'Julius Nyerere': The man, the word, and the order of discourse

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> "When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less."
> "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean different things."
> "The question is," said Humpy Dumpty, "which is to be master, that's all."
> *Through the Looking Glass*, Lewis Caroll

> "489. Ask yourself: On what occasion, for what purpose, do we say this? What kinds of action accompany these words? (Think of greeting.) In what kinds of setting will they be used; and what for?"
> *Philosophical Investigations*, Ludwig Wittgenstein

"His Eternity" Nyerere? A risk of *déjà vu*

The Political 'Afterwards' in the late postcolony

Anthony Kirk-Greene once worried that any new publication about African heads of state might risk *déjà vu* (Kirk-Greene, 1991). During the 1980s, an influential literature reflected upon leadership, personal rule and national trajectories in Africa. It adopted a comparative and typological approach that discussed scholarly studies in political history published from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982; Cartwright, 1983). Did the first generation of postcolonial political leaders belong to the category of prince, autocrat, prophets or tyrant? Or should one view "His Eternity," "His Eccentricity," or "His Exemplarity" (Kirk-Greene, 1991) as modern versions of Janus, both prince and autocrat or philosopher and tyrant, like Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya or Sékou Touré in Guinea? Biographies of the most renowned leaders – usually the founding fathers of the fledgling sub-Saharan African nation-states – added to these debates about personal power and styles of leadership, the better to interrogate the foundations of legitimacy in early African postcolonial regimes. This profound interest – fascination, even – in the thoughts and conduct of rulers has not diminished, in Africa or elsewhere.

Yet in the mid-2010s, an era one might call the "After-life" or "Afterwards"[1] of most of those African statesmen who had stepped down from power and/or passed away, we contend that the imperative question concerns the memories and legacies of their personalities and leadership, and how these weigh on the present of African societies. The question is timely: independence jubilee celebrations across the continent have prompted African countries, their diasporas, their former colonial powers and international academics to take stock of post-

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[1] Unlike Southall and Mercer (2006) in their discussion of the political "Afterwards" (not in the metaphysical but historical sense of the term), this volume does not address the actual role former heads of state continued to play in politics after they retired from office (see also, for Tanzania, Hodd, 1998; Legum and Mmari, 1995; Mbelle, Mjema and Kilindo, 2002; McDonald and Sahle, 2002). We focus here on the traces they left on leadership and political imagination after their presence faded or they passed away.

independence successes and failures. Most such assessments, however, have tended to gloss over the relationships built between states and citizens, and have ignored both postcolonial national narratives and the figures who embodied nation, power and authority (Charton and Fouéré, 2013). The legacies and memories of the anti-colonialism leaders and the national Fathers still play out in contemporary modes of government, shaping representations and senses of national belonging; they demand reassessment. The present volume will address one compelling and, we will argue, exemplary case.

Debating the meanings of 'Nyerere'

The interrogations we propose here aim to decentre the perspectives on leadership that dominated political science in the 1980s – in particular, those that identified ideal leadership models or adopted the "national synonymity" viewpoint in which leader equals nation and vice versa (Chabal, 1984: 108; Kirk-Greene, 1991: 167).[2] Gavin Kitching has argued, for instance, that Nyerere "entirely determined" the general thrust of Tanzanian post-independence policy (Kitching, 1982: 117).[3] Yet many early works of political science fell into the trap of personalizing the nation,[4] thus missing the complex interplay between social actors through which state and citizens are produced, and therefore through which state-formation occurs – a conflicting and largely involuntary historical process entwined with disorder, confrontations and compromises, rather than a simple building of state institutions (Berman and Lonsdale, 1992; see also, in the case of Tanzania, Geiger, 1998; Maddox and Giblin, 2005).

Departing from these past perspectives on leadership, the decentred approach adopted here emphasizes how individuals and groups use the past – and within this past, the figure of one statesman in particular, Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the first President of Tanganyika and first President of Tanzania – to reflect upon their present and act upon it. Rather than scrutinizing Nyerere the statesman and his political philosophy, this volume asks how the state and Tanzanians, from all levels of society, appropriate the figure of Nyerere today, reworking it and harnessing it to different representations of power and authority. We will consider how 'Nyerere' becomes a political language and metaphor for debating and shaping the present, and how collective memories and legacies can transform current political and social practices – both through ingrained modes of thought and doing and through strategic transactions.[5] We will, in short, take 'Nyerere' as a point of departure for the discursive dimension of contemporary Tanzanian politics.

[2] This shift gained its footing in the mid-1980s in political science and political anthropology, though from different perspectives, in an effort to capture key aspects of the politics of contemporary African societies "from below" (Bayart, 1981, 1993 [1989]), "from within", "on the ground" or, to quote yet another metaphor, by "fixing the camera at eye level and engage with politics as it is played out in everyday life" (Chabal, 2009: xi).

[3] Our approach does not refute the idea that statesmen indeed have some bearing on the historical trajectory of their country, as aptly shown by John Lonsdale's intellectual biography of Jomo Kenyatta (2002: 34).

[4] The recent political science literature on ruling regimes and power configurations has made tremendous progress in analysing governing practices by giving insight into the complex interplay between political structures, elite alliances and state institutions. See for instance Stacher on 'autocratic continuity' in North Africa and the Middle East (2012), or Bueno des Mesquita et al. (2003) on leaders' 'political survival'.

[5] The use of the past not only owes to tactics and strategies intentionally deployed by actors, but are also the product of enduring and incorporated traces – or "sedimentation" (Bayart and Bertrand, 2006) – which shape political and historical consciousness today.

Therefore, this book is not about Julius Nyerere; it is about what Julius Nyerere means and stands for in Tanzania today. It does not answer the question of who Julius Nyerere was in his private life and as a public figure, or what he genuinely thought and did. Rather, it addresses what institutions and people say that Julius Nyerere was, and of what they think of the impact of his thoughts and deeds for the present. The people considered are not just those who were closely associated with Nyerere, retelling their personal memories of interactions with Nyerere. They are Tanzanians in general, of all generations and social conditions, who excavate their memories of Nyerere (and/or what they have heard of him) to revisit his salience and significance in contemporary Tanzania. In the words of Cohen and Comaroff (1976), this book is about the everyday "management of meaning" in Tanzanian society – here, the meaning of 'Nyerere' – in situations where people debate their present and seek to shape it.

From Mwalimu-in-power to Mwalimu-in-memoriam

Tanzaphilia and Nyererephilia

Like most founding fathers of the early postcolonial African states, Julius K. Nyerere appears in scores of works of history, politics and memoirs;[6] these have explored his style of leadership, his political thought, intentions and actions, in great detail. To Crandford Pratt, "[Nyerere] has always been a leader with strong convictions about his people's needs. Nyerere has been, above all, a teacher, a *mwalimu*. He is a teacher of a special sort (…). He is a *mwalimu*-in-power – a moral teacher who is a political leader with a great deal of authority and power" (Pratt 1976: 256). This laudatory depiction of Nyerere from 1976 seems to have weighed heavily on subsequent scholarly works about Nyerere in the 1980s.[7] In 1982, Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg asserted that:

> Julius K. Nyerere, the socialist president of Tanzania, provides one of the best contemporary illustrations of the importance of mean and ideas as factors in historical change, of history not as "destiny and necessity" but as "chance and contingency". He is an example of a ruler who recognizes that considerable structural impediments and constrains stand in the way of planned, socialist-inspired change in Africa, but who believes that appropriate action can be taken to rationally deal with these obstacles. Nyerere offers the students of African rulers and regimes an example of a leader whose personal ideals will have made a significant difference not only to personal relations of power in the state, but also to social relations in the wider society (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982: 219).

These two authors portray Nyerere as a "Prophet" and the "best example of the moral agent in political history" in Black Africa (Ibid: 220).[8] This depiction of Nyerere has become commonplace in most academic writings, either those centered on Nyerere or addressing

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[6] I do not present an exhaustive summary of the existing literature on Nyerere, which is both vast and dispersed. Instead, I critically engage the corpus of texts I find the most relevant for my argument. For a detailed overview of this literature and its discussion, see Bjerk (2010).

[7] For an earlier lookalike depiction of Nyerere as the guiding teacher of Tanzania's people, see also Hyden (1967) who states that "[t]he leader of the Revolution in Tanzania is the humble teacher, who is not teaching his pupils – the Tanzanian people – for the sake of teaching, but for the sake of making their education relevant to their life" (p. 34).

[8] In the authors' vocabulary, a Prophet is one who can "foretell a new and better world and (…) inspire and guide others towards its attainment. (…) [He] is a political agent, but he is also a moral agent – a political-religious man" (Ibid: 182).

African leadership generally,[9] a point underscored by Coulson (1982) and Kirk-Greene (1991).[10] This has made it difficult to move away from the figure of Nyerere in exploring Tanzania's politics. These early assessments reflect the largely uncritical reception of Nyerere and the Tanzanian experiment among Westerners in the 1960s-70s – what Ali Mazrui (1967) ironically characterized as "Tanzaphilia" and "the mystique of Nyerere" (Ibid: 165, 168).[11]

A primus inter pares among a 'few good men'

Academics have long analyzed two major aspects of Nyerere's time in power, sometimes separately and sometimes together: his political philosophy and political action. Many works on Nyerere's political philosophy, officially referred to as Ujamaa or African socialism – sometimes even "Nyererism" – address Nyerere's conception of political power and the nation as a coherent body of ideas and principles drawn from various intellectual influences.[12] Certain analyses stress, on the one hand, the traditional values of work, mutual cooperation and solidarity, as well as the reciprocal generosity and egalitarianism of northwestern Tanzania.[13] But scholars have also highlighted his exposure to classical liberalism, British socialism, anti-colonialism and pan-Africanism during his studies in Edinburgh.[14] The relative importance assigned to these influences varies.[15] Some scholars have elected to trace shifts from Nyerere's earlier writings and speeches to his later declarations, with a view to revealing the "dynamic development of Nyerere's thinking" (Havnevik, 2010: 41).[16] Others have preferred to highlight discontinuities, self-contradictions, or even what they see as inconsistency in Nyerere's intellectual stance, and how it translated – or failed to translate – into practices.

When it comes to political action, past scholarship has often presented Nyerere as the sole driving force behind the anti-colonial struggle and the first years of independence, and above all, behind the Tanzanian experiment, from the Arusha Declaration in 1967 – the blueprint for African socialism – to his retirement from presidency in 1985. More recent historiography has

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[9] For instance, in their discussion of the figure of the Big Man in Africa, Chabal and Daloz (1999) mention in passing that "exceptional leaders", "like Nyerere or Museveni" who had "a relatively modest personal need for the status of Big Man", genuinely aimed "to transcend the short-term view in favour of longer-term development" though, they assert, the forms of political legitimacy in use during their time in power limited their capacity to transform the political system (p. 162).

[10] To Coulson, this literature often leaves the reader "with an impression of Nyerere as a far-seeing superman" (Coulson, 1982: 5). As Kirk-Greene reminds us, the "national synonymity" syndrome applied to Nyerere as well as to other African heads of the state: "Tanzania was Nyerere and Nyerere stood for Tanzania and African Socialism" (Kirk-Greene, 1991: 168).

[11] On "Nyererephilia", see also Bennett (1968), Leys (1968), Samoff (1989), Constantin (1988), and more recently, Hunter (2004), Fouéré (2009, 2014), and Becker (2013).

[12] Similar approaches have been adopted to account for the thoughts of leftist African 'intellectual politicians' like Sékou Touré, Patrice Lumumba or Kwame Nkrumah (see for instance Williams, 1984)

[13] Nyerere was born in the village of Butiama, in a region populated by people designated by the ethnic name of Zanaki, and situated 50 km from Musoma town on the shore of Lake Victoria in northwestern Tanzania. Nyerere describes his youth, saying: "I grew up in a perfectly democratic and egalitarian society" (in Stöger-Eising, 2000: 119). This contrasts with a different depiction of Zanaki society by Nyerere himself in Smith (2011 [1973]: 34-44).

[14] See in particular Listowel (1965), Mohiddin (1968), Hatch (1976), Assensoh (1998), Stöger-Eising (2000), and Mwakikagile (2010: 78-109).

[15] In contrast to this tradition-vs.-modernity binary, some have argued the relative futility of untangling the Western and indigenous elements of Nyerere's thought (Eckert, 2001: 323) – the supposed "Africanness of his ideas" (Meyns, 2000: 158).

[16] Nyerere has produced numerous writings, gathered in several volumes, which Michael Twaddle calls both "a skilful constructed ideological monument to the Tanzanian future" (1968: 669).

questioned this view of Nyerere as the only architect of Tanzanian nationhood. By interrogating Tanzanian nationalist ideology and official historical narratives, such works have re-situated Nyerere in the various milieus that made his rise to power possible (Said, 1998).[17] Other writers – skeptical of the biographical approach focused on exceptional figures, the "few good men" (Denoon and Kuper, 1970) – have reassessed the role of various collective actors and movements in the anti-colonial struggle. Susan Geiger, for example, has questioned the gendering of this model in her work on women activists in TANU and their relation to Nyerere (Geiger, 1996).[18] However, the conception of Nyerere as the *primus inter pares* of the "few good men" who changed the country's destiny has remained entrenched among many scholars, and unmistakably remains at the heart of the Tanzanian nationalist and statist metanarrative.

Building Utopian Tanzania

Lastly, many commentators over the years have portrayed Nyerere as a utopian, aiming to realize an ideal state in Tanzania.[19] In the late 1960s Ahmed Mohiddin characterized Nyerere's stance as "unrestrained idealism" (1968: 137); one year after the Arusha Declaration was adopted,[20] he drew attention to the sweeping vision in Nyerere's own description of his objectives, the precepts that would underpin Ujamaa. By deploying "Herculean efforts to create a better world" (Hartmann, 1988: 165) – one detribalized, deracialized and unified under a shared sense of nationhood – Ujamaa represented a political ideology that cast economic and social issues in a "familiar popular idiom" (Ferguson, 2006: 76).[21] The historian Emma Hunter (2008) has shown that, as it permeated Tanzanian society, the Ujamaa political lexicon transformed into a popular language, one utilized by common citizens to think and debate about social, political, and economic morality and state/citizens relations, thus connecting local issues to the broader national framework of socialist-appropriate behaviours and attitudes.[22] Forty years later, James Scott, analyzing the failures of high-modernist schemes of social engineering around the world, associated Nyerere with the "hubris" of the utopian planners and intellectual advocates, while conceding the sincerity of their desire to improve the human condition (Scott 1998: 342).

Because Nyerere has often been cast as both an intellectual *sui generis* and a man imbued with a deep sense of morality, later academic works rarely attribute the failures of Ujamaa to

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[17] Mohamed Said (1998), for instance, notes that the circle of educated Muslim townsmen of Dar es Salaam (led by the Sykes family, founders of the first nationalist organisation in the country, the Tanganyika African Association (TAA)), helped Nyerere reach the summit of power. They did so once they realised he was "a highly educated person with admirable debating skills" (Ibid: 111) who could be made president of the association, and of the political party that would emerge in 1954, the Tanganyika Africa National Union (TANU) (Ibid: 111).

[18] Geiger shows that women activists in the 1950s "did not 'learn nationalism' (so to speak) from Nyerere or when they joined TANU. Rather, they brought to TANU and to their public, political party activism an (sic) ethos of nationalism already present as trans-ethnic, trans-tribal social and cultural identity" (Geiger, 1996: 468–469). They thus helped shape and spread a nationalist consciousness throughout the country "for which TANU was the vehicle" (Ibid: 478) – and, one may add, for which Nyerere was the talented spokesperson before he became its inventive composer through the language of Ujamaa.

[19] Nyerere, however, rather saw himself a "realistic idealist" (Nyerere, 1967).

[20] See also John Lonsdale who, in an article published shortly after the Arusha Declaration, recounts that the Lutheran pastor Reverend Mushendwa "compared the Arusha Declaration with the Sermon on the Mount" (1968: 344) to underline the Utopian character of Ujamaa and its religious and moral overtones.

[21] See Nyerere's own writings (1966, 1968, 1973).

[22] See also Martin (1988) who characterizes Ujamaa as a "dynamic utopia" based upon coercive measures and "cohesive political" languages. Yet, James Ferguson argues that, in Tanzania as well as in Zambia, for instance, "state moralizing (…) was intensely interested, self-serving, and very often fraudulent" (Ibid.).

his actions.[23] Since the 1990s, the prevailing interpretation has blamed external circumstances – the international economic situation, his fellow politicians and the administration, the reluctance of Tanzanian farmers to embrace new work practices and their evasive manoeuvres to avoid state "capture" (Hyden, 1980). Discussions of village collectivization – probably the most controversial of Nyerere's policies, due to its coercive nature – exemplify his exoneration from this "*idée fixe*" (Meyns, 2000: 163): as Leander Schneider has argued, direct responsibility for coercive action has gone to anonymous "'officials,' as well as 'policies' and 'campaigns' without authors or initiators." As a result, Nyerere emerges from these narratives as a "tragically failing hero", whose good intentions were subverted in implementation (Schneider 2004: 346). Such defenses of the genuine intentions of Tanzania's "philosopher-king", "kingmaker", "teacher-president" or "philosopher president" (as his most apologetic commentators variously described him), and the idea that he could or should not be held accountable for "unsavoury" abuses or failures (Saul 2002: 20), underpin most accounts of Mwalimu-in-power.

It is perhaps less surprising, then, that most postmortem scholarly and historically-minded works on Nyerere now available in Tanzania consist of romantic retrospectives of Mwalimu and pay tribute to the Father of the Nation – sometimes under the guise of critical scholarship, sometimes in a hybrid scholar-cum-admirer mode. Rather than unsettling the reigning interpretations of the Mwalimu-in-power era, they renew them in the present. Discussing Nyerere's role within the CCM party (Chama Cha Mapinduzi, the Party of the Revolution) and on the international scene after he voluntarily stepped down from the presidency in 1985 (Nyerere, notably, took a strong part in mediations in Burundi and Rwanda), Roger Southall stresses his singularity, egalitarianism and his "down-to-earth" mien (Southall, 2006: 233). Echoing the earlier exonerations and "tragic" views noted above, Chambi Chachage and Annar Cassam (2010) assert a project both celebrating the man and reassessing the shortcomings of his policies (see e.g. Manji, 2010: x). In lieu of critical scholarship, most of these publications gather personal memoirs and anecdotal contributions – often drawn from recycled secondary literature rather than recent first-hand materials.[24] This gives them "something of the air of a matey ramble down Memory Lane", as Justin Willis ironically phrases it (1996: 465).

Looking Through Nyerere

Capturing 'Nyerere'

This background sets a high bar for the present volume, which aims to move away from scholarly former conceptions and look afresh at Nyerere, or rather through Nyerere. The contributions gathered here come from a young generation of scholars in varied disciplines

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[23] It is impossible to quote all the publications on the successes and failure of Ujamaa, which are numerous (see, notably Civille and Duggan, 1976; Coulson, 1982; Boesen et al, 1986; McHenry, 1994; Rugumamu, 1997; Scott, 1997; Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003). Samoff's position that "the clash of sharply conflicting positions – Tanzania's economic strategy has been a great failure vs. Tanzania has in fact done no worse than most other African states and a good deal better than some – is no more definitively resolved here than it is elsewhere" (1989: 178) provides a concise assessment of the dead-ends of these discussions.

[24] Various non-scholarly volumes that pay tribute to Nyerere have been published over the last 10 years, among them Othman (2007), the Russian Academy (2005), and Kaduma (2010). Several volumes of Nyerere's speeches that had not yet been transcribed have recently been released by the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation – an organisation created by Julius Nyerere in 1996 with the aim to preserve and transmit his memory and legacy – and some of his most famous writings have been reprinted, thus adding to the sum of new publications associated with Tanzania's former President.

(history, anthropology, political science) who have not been closely associated with Nyerere as colleagues, friends, family members, or observers of the Tanzanian experiment during his political tenure. This distance from the man Nyerere, we suggest, makes it possible for them to avoid the trap of romanticizing both Nyerere and Ujamaa, and instead critically engage the existing literature, drawing upon materials recently collected through extensive fieldwork and archival research. Nor do their interrogations replay the now "obsolete debates" (Bjerk, 2010: 276) at the heart of years of scholarly literature on the Tanzanian experiment. Therefore, rather than assessing once again the failure and successes of Ujamaa or exploring the origins of Nyerere's political philosophy, they focus on the production of a usable past for a contemporary (re)imagination of nationhood (Anderson, 2006). Beyond a variety of approaches and themes, they share key common interests: in the power of words and narratives — delimiting, in a positive or negative way, the moral standards for the exercise of power and the contours of national sentiment; in the interplay between state-orchestrated memorializing and counter-hegemonic political repertoires, through remembering and forgetting; in the weight of a failed teleology of modernization, the legacy of the early postcolonial era, in reimagining the state-citizen relationship today. In this sense, they shift away from the dominant scholarly interest in the colonial legacy, and instead explore the imprint of the early postcolonial years on contemporary African politics and political culture, in words and in practices.

Chapter 2 by Marie-Aude Fouéré gives a panorama of Nyerere's iconic presence in the Tanzanian public space since his death in 1999. It complements this introduction with empirical and historical information about the various contexts and actors engaged in appropriating and mobilizing Nyerere. After the decline in his popularity from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, Tanzania's *Baba wa Taifa* (Father of the Nation) has reappeared on the public scene as an acclaimed symbol of humility, integrity and incorruptibility. The state and the media have propagated a laudatory official memory of Nyerere for the purposes of nation-building and the ruling party's political hegemony. As in other nations, the effigy of the head of state appears everywhere, in the public as well as in the domestic space (Mbembe, 1992). Political parties and politicians also lionize Nyerere when they try to gain or reassert political legitimacy by claiming to walk in Nyerere's footsteps and represent his moral legacy (see also Fouéré, 2006, 2009; Phillips, 2010), a theme elaborated by Kristin Phillips in Chapter 5. And among common citizens, popular discussions about post-liberalization hardships, religious, ethnic and political cleavages, and the absence of patriotism among political leaders also recur to a positive image of Nyerere – though criticism is not absent (Becker, 2013). Thus, Nyerere may appear associated with the "good old days" when the government provided free health care, subsidized food, and social security; and citizens' mobilisation and popular discontent against the neoliberal order may invoke Nyerere to ground dissent upon a narrative of the moral standards he supposedly set, understandable by all (Kelsall, 2003; Monson, 2006, 2013; Kamat, 2008; Chachage, 2010).

This shows that among ordinary citizens — and despite variations between the sociological groups considered – Nyerere has increasingly offered a terrain for holding the state and political leaders accountable and reminding them of their responsibilities, on the ground of the ethical norms Nyerere promoted during his lifetime. These actors will invoke Nyerere in moments of what Ferguson calls "abjection" (Ferguson, 1999), affecting different levels of Tanzanian society – the perceived failure to deliver on the liberation struggles' pledges of modernization, enrichment, and social justice. Yet the fact that Nyerere is invoked at all levels of society and in so many contexts – indeed, as a benchmark against which Tanzanians measure political leadership – argues a complicit dialogue or other transactions between the

state and citizenry, rather than a simple, top-down exercise of state power. This definitely sheds light on what others have coined "collaborative nationalism" to depict the dynamics of a nationhood mutually constructed by the state and its citizens (Edmondson, 2007: 17-18).

Entering and securing the political space

In Chapter 4, Emma Hunter asks: "[W]hy it is that memories of Nyerere serve so effectively as a site at which to reflect on wider questions of Tanzania's past, present and future?" The question appears all the more pertinent given that the Arusha Declaration and the socialist Tanzania experiment have increasingly appeared in retrospective as a failed economic model. Hunter's contribution re-examines the political and discursive context of the Arusha Declaration. The author ascribes the contemporary power of Nyerere's memory to the role that the Arusha Declaration played in re-founding the Tanzanian nationalist project, and in securing Nyerere's position – fragile in the first years after independence – both in the country and within TANU. In her view, the moment when Julius Nyerere firmly committed Tanzania to a path of Ujamaa (socialism) and Kujitegemea (self-reliance) constitutes the foundation of modern memories of him, since it was then that he established himself as the champion of morality who would fight corruption and speak up for the poor against the rich. This narrative of Nyerere as a "Titan" (Mazrui, 2002) became conventional wisdom because the state and the party efficiently deployed it throughout the socialist era. This deeply anchored the association between Nyerere and the nation in the collective imagination, in spite of later attacks against him in the mid-1980s.

In this connection, Thomas Molony (Chapter 3) provides key biographical landmarks to understand the ambiguities of a Nyerere who was a modest man opposed to personality cult, and still used his power to strategically build his own national representation. Molony's chapter provides an overview of the formative years of Nyerere, from his childhood through his times in Great Britain to his early political engagement in Tanzania[25] – the latter epoch marking the emergence of Nyerere's own voice, notably through the words of his best biographer during his lifetime, the *Time* correspondent William Edgett Smith (2011 [1973]).

The nation-building language of Nyerere and his party were much more than top-down rhetoric; they became durable artefacts of vernacular political discourse. By the 1960s-70s, Ujamaa had already come into use among ordinary Tanzanians as a tool for attacking corrupt officials (Hunter, 2008), demonstrating the continuity in Tanzanian political languages. These may vary over time with reworkings of historical symbols, but they remain harnessed to the past (Crozon, 1996, 1998). However, these political languages may become emptied of their former content, as demonstrated by the anthropologist Kelly Askew (2006) in her compelling analysis of the songs of lamentation composed after Nyerere's death. Although the vocabulary of peace, unity, solidarity, and the elimination of tribalism and religious divisiveness – an array of terms used in the Tanzanian state ideology –appears in song after song, the term 'Ujamaa' rarely occurs, with little mention of the socialist orientation and economic policies of the Tanzanian experiment, as if to avoid recalling the dark side of the socialist times. The present volume will return to the significance of such vernacular reworkings below.

A tutelary figure

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[25] For a fresh, detailed insight into the first thirty years of the life of Nyerere before he formally entered politics, see Molony (2014).

Chapter 5 and 6 explore in greater detail the strategic use of Nyerere on the Tanzanian political stage. Analyzing the 2005 and 2010 presidential and parliamentary elections, and touching upon the run up to the 2015 elections, Kristin Phillips (Chapter 5) shows how political parties and politicians tried to convince the electorate of the legitimacy and efficacy of their leadership through the symbolic manipulation of Nyerere's name, memory, and legacy. This invocation takes place within a broader political rhetoric of eldership and youth, fathers and sons, and illicit eating and legitimate consumption (see notably Bayart, 1993; Schatzberg, 2001), a dynamic perfectly illustrated by the political cartoons included in the chapter. Symbolic filial descent from Nyerere — both personal and party-based — therefore becomes central to the construction of political legitimacy in Tanzania. Such a discourse denies political change, rhetorically asserting a false continuity between past and present governance. The author also casts light on how citizens draw on the figure of Nyerere – sometimes with irony and sarcasm – in order to leverage their electoral power to influence government agendas, performance and conduct. Nyerere becomes a touchstone of good governance, co-opting elite discourses of filial descent to morally discipline the government with projections of paternal displeasure. Interestingly, the controversy over which political party had the right to claim the legacy of Nyerere, a central feature of party jockeying in 2005, seemed to have lost its salience in the 2010 campaign.

Aikande Kwayu's contribution to this volume (Chapter 6) deeply resonates with that of Phillips. In surveying current debates at the Constitutional Assembly, the author shows how Nyerere's words and ideas are invoked not only for moral authority but to justify debate over the country's destiny, and most notably the structure of the Union government. Kwayu identifies three different models for the Union proposed through recourse to Nyerere, either to ground their promoters' views or to delegitimize other factions: those of the CCM leadership, of the Chairman of the Commission Joseph Warioba and his adherents, and of the opposition group Umoja wa Katiba ya Wananchi (UKAWA, the Coalition for a People's Constitution). Each proposes a different view of Nyerere's advocacy and intentions over time, and each recurs to the notion of symbolic filial descent from Nyerere – the content of this legacy provoking more debate than its present-day relevance. Kwayu also makes it clear that the manipulation of Nyerere, figured as the founding father of the nation, tends to delimit the thinkable and the unthinkable in Tanzania's politics – the death of Tanzania as a nation-state. Shortly before the demise of Tanzania's Ujamaa, Jackson and Rosberg noted that "the real test for the Tanzanian experiment will occur after Nyerere exits from the political stage that he has dominated for so long" (1984: 440). One might add that today's debates test the very concept of Tanzania as a nation.

Vilifying Nyerere?

The public use of Nyerere to debate nationhood – and the scholarly literature that has tended overwhelmingly to eulogize Nyerere's time in power – should not obscure his political critics. In his contribution to this volume, James Brennan (Chapter 7) presents three distinct groups of detractors, all sharing a sharp frustration with how Nyerere used his image – humble intellectual and paragon of morality – as a political weapon to control political debate and silence opposition. These groups include the disillusioned paternalist Anglo-American elites who had followed Nyerere's ascent to power; Western anti-socialist writers who witnessed the Tanzanian experiment and its failure (e.g. Naipaul, 1979; Daniels, 1988); and, since the country's return to multiparty elections in the early 1990s, Tanzanian political opponents who experienced Nyerere's autocratic power (e.g., Muhsin, 2002; Mwijage, 1994). The author shows that the production of political criticism against Nyerere calls for a sociological

characterization of actors and requires historical contextualization: the coercive nature of village collectivization was a watershed, turning enthusiasts into fierce critics. Yet, these "counter-mythologies" have little impact on everyday discussions because they take the form of confidential writings, such as foreign newspapers articles or prison letters, which are shared only among Tanzania's educated elite. Lionizing Nyerere remains the rule.

This echoes Marie-Aude Fouéré's chapter (Chapter 8), describing popular Nyerere-bashing in contemporary Zanzibar as a tool for the production of counter-hegemonic narratives of nationhood. Retracing how anti-Nyerere sentiment entails rewriting the history of the 1964 Revolution in Zanzibar and the Union with the former Tanganyika, she shows how present-day anti-Nyerere criticism owes something to the spread of publications by his fierce political opponents – most of them belonging to Brennan's third group. Critics used various channels to disseminate their views throughout Zanzibar society, eventually shaping popular historical consciousness and informing political mobilization. As a consequence, ordinary citizens can also produce critical accounts of Nyerere (see also Becker, 2013; Kamat, 2008). Most of these critical voices, however, do not come from Tanzania's academics (for exceptions, see notably Shivji, 1974; Othman in Yahya-Othman, 2014). Brennan aptly reminds us that for years, protest or disagreement within the Tanzanian national borders had to be muffled or uttered off the record; in the case of scholars, it required "the panoplies of deeply abstracted theory," e.g. debates on socialism at the University of Dar es Salaam.

Politics and poetry

Two chapters on the genre of newspaper poetry, focused on nonprofessional praise poems about Nyerere, enrich our understanding of channels of production and transmission of ordinary political debates about the nation. They remind us of the deep imprint of Swahili oral and print culture on Tanzanian national culture. In Chapter 9, the anthropologist Kelly Askew contrasts non-elite poems about Tanzania's first president with poems published decades earlier, during colonial times, about Kaiser Wilhelm II and King George V. Mary Ann Mhina (Chapter 10) reviews the specific form of Swahili popular poetry published in the ruling party newspaper, *Uhuru*, during the mourning period of Nyerere in 1999. Both chapters give complementary insight into this genre of poetry as a "repository of popular political debate," in Askew's words. The genre bears witness to the engagement of Tanzanian citizens with politics, in the broad sense of the term, reflecting at once a particular *zeitgeist* and individual creativity. A comparative historical perspective captures variations in popular perceptions of a leader and their ties to distinct political moments. Praise poetry about Nyerere consequently follows the ups and downs of citizen investment in the national project. During Nyerere's early tenure, especially after the Arusha Declaration, newspaper poetry not only resonated with the modernization faith and the left-leaning development promises of the new postcolonial regime, but also reflected the cultural "revolution" of the fledgling nation, aimed at making arts and culture a vehicle for nation-building. In a period where art was seen as serving and representing society, popular poetry too performed versions of patriotism (see notably Askew, 2002, 2005; Edmondson, 2007; Ivaska, 2011).

With the demise of socialism and the decline in Nyerere's popularity since the end of the 1970s, poems increasingly articulated discontent and critique – often conveyed, however, by way of metaphor and innuendo. And in the post-Nyerere period, patriotic poets have flourished again and newly re-assert Nyerere's central position in the political imagination, as Mhina demonstrates. This rekindled investment is two-sided, however. It can be used as a means to foster the legitimacy of CCM in a fiercely competitive multi-party system, and it

may replay the symbolic filiation between the previous and current political leaders, in ways similar to those described by Phillips and Kwayu in their chapters. Yet the panegyric ode to Nyerere can also serve as sharp critique of the new big-bellied elite of bureaucrats and politicians, as against the idealized national leader whose "conspicuous lack of a belly was perhaps as symbolically potent as his rejection of material luxury" (Ferguson, 2006: 76, quoted in Kristin Phillips' chapter). While the social impact of the printed word in verse or in prose goes beyond the scope of their analysis, Askew and Mhina remind us of an important paradox: one cannot postulate an autonomous popular domain of thought and action outside state narratives and practices, but the state's efforts at citizen control remain partial and imperfect — liable, in fact, to turn against the state and those associated with it.

*Post-*Mwalimu *education*

The last two chapters of this collection explore Nyerere's legacy in the field of education, a field bearing his lasting imprint. Theoretically, these essays differ slightly from the other contributions: they do not simply excavate memory narratives of Nyerere that inform debates on politics and belonging, but rather demonstrate how Nyerere's words and Ujamaa policies play out in current institutional and bureaucratic practices. Olivier Provini (Chapter 11) argues that the University of Dar es Salaam occupies a space set between transition (through the implementation of a new neoliberal agenda) and continuity (maintaining representations and practices related to a socialist approach), notably in the state's financial engagement with the university budget. Nyerere's shadow still lingers over the implementation of reforms as well as in teacher and student visions of education. The author details how the policy of cost-sharing among governments, parents and students gave rise to demonstrations invoking the tutelary protection of Mwalimu. Students asserted that the government should follow Mwalimu Nyerere's example by prioritizing education for all eligible students, not simply the well-off. Student-government negotiations finally resulted in budgetary reforms which did not, however, fully embrace the neoliberal model originally intended. This outcome signals the uniqueness of Tanzania's higher education system – what we could call a "post-socialist" system, characterized by both ruptures and continuities with Tanzania's past.

In her study of the ward secondary schools policy introduced in 2006 (Chapter 12), Sonia Languille skillfully argues that public policy-making in the field relies on narratives of legitimation and justification, which in turn draw upon Nyerere's educational philosophy as a discursive resource. Asserting that the 2006 policy blatantly contradicts Nyerere's actual concept of education's purpose – that is, to prepare children for their roles within the community – she identifies a rigid "performative" adherence to a Nyerere orthodoxy among policy-makers. However, such invocations of Nyerere rarely address the contradictions between Ujamaa egalitarian rhetoric and the reality of an elite produced and reproduced under the present system. But Languille highlights one significant legacy from the socialist past in the dominant narrative of youth-centred legitimacy, mobilized to justify the ward secondary schools policy. This narrative brings back the ambivalent socialist view of Tanzanian youth – at once servants of the nation and threateningly raw minds and bodies, prone to idleness, crime and transgression (Burton, 2005, 2006; Burgess, 2005; Brennan, 2006, 2010; Ivaska, 2011), especially in the city (Brennan, Burton and Lawi, 2007).

'Nyerere' as a Political Struggle

Floating 'Nyerere'

The foregoing should establish the variety of uses and attributes configured by "Julius Nyerere" in contemporary Tanzania: sometimes hero and sometimes villain, king-philosopher or cynical dictator. In all instances, 'Nyerere' becomes a political metaphor for debating and acting upon the present. More precisely, 'Nyerere' attains it meaning by virtue of having something done with it. 'Nyerere' can be brandished in a street demonstration for better education or freedom of speech – thus becoming a referent of liberty, justice and equality. It can be harnessed to nostalgia for social services in the 1960s-1970s as against neoliberal reforms, in street-corner discussions between friends, colleagues and acquaintances – thus becoming synonymous with social equity, national welfare and solidarity. Or it can be dropped on the stage during a political rally to promise a walk in Nyerere's footsteps if elected – as a rallying point for political commitment, incorruptibility, and integrity. In the language of semiotics and philosophy, 'Nyerere' is a floating signifier: it has no fixed or definite signified attached, but rather ambiguous, flexible, and variable signifieds, assigned according to the occasions and settings of its use. As Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe remind us, it is impossible to fix "ultimate meanings" to floating signifiers (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 111). In other words, 'Nyerere' means different things to different people – it has a plurality of signifieds, always contextual in character.

Although 'Nyerere' appears as a floating signifier due to its polysemy, indeterminacy and indexical character, we contend that it is not "empty" – it does not float in a space of freedom in which one could assign any type of meaning to it. If its meanings are highly variable, as we contend above, they are not free from any determinacy: 'Nyerere' remains embedded in a system of existing signifiers and signifieds historically constructed throughout his life and since his death and disseminated through Tanzanian society. 'Nyerere' is not blank and unfilled, because Julius Nyerere possesses a historicity. Social and cultural conditions also constrain and limit how a given society negotiates and contests its past. In Arjun Appadurai's words, "the past is (not) a limitless and plastic symbolic resource," subject to contemporary interests and warped by contemporary ideologies, since culturally variable norms "regulate the debatability of the past" (1981: 201). The thinkable and the unthinkable, the debatable and the un-debatable remain largely framed by history and culture. If 'Nyerere' is discursively constituted in the present and by the present, the present uses of 'Nyerere' also depend upon the past.

The present volume depends upon disconnecting the entity and the word, to borrow Foucault's formulation (1966) – divorcing the signifier "Nyerere" from the historical referent Julius Nyerere – while acknowledging that the existence of that referent constrains public debate about the signifier's meanings. This indeed explains two core issues at stake. First, it accounts for the fact that most debates about what Nyerere stands for today – whether deliberate or the product of less articulated practices – translate into specifying what 'Nyerere' means. This prompts endless interpretations and arguments, be they banal and mundane or learned and erudite, rooted in living experience of the past or grounded in second-hand oral or written accounts. People make continuous efforts to arrest the flow of meanings and construct fixed signification – in our case, striving to make of 'Nyerere' a "privileged discursive point of partial fixation" or a "nodal point" (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 112).[26] Second, highlighting the indexical or contextual nature of words shows us that assigning meanings is a political

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[26] We contend that biographies of Nyerere, transcripts of his speeches and publications of his writings, and essays at analysing his political thought constitute efforts by some gatekeepers to arrest the ordinary continuous flow of meanings of Nyerere and sustain a certain image – or what they see as a certain 'truth' harnessed to 'objective facts' in order to fight 'distortions' – of the man and the politician, though the written word, like the spoken words, also generates debates and may trigger contest.

struggle; debates over the possible meanings of 'Nyerere' construct ideas, ideals, conceptions and representations of what the society should be, and prompt actions that may transform society.[27] Any signifier is always, therefore, a performing signifier (Austin, 1962). People manipulate words, struggle over their definitions, contest the legitimacy of given actors to use them and to attribute other meanings to them – not simply for the sake of it, but to accomplish certain ends, in contingent contexts where power is at play.

Post-socialist Tanzanian nationhood

This leads us to several observations. First, scholars who attempt to map the various meanings attributed to 'Nyerere' in Tanzania face an endless task. Perceptions, memories and descriptions of Julius Nyerere vary greatly in time and place – from his lifetime to the present, and from one social environment to another. A merely inventorial perspective on this variety is rapidly exhausted; we propose, instead, to cast light on efforts to produce "partially fixed" meanings and how these operate in a given social situation. We cannot escape historicizing and contextualizing the uses of 'Nyerere', and all contributors to this volume have brilliantly taken up the challenge.

This collection calls for a reappraisal of contemporary politics – one which, instead of continuously looking back onto the colonial legacy, explores continuities and discontinuities with the early postcolonial period. Following Crawford Young, it suggests that the colonial referent has lost its pertinence in current governance and shows that Tanzania no longer situates itself in the "post-colonial moment", having shed "routines, practices and mentalities" inherited from the colonial state (2004: 23–24; see also Burton and Jennings, 2007). Since the demise of the socialist order, Tanzania has entered the "post-socialist" moment (Askew 2006; Askew and Pitcher, 2006) with continuities as well as ruptures with the socialist paradigm. Ongoing debates around Nyerere clearly indicate that a new historical moment is taking shape, characterized by efforts at reimagining the Tanzanian nation.

Second, we propose revisiting the liberally-applied scholarly concept of "collective memory." This is often conceived as a set of representations of the past, shared by a given social group – a village community, people who went through the same experience, a generation who have lived specific historical events, a nation. However, since the initial reflections of Ernst Renan (1996 [1882]) and Maurice Halbwachs (1980 [1950]), this conception of memory has come into question.[28] In the case of the nation-state, memory narratives have a powerful presence among various constituents of society, because they reflect the power of the state to control their terms, contours and modes of transmission, notably through institutions such as museums, school curricula, the media, etc. (Roberts, 2000: 521). As Moses Finley has aptly argued (1965: 297), memory is "the transmittal to many people of the memory of one man or a few men" for given purposes. Memory is therefore about mediation, oralisation, textualization, and acts of communication more generally: when Tanzanians "remember" Nyerere, they re-narrate and re-define him. The struggle over the meanings of Nyerere will

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[27] See also Chambi Cachage who, in his contribution "Mwalimu in our popular imagination", shows that when the name 'Nyerere' is uttered in the public space, it generates "public debates on issues of importance to society" (2010: 3). Yet, that the name 'Nyerere' may prompt debates has to do with its nature of floating signifier, not to any ability of collective debating which Julius Nyerere would have passed on to Tanzanians.

[28] From different perspectives, both authors show how remembering and forgetting are social processes in the service of conceptions and needs of the present through which the 'content' of memory is constantly reshaped. Efforts to physically inscribe mental representations in space or in repetitive social practices like rituals and commemorations clearly point to the malleability of collective memories which societies – or certain segments within society – may try to control.

not recede – and the floating yet historically and culturally constrained nature of Nyerere as a signifier will not vanish – as long as the political imagination that underpins conceptions of the Tanzanian nation and Tanzania-ness has its anchor in the figure of the first president.

One should also stress that local memories rather than grand national narratives may affect the esteem that citizens accord Nyerere. In her work on women's mobilisation in the late 1950s, Susan Geiger noted a "moral claim on Nyerere and the party", with echoes in today's generation of politically involved women; this should not be dismissed as simple nostalgia (2005: 286) or as the product of state and party hegemony. It also derives from vivid memory of Nyerere, their *mwanangu* (son) – a nickname given to him before he became the father of the nation – who publicly recognized their role in the independence struggle on several occasions. Ordinary citizens, therefore, can locate the origins of their memory narratives of Nyerere in their own shared experience, and such narratives may intertwine – or not – with the more strategic uses of his figure by politicians and the state.

Last, why is it that in Tanzania Nyerere remains such a paramount figure at various levels of society, while many other African Fathers of the Nation have been challenged or debunked – such as Léopold Ségar Senghor in Senegal or Sékou Touré in Guinea (see Charton and Fouéré, 2013)? Other countries such as Kenya have created a pantheon of national heroes, fostering a sense of plural and multipolar nation building. But in Tanzania, when the official historiography has foregrounded other personae, they are located in the pre-colonial past and seen as Nyerere's forebears (Sunseri, 2000; Roberts, 2000). Personalities who had a tremendous political role during the Nyerere era and are reclaimed today, such as former Prime Minister Rashid Kawawa, cannot overshadow Nyerere in the state narrative. We contend that the socialist national narrative and its embodiment in Nyerere have had powerful effects on political consciousness and the national ethos. Tanzania under Nyerere managed to create deep-rooted repertoires of subjectivity with which Tanzanians still identify in part, and which they draw upon to express their conception of the polity. To borrow a still-pertinent usage from Max Weber, we might say that the early postcolonial era has led to "types of men" (*Menschentum*) who share a specific ethos of respectability, honour, and dignity (Weber, 1964). [29] As in many African countries, economic liberalisation changed the state-society relationship and brought about demoralization and disillusion; but in Tanzania, this new context violently collided with the postcolonial repertory that had undergirded political subjectivities.

This may explain the rekindled investment in the figure of Nyerere and how it has translated into political discussions and discourses at all levels of society, whether in the media, on political podiums or in street-corner talks. This reminds us that, as above, popular narratives do not necessarily take shape in opposition to the dominant state narrative, but arise within the same repertoire of representations (Roberts, 2000: 522). However, shifts are occurring in the Tanzanian nationalist ethos, and new figures and repertoires of success have emerged from prevailing conditions of social, political and economic transformation (see, e.g. Weiss, 2009). Only the passing of generations, therefore, will tell us whether the relevance of Nyerere – the values and ideals he represents in the nation's present – will remain intact. In a speech in Accra on 6th March 1997 marking the 40th anniversary of Ghanaian independence, Nyerere challenged new generations of Africans, saying: "My generation led Africa to political

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[29] Nyerere himself clearly expressed how national ethics supply the foundation of national identity: "What was needed (Nyerere said) was a national ethic that enabled the government to say, 'That we cannot tolerate, that is un-Tanganyikan.' Without such an ethic, said Nyerere, 'no constitution, however, framed, could insure that the people would not become victims of tyranny'" (Smith, 2011: 84).

freedom. The current generation of leaders and peoples of Africa must pick up the flickering torch of African freedom, refuel it with their enthusiasm and determination, and carry it forward" (Nyerere, 2000: 31). [30] Today, the question is less whether these new generations are ready to take up this challenge, but whether they see it as a challenge at all.

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[30] In this speech, Nyerere makes reference to his own words at the Tanganyika Legislative Assembly on 22nd October 1959, when he expressed his hope that torch of freedom "would shine beyond our border, giving hope where there was despair, love where there was fate, and dignity where there was before only humiliation".