

Veronika Nad

Father of the Nation

Tanzania's Independence
Jubilee and the Nyerere Myth

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Veronika Nad: Father of the Nation: Tanzania's Independence Jubilee and the Nyerere Myth.

Zusammenfassung

Im Dezember 2011 feierte die Nation Tansania den 50. Jahrestag der Unabhängigkeit des tansanischen Festlands von britischer Kolonialherrschaft. Dabei offenbarte sich im Zuge der Inszenierung nationaler Symbole und Narrative, dass insbesondere der nationale Gründervater und erste Präsident ein wichtiges nationales Bezugsmerkmal auf verschiedenen Ebenen darstellt, obwohl dieser im kollektiven Gedächtnis über lange Jahre in Ungnade gefallen war. Die vorliegende Arbeit erörtert, wie sich die „Rückkehr“ Nyereres auf die politischen Bühnen des Landes seit seinem Tod im Jahr 1999 in Form eines nationalen Symbols vollzogen hat, und wie seine Person und politisches Vermächtnis im Kontext der Unabhängigkeitsfeiern 2011 erinnert wurden. Weiterhin soll der besondere Einfluss der ehemaligen Einheitspartei CCM auf Nyereres heutige Inszenierung untersucht und herausgestellt werden, dass Nyerere seiner ehemaligen Partei vor allem als Mittel politischer Legitimierung dient, wodurch Tansanias politische Landschaft erheblich beeinflusst wird.

Abstract

In December 2011 the nation of Tanzania celebrated the 50th anniversary of the mainland's independence from British colonial rule. During this event and the staging of national symbols and narratives, it became apparent that in particular the country's founding father and first president Julius Nyerere represents a vital national benchmark on many levels, although he had fallen out of favor in the collective memory for many years. This paper will discuss how Nyerere "returned" onto the country's political stage in the form of a national symbol since his death in 1999. It will also look at how he and his political legacy are remembered in the context of the 2011 Independence Day celebrations. Furthermore, this paper will point out the influence of the former single party CCM on Nyerere's current representation and argue that the founding father continues to be used by his former party to secure political legitimacy, which considerably influences Tanzania's political landscape.

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1. Introduction¹

When on December 9, 2011, the United Republic of Tanzania celebrated its fiftieth anniversary of the mainland's independence from the British Empire, the event was celebrated with every bit of pomp and style as in a number of other countries on the African continent one year before.² Weeks of regional festivities – exhibitions, commemorative celebrations and cultural events – preceded a proud military and civilians' parade as main act of the celebrations, which took place in Dar es Salaam, the country's largest city and economic center. The jubilee provided a unique occasion to reflect on fifty years of nationhood and debate how the country had handled its sovereignty. National media, politicians and people on the streets – everybody participated in nationwide discussions on the country's current situation, the legacy of the socialist era as well as opportunities and challenges following the political changes of the 1990s.

As ritualized commemoration of national achievements accompanied by debates and controversies on how the nation should proceed, independence jubilees are moments of national reflection and (re-)production of identity (Etzioni 2004). Like national holidays in general, they offer insight into the processes of shaping and presenting “collective memory” (Erll 2011: 1 ff.) and allow us to observe particular symbols by which nations create and strengthen their identity (Geisler 2005). Being usually organized by the government and political elites, these celebrations often provoke political discourse, since employment of national symbols and demonstration of political power are closely linked (Lentz 2011).

Thus, Tanzania's fiftieth independence jubilee was a valuable opportunity to take a look at the different aspects of the country's national collective memory. Remarkably, the celebration's opening two months before the actual jubilee took place neither in Dodoma, the country's official capital and seat of the parliament, nor in Dar es Salaam, where the president resides and from where the independence movement had spread during the 1950s. Instead, the national festivities officially started in the small village of Butiama near Lake Victoria, a place far away from the political stages and not in any way connected to the independence movement on Tanzania mainland. The same applies for October 14, the date of the celebration's prelude in Butiama. In fact, the opening celebrations of the Golden Jubilee were merged with *Nyerere Day*, the annual festivities honoring life and legacy of Tanzania's *Baba wa Taifa* or “Father of the Nation” Julius Kambarage Nyerere, which have been celebrated each year in his hometown Butiama since his death on October 14, 1999.

This way, the ritualized commemoration of independence on Tanzania mainland, which is widely seen as the first step towards building present-day Tanzania, was put on an equal level with the commemoration of a man, who inarguably influenced the country's history like no one else, but whose policies and legacy were viewed very controversially during the past decades (Fouéré 2011). Nyerere, who had led his people to independence in 1961 and given the country a socialist doctrine and national identity called *Ujamaa* (or “familyhood”),

¹ The paper presented here is a revision of my master thesis submitted to the Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikastudien at Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz in November 2014, supervised by Prof. Dr. Carola Lentz and co-reviewed by Prof. Dr. Matthias Krings. I would like to thank my professors as well as my sources in Tanzania for their support and interest; without them, this paper would not have been possible.

² An overview of the Golden Jubilees in Cameroon, Madagascar, Democratic Republic Congo, Benin, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Mali, Nigeria and Burkina Faso can be found in Lentz & Kornes 2011.

stepped down from his office voluntarily in 1985 following public protests. By the end of his more than twenty-year-long presidency, often referred to as a “benevolent dictatorial regime” (Lyimo 31.01.2014), his popularity as “philosopher king” (Crutcher 1968: 250) had been replaced by public frustration over failed political reforms. At this time, Nyerere’s representation as “Father of the Nation” and national icon was unlikely. Up until today, the framework of the *Ujamaa* policy is widely seen as the basis for Tanzania’s current economic situation, which ranks amongst the poorest countries of the world.

Nevertheless, during the opening of the celebrations on the occasion of Tanzania’s Golden Jubilee, Nyerere was represented as iconic key figure in Tanzanian history. According to Marie-Aude Fouéré, the reduction of Tanzanian history since independence, which after all has seen three more presidents, to a single man’s personal influence – as implied in the connection of those two important holidays – is part of a particular process: Nyerere’s “reviving” (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011) as national father figure, which can be observed since his death in 1999.

This paper is an attempt to explain why Tanzania’s fiftieth Independence Jubilee was celebrated in explicit reference to a man, who fell from grace after his socialist doctrine of *Ujamaa* failed and who left the country’s economy shattered. Considering Nyerere’s historical influence as president and “national moral authority” (Interview Butaha 31.10.2011), I will examine under which circumstances Nyerere became a national father figure, moreover as Nyerere himself never supported a personality cult and eventually opposed it (Schatzberg 2001: 151). As Tanzania underwent major political changes by introducing a multi-party system following Nyerere’s resignation, Philipps (2010) and Fouéré (2013) understand Nyerere’s *mise-en-scène* as “Father of the Nation” and a national symbol as a political instrument to secure the leading party’s legitimacy. Nyerere’s idealization, the narratives constituting his official image, as well as the way he is used as a political tool will be examined here in the context of Schatzberg’s theory of *moral matrix* (2001), a culturally particular template to interpret and evaluate political measures.

My own field research conducted in 2011 and 2012 in Tanzania indicated that Nyerere is not only subject to commemoration and idealization on an official level. Interviews and discussions showed that Nyerere is highly regarded among Tanzanian citizens and has a distinguished significance in the country’s collective memory. Media reports from the months around the festivities, too, were very much centered on the reflection and discussion of the first president’s influence. The paper will reflect on the non-governmental representation and commemoration of Nyerere’s legacy to discuss the potential consequences for his successors as well as the country’s political landscape.

His official representation during the Golden Jubilee celebrations as well as media and public reactions to this image indicate that Julius Nyerere did not only personally and politically contribute to the nation’s identity during his presidency. There are reasonable beliefs that he continues to do so far beyond his passing as a consequence of his collective commemoration. This assumption will be the subject of the final section.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

As the concepts of “nation” and “national identity” are at once overcharged with meaning and vague, I will first define how these abstract terms are understood and used in modern research on nations and nationalism as well as in this paper. There are two major concepts

which both have substantially influenced the contemporary understanding of nation and collective identity: first, Benedict Anderson's social-constructivist theory of nations as "imagined communities" (Anderson 2006: 13), and second, Assmann's idea of "cultural memory" (Assmann 1997: 57).

Anderson defines a nation as non-ideological, identity-creating construct, which assumes the existence of a community of actors sharing a number of realms, namely time, space, historical, linguistic and/or cultural experiences (Anderson 2006: 10 ff.). With this concept, Anderson counters the understanding of the concept of nation as "state nation" or "culture nation" (Jensen & Borggräfe 2007:10 ff.), where nations are defined by either territorial or cultural boundaries. As these concepts do not reflect on the origin of postcolonial nations, their territorial and ethnic borders having been drawn more or less at random, Anderson stretches the importance of a sense of belonging in reference to Seton-Watson: "All I can find to say is that a nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves to form a nation, or behave as if they formed one" (Seton-Watson 1977: 5, in: Anderson 2006: 6). Considering nations as "imagined communities" implies an idea of togetherness between people who will probably never personally encounter each other. These communities are always real because they are imagined, Anderson argues, and thus opposes on Ernest Gellner's position, who doubts the authenticity of the invented (Anderson 2006: 6).

Understanding the nation as a community of people who have a sense of belonging towards each other and see themselves as what Elwert describes as "We-group" (Elwert 1989), brings up the question of common features of identification. One possible answer is given by Assmann and his concept of cultural memory. Distinct from, but depending on, the communicative memory, which reproduces individual experiences, the cultural memory constitutes topics and ritualized forms of traditions and realizations of a group's culture (Assmann 1997: 20). Values, customs and traditions, language, literature and art as well as more explicit symbols like flags, hymns, national celebrations and personality cults on national heroes create a group's identity and contribute to nation-building in general (Geisler 2005: XV). Historical authenticity of these elements is not relevant; they can mostly be considered as inventions, but they support a community through common reference by members of a group. This is expressed in Hobsbawm and Ranger's concept of "invented traditions" (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983: 1), where the construction of traditions and related symbols is a necessary requirement to confirm collective values and norms:

`invented traditions' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983: 1)

In her analysis of national narratives in Tanzania, Kelly M. Askew criticizes Hobsbawm's and Anderson's concepts, understanding them as final products of a guided integrational process. Instead, she proposes the term *national imaginaries*, "the multiple and often contradictory layers and fragments of ideology that underlie continually shifting conceptions of any given nation" (Askew 2002: 273), emphasizing the flexibility of national narratives and their formation. Nations do not rely on a single national narrative valid for all citizens – instead, controversies on multiple, differing *national imaginaries* support the process of nation-building and the question of "Who are we and what is it that binds us?".

Collective memory and national holiday celebrations

Different *national imaginaries* presented during national holiday celebrations, as well as the public debates discussing and symbols accompanying them, are examples of what Erll identifies as “collective memory” (Erll 2011: 1ff.). This generic term refers to all substantial, media or institutional processes influencing the reciprocal connection of past and present in a socio-cultural context, thus ritualizing Assmann’s cultural memory, and is a key concept in analyzing the construction of identity in national holiday celebrations (Erll 2011: 6).

In celebrating national holidays, nations reproduce and strengthen their collective memory, identity and memory being interdependent:

The core meaning of any individual or group identity, namely, a sense of sameness over time and space, is sustained by memory; and what is remembered is defined by the assumed identity. (Gillis 1994:1)

Following Gillis’ approach, memory as well as identity are flexible constructs underlying continuous transformations as well as reciprocal assimilation, functioning as “representations or constructions of reality” (Gillis 1994:3). They can be nothing but artificial, adding a socio-political dimension:

Commemorative activity is by definition social and political, for it involves the coordination of individual and group memories, whose results may appear consensual when they are in fact the product of processes of intense contest, struggle, and, in some instances, annihilation. (Gillis 1994: 5)

According to Amitai Etzioni, Independence Day celebrations count as *recommitment holidays*, which – in contrast to so-called *tension management holidays*, where social tensions are met by temporarily inverting hierarchies and rules – confirm a set of collective values and norms (Etzioni 2004). By celebrating them, a nation presents images of itself, its controversies and conflicts as well as references to a common past. According to Halbwachs (1967 [1939]), history’s impartiality and inflexibility impedes the process of constructing collective identity rather than supporting it. Thus, a particular judgmental reference to the past in accordance with a collective image and flexibility towards history is developed. This reference will never be an accurate representation of a group’s past, but a meaningful indicator for its members’ present interests and needs (Erll 2011: 7).

Due to their actuality, Golden Jubilee celebrations are, in reference to Assmann’s theory, transitional between communicative and cultural memory (Lentz 2011). Independence, Nyerere’s presidency and his passing are rather recent events of Tanzanian national history, and as such are part of many individuals’ personal, or communicative, memory. By synchronizing and ritualizing these events, as in the context of national celebrations, they become a part of Tanzania’s cultural memory and national narratives, free to be interpreted and shaped.

Golden Jubilee celebrations, besides their symbolic-integrative effect, also shed light on a nation’s political condition and processes. Official commemorative events such as parades, re-enactments, and commemoration of national heroes usually are organized by governmental institutions, ergo a country’s political elites. As Lentz and Kornes (2011) showed in their analysis of Golden Jubilee celebrations in eleven African nations in 2010, organizing political actors inevitably influence the means and images of commemoration,

consequently coining the representation of national identity. By temporarily merging nation and state (Lentz 2013) during official ceremonies, governments and politicians mainly disclose their own image of a nation, which in turn always relates to those aspects of national history the organizers themselves can identify and associate with. Oppositions by the public or particular groups can reveal other, possibly contrary perceptions of a nation's identity.

At this point, the aspect of political legitimacy becomes important, as Fauré pointed out as early as 1978. The connection between the power of the state and national symbolism can be used to focus on specific symbols and historic events that legitimize the rule of a particular person, group or party (Fauré 1978; Lentz 2011).

Father of the Nation and legitimacy of power in middle Africa

The use of national symbolism to secure political legitimacy is discussed in Michael Schatzberg's book "Political legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food". After analyzing newspaper articles from eight African countries³, he argues "that political legitimacy in this corner of the globe rests on the tacit normative idea that government stands in the same relationship to its citizens that a father does to his children" (Schatzberg 2001: 1).

In the reviewed countries, Schatzberg detected family metaphors as an integral part of what he calls *moral matrix of legitimate governance*, which allows political contexts to be understood within their cultural logic:

Moral matrices are present in all societies, and they change across both time and space. They form a culturally rooted template, against which people come to understand the political legitimacy, or 'thinkability', of institutions, ideas, policies, and procedures. (Schatzberg 2001: 1)

According to Schatzberg, the use of the family metaphor in the examined countries replaces the impersonal authority of an institutionalized state, which constitutes the *moral matrix* of many Western nations (Schatzberg 2001: 36 ff). A similar observation was made by Chabal and Daloz (1999), who equate a country's level of institutionalization with its structural differentiation between state and society. They distinguish between formal and informal politics: political processes in postcolonial Africa, shaped by structural weak states in the Weberian sense, are far from formalized; instead, informal and personalized rules based on historic circumstances as well as a tendency towards the personalization of status and prestige mark the political realms (Chabal & Daloz 1999).

Consequently, heads of state rely to a great extent on the personal legitimacy of their rule. Schatzberg also identifies metaphors of food and nourishment to refer to natural resources within the political discourse as essential element of the *moral matrix of legitimate governance* in the examined states. Thus, the political legitimacy of a governments in middle Africa also relies on how equal and under which circumstances a president or political elite distributes the "national cake" (Bayart 1993).

Schatzberg's theory cannot be applied without comment. Lentz (1998) argues that by defining a *moral matrix*, the author risks generalizations "because the complexity of cases [...]"

³ Schatzberg's analysis comprises newspaper articles from Senegal, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Cameroon, Nigeria, Republic of Kongo, Kenya and Tanzania.

shows, how difficult it is to come up with a general 'matrix' even for a single society" (Lentz 1998: 64). In the context of her analysis of power and legitimacy in northern Ghana, Schatzberg's term is only applicable "if 'matrix' is not defined as a firm set of norms but understood as a rather flexible and historically variable framework of rules" (Lentz 1998: 64). This paper will use the concept of the *moral matrix* as a flexible construct allowing conclusions in reference to individuals and contexts included in this analysis, while not claiming to provide an absolute and comprehensive image of the Tanzanian society's values and norms.

The use of images of political fathers is not limited to states in postcolonial Africa. In ancient Rome, Emperor Augustus presented himself as provider and protector; he as well as some of his successors were honored as *pater patriae*. The Turkish parliament offered the name *Atatürk*, 'Father of the Turks', to the state's founder and first president Mustafa Kemal, banning the use of this name in reference to any other person. Mahatma Gandhi was named *Father of the Nation* to honor his role in India's struggle for independence, and Josef Stalin gave the title to himself. Even the ironic nickname "Mutti" ("Mommy") coined for Germany's Angela Merkel refers to the notion of care and protection. The list of political fathers is long and certainly not restricted to Schatzberg's examples from middle Africa.

Nyerere and Tanzania

Julius Nyerere's personal and political influence on Tanzania as a nation has been and still is the subject of intense academic research. As an example for the multiple attempts to analyze his presidency, I would like to discuss the classification of leadership in Africa proposed by Jackson and Rosberg (1982). According to them, Nyerere's presidency could be described as *prophetic rule*, which is characterized by "a charismatic personality who can convert politicians into missionaries and politics into crusade" (Jackson & Rosberg 1982: 21). Here, as well as in Crutcher (1968), Agyeman (1975) and Memel-Fôte (1991), Nyerere's influence and vision are compared to Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, based on common socialist ideals and "charismatic authority" (Weber 2005: 179 ff.) of the two statesmen.

Detailed analysis on the role of the late Nyerere in Tanzania's modern society have been presented by Kelly M. Askew, who approached the issue by examining popular music and art. Songs and poetry are common tools of political communication in Tanzanian society, which is shaped by extreme discretion in conflict and sophisticated mechanisms of indirect communication⁴. In her analysis of Tanzanian music of the post-socialist era on the occasion of Nyerere's burial ceremony in October 1999, Askew summarizes the relevant characteristics and merits attributed to the founding father (Askew 2006).

Askew (2002) concludes that above all, Nyerere is credited for his role as head of the independence movement TANU, leading a nonviolent struggle to end British colonial rule and making him a symbol of peace and unity. By establishing a political union between Tanzania mainland and the archipelago of Zanzibar, the first president tried to prevent local conflicts between subnational and ethnic groups. Considering the multitude of these kind of conflicts in Kenya and other neighboring countries, many Tanzanians see their mostly peaceful union as a grand achievement. Nyerere's support for other African independence

⁴ One of them being *kangas*, traditional fabrics printed with aphorisms. For a detailed analysis of their importance as mediums of indirect communication see Askew (2002): "Khanga as a Medium of Communication", *Express*, October 1-4, 1995, 11.

movements in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa is widely respected and adds an international but foremost Pan-African relevance to Nyerere's actions. Finally, the image of Nyerere is associated with political wisdom, commitment, integrity and altruism. Moreover, Askew illustrates the consequences of Nyerere's idealization for his successors and the country's political landscape today (Askew 2002).

Nyerere's significance as a national symbol has also been analyzