and Kikwete presidencies. In short, John Magufuli’s assumption of the presidency in 2015 seems to have

reinforced the collective position of a radical clique in the CCM at a time when the party is increasingly vulnerable (see: *The Citizen* [2019](#)). Magafuli's increasingly authoritarian practices have allowed for effective and needed fiscal reductions, including the removal of as many as 16,000 "ghost workers" from the public payroll (Ahearne, [2018](#)). Nevertheless, the implementation of repressive tactics, which often falls to the military and the FFU, may be undermining the careful co-opting and social inclusion that had underwritten one key element of the coup-proofing emphasis of the Nyerere design.¹⁶ Religious tolerance and respect, a key to preventing the resurgence of internal divisions and conflict, may be threatened. Tanzanians claiming to be Christians have risen from roughly 30% to over 60% of the population over the past 50 years. Muslims account for about a third, and animists (traditional religions) only about 2%. The growing Muslim-Christian split is troubling, particularly given its potential for upsetting Nyerere's cultural design.

The continuing stability of civil-military relations in Tanzania, based at least in part on many small ethnic groups, widespread tolerance and respect for differences, and, incongruously, the co-opting of senior commanding officers with retirement to comfortable CCM positions, seems ultimately to have been grounded in the radicalism and antimilitarism, or perhaps the militarization, of civil society (Mazrui, [1969](#)). The military, in this regard, has remained the vanguard of Tanzania's national culture. This may be the key to the CCM's survival up to this point, at least as the lead institution of a dominant party system. However, use of the military to enforce party and presidential policies runs the risk of losing popular legitimacy and the fundamental tolerance and respect for differences that have underpinned the institutional success of the CCM. Although laden with multiple legal parties after 1992, the CCM, with the presidencies of Jakaya Kikwete (2005-2015) and John Magafuli (2015-), was apparently able to suppress criticism and to cover over the impact of growing sociopolitical differences. Without the CCM's dominant-party status, however, it has been difficult to see how the incentive-based coup-proofing, the co-opting of senior and potentially threatening combat officers with comfortable CCM positions, could continue to be successful. The pressures on this new system, besides the possible need to abandon party-based anticoup incentives, have included the very real and constant threat of a decline in CCM dominance, something that must ultimately affect patronage and thus system stability. The fragility of CCM dominance, in fact, had been repeatedly discussed in the *Daily News of Tanzania* prior to the 2015 election of John Magafuli (see Athumani, [2015](#); Mugini, [2015](#); *The Citizen*, [2019](#)).

The threat of the loss of dominant-party status, then, has held very real implications for the continuation of peaceful civil-military relations in Tanzania. This problem was already apparent three decades ago (Zirker, [1992](#)), and the growing vulnerability of the CCM may explain the intensification of more authoritarian practices, widely documented after 2015 (see *African Arguments*, [2018](#); Corey-boulet, [2018](#); Lissu, [2019](#)). An apparently enhanced use of the FFU's repressive tactics, ordinarily rarely mentioned, had begun to find its way into media reports (Ng'wanakilala, [2018](#); United States Department of State, [2018](#)). Furthermore, the CCM appeared to have become more vulnerable to electoral defeat (Kamagi, [2020](#); Mugini, [2015](#)) and more prone to "grand corruption" (see: Lakic, [2017](#); "Editorial," 2015; Gray, [2015](#)). An apparent response had transpired, a move to an incipient form of authoritarian populism, a pattern already noticeable under President Kikwete and, much more obviously, under the post-2015 presidency of John Magafuli ("How to steal an election," 2012; "Democracy under assault," 2018; "Tanzania's sickening lurch," 2018).

Some early observers of Tanzanian politics, following the lead of Mazrui, saw the combination of socialism, collectivism, and the individualistic and even capitalist co-opting of senior commanders as the militarization of civil society in Tanzania (Mazrui, [1969](#)). Stefan Lindemann described the co-opting of senior military commanders and the relatively generous military budgets as providing “the army with generous access to state patronage” (Lindemann, [2010](#), p. 7). This had aided the virtual creation (as had occurred in Uganda) of a “lumpen militariat” (Mazrui, [1973](#)), a largely undesirable development. Nevertheless, it is useful to recall a relevant and intimately related question: Why have there been no successful military interventions or civil wars in Tanzania’s over half century of independence? The liberal economic and political periods under Presidents Ali Hassan Mwinyi (1985–1995) and Benjamin Mkapa (1995–2005), for example, coincided with the adoption of multiparty electoral democracy and a greater stress on individualism and individual incentives. The co-optation of senior officers, however distasteful in the context of the new, socialist military culture, appears to have been effective, particularly after the end of the war in Uganda, where returning officers met with force reductions and diminished influence, and thus constituted a potential threat to continuing civilian rule.

Conclusion

Why have there been no successful military interventions or civil wars in Tanzania’s nearly 60 years of independence? Most of the analyses of civil–military relations, including a number of partial explanations, seem to miss the most impressive characteristic of Tanzania: the forging by the 1970s of a single, strong, and developmental national culture out of more than 125 cultures and languages. Julius Nyerere’s emphasis upon self-reliance, racial and religious tolerance, a single African national language, the integration of the military with civil society, and African socialism, each seem to have made an important difference in this very poor country. The Maji Maji rebellions may have mitigated the competitive and antagonistic relations between the many tribes, perhaps an impossibility in countries with four or five major and competing tribes. The relatively “new tradition” of “humorous banter” between tribes, a practice that is described as one that “eases contacts, saves embarrassment, and lightens what could be dull or sorrowful occasions” (Lupogo, [2001](#), pp. 79–80), is largely salutary. Such gentle humor may be insufficient in itself to insulate Tanzania from the centrifugal forces of ethnic politics in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, although when it is combined with the additional elements of leadership, institutionalization, and national development, the prospects are strong. The unique leadership role played by Julius Nyerere, including his voluntary retirement from the presidency in 1985 and his continuing concern for the well-being of the country after that, were unique and politically healthy in a sub-Saharan African context. Nyerere’s reluctant acceptance of the principle of multiparty politics as leader of the CCM in 1990 set him apart from the other surviving éminences grises of the independence era. His one fillip in response to this potential threat to stable and radical civil–military relations was a single comment that he made as the CCM debated the advent of multiple parties in early 1990: he expressed the hope, in a public declaration, that the soon-to-be-legal new parties would all be socialist.

Charismatic leaders come and go, of course, and what remains, with luck, are institutions and the political culture that they support. Economic well-being and people’s perception of their economic well-being are silent factors upon which political practices can turn. Paul Kaiser, in a 1996 article, observed that “Tanzania is one of the few countries that has remained relatively calm since independence. However, its long history of ethnic, racial, and religious

cohesion has begun to fray as the government attempts to reform its ailing economy in accordance with World Bank and . . . IMF . . . conditionalities” (Kaiser, [1996](#)).

In 1990, during the economic liberalization that took place under President Mwinyi, several students at the University of Dar es Salaam posted unflattering comments about the president on a bulletin board, and the presidential reaction was to close the university for a year, thus denying permanently an entire third-year class the ability to graduate.¹⁷ Even in Mwinyi’s liberal and liberalized presidency, a democratic deficit seems to have persisted, albeit quietly, as the dominant political clique tolerated (but apparently only just barely) a significantly more “open” political system.

The attempt to enumerate causal factors in Tanzania’s uniquely peaceful and coup-free history should certainly begin with Nyerere’s significant contributions to the framing and formation of national institutions, as well as his relative failure to alleviate poverty in one of the poorest countries in the world.¹⁸ A range of conditions set the stage for peaceful civil–military relations: the East African mutiny, and the personal and systemic fear of military intervention that it engendered; Nyerere’s pan-Africanism and commitment to Tanzania’s role as a Frontline State; the territorial disputes with Uganda and Malawi, which gave the TPDF a uniquely orthodox military mission, a strong *raison d’être*; African socialism in the form of Ujamaa; the co-opting of field officers with early retirement in comfortable CCM positions; the effective societal use of National Service and the People’s Militia; and Tanzania’s profound ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity.

The continuing and endemic poverty in Tanzania and the move to multiparty government do not bode well for the future of civil–military relations, however. The ultimate legitimizing agent, democracy, has been increasingly absent, if it had ever been present in Tanzania. The single-party state allowed for the co-opting of potentially rebellious field officers, it is true, but it was unable effectively to tolerate democratic pressures from below, as the closure of the University of Dar es Salaam in 1990 underscored. Too often, the FFU was called in to stop legitimate protests. Striking democratic deficits are familiar. The socialist student leader whom John S. Saul described as having been bounced down the concrete stairs in the Administrative Building at the University of Dar es Salaam by the FFU in the early 1970s, ostensibly because the student questioned the university’s participation in the political repression of students, returned to Tanzania only in 2000. According to Saul, who knew him, he “had sworn not to return to live in Tanzania as long as Nyerere was alive. He thus offered a perspective on Mwalimu and his ‘democratic’ sensibility that is, at the very least, ‘worth recording’” (Saul, [2002](#), p. 196).

Further Reading

The understanding of Tanzania’s unique pattern of civil–military relations has benefited from the careful attention of noted academics, most prominent among whom was the late Ali Mazrui. Although much of his analyses of civil–military relations in East Africa are now dated, as was his comparative focus, which tended to center on Uganda even when he appeared to be primarily interested in Tanzania, his works resonate with his personal contacts with many of the major players, including Julius Nyerere. Mazrui’s emphasis upon the militarization of Tanzania’s civil society (Mazrui, [1969](#)) and upon the African “lumpen militariat” (Mazrui, [1973](#)) sharpened our understanding of the seemingly peaceful anomaly that was Tanzania and of the central role played by Julius Nyerere (Mazrui & Mhando, [2013](#)).

David Apter's critical work on Uganda shed some light on the unique conditions and early policy outcomes in Tanzania (Apter, [1960](#)). Writing originally in 1960, Apter addressed the profound pre-independence distinction, raised as well by Naomi Chazan, between the traditionally deep and democratic nature of local politics in Africa, and the authoritarian and militarized politics of the capital and the statehouse, the high politics (Apter, [1960](#); Chazan, [1999](#); Chazan, Mortimer, Ravenhill, & Rothchild, [1992](#)).

K. I. Tambila's work on the ambiguities and complications, as well as the likely virtues, latent in Tanzania's shift to multiparty government (Tambila, [1995](#)) similarly stresses the complexities of civil–military relations in an East African nation where high politics had previously been largely irrelevant.

Broad analyses of civil–military relations in Tanzania include those of Lindemann ([2010](#)), Lonsdale ([1972](#)), Lupogo ([2001](#)), Mazrui ([1969](#)), Omari ([2003](#)), Pachter ([1982](#)), Thomas ([2012](#)), and Tungaraza ([1998](#)), among others.

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Notes

- 1. In a 2017 ranking of over 200 countries by GDP per capita, Tanzania ranked 192, with a per capita GDP of \$3,200 ([CIA World Factbook](#)). Outliers minimize the accuracy of these arithmetic means.
- 2. The Ministry of Defence and National Service describes the objectives of National Service as “to build national unity” and “to carry out economic activity,” and stresses that “through the National Service, Tanzania is envisaged to be a country whose youths are well nurtured so as to constitute a productive part of society which has a high sense of: Confidence; Self-Discipline; Patriotism; Brotherhood; Co-operation; [and] Responsibility” (The United Republic of Tanzania Ministry of Defence and National Service, [n.d.](#)). This is a web page: <http://tuico.or.tz/sw/pages/tpdf.html> .
- 3. The Chengdu J-7 fighter is modeled on the Russian MiG-21.
- 4. Monson argued that the Maji Maji rebellion had as much to do with its intertribal competition, “an extended period of competition for territory, labor, grain and livestock” as it did with rebellion against German rule. Monson averred, “The term Maji Maji is used to refer to conflict, population dispersal and political realignment” (Monson, [1998](#)).
- 5. The author, while teaching at the University of Dar es Salaam, had a graduate student who had been a favored member of the CCM hierarchy, but who lost a competitive election to a newcomer in the CCM for her seat in the Bunge and was thus out of government.
- 6. Subsequent information suggests that Kambona’s role may have been less heroic than perceived at the time.
- 7. Listed in, among other papers, the *Sunday News*, January 26, 1964. Cited in Omari ([2003](#), p. 94).
- 8. Kambona was accused in the press of having misused public funds, which is overt corruption.
- 9. Perhaps “military diversion” also explains Hitler’s striking and almost inexplicable decision to declare war on the United States just as he had his back to the wall in the Soviet Union. It is clear in retrospect that Amin’s moves had virtually no chance of success, and that for him the consequences of failure were dire.
- 10. Nyerere and his brother, Joseph Nyerere, strongly supported a UN-controlled pan-African military force; however, even as Nyerere continued to voice his concern and mistrust regarding national military establishments, he strengthened and relied upon the TPDF for critical regime support.
- 11. The author, while teaching and conducting research in Dar es Salaam in 1989–1990, at the height of the book famine, discovered in the University Library, a building at that time almost devoid of books, a whole shelf (more than 100 copies) of

Small is Beautiful, by E. F. Schumacher, who was apparently a friend and advisor to Nyerere.

- 12. Shortly after the author completed his year of teaching at the University of Dar es Salaam, several Somali animal poachers were apprehended at the Dar es Salaam airport using forged Tanzanian passports. Tanzanians found this very humorous, since the poachers could not speak Kiswahili. How, people asked, could they dare to claim to be Tanzanians and not be fluent in the national language?
- 13. Nyerere chose to translate several classic English works into Kiswahili as part of his drive to legitimate and enrich the new culture. It is interesting to note that the first play of Shakespeare's that he translated was *Julius Caesar*, an account of a coup attempt gone terribly wrong (Zirker, [1992](#)).
- 14. The immediate reason for this was a profound budgetary shortfall and the virtual absence of barracks in most regions of Tanzania.
- 15. The almost immediate removal of former President Benjamin Mkapa's clique from influence following the accession of Jakaya Kikwete is a case in point.
- 16. This is, of course, nothing new. Saul mentioned the use of the FFU to intimidate a socialist student leader at the University of Dar es Salaam in the 1990s (Saul, [2002](#), p. 196).
- 17. The practice of publicly attacking people with messages on the bulletin boards was known as "punching." One of the messages, observed at the time by the author, said: "Even a dog can be trained to be president!" The author taught that third-year class in 1989–1990 and found the students to be increasingly interested in neoliberalism. As the students' party representative told the author, "We are tired of explanations of underdevelopment that blame neocolonialism. We want to know what we can do to develop Tanzania."
- 18. By the early 1990s, Nyerere was widely criticized for "sharing poverty."

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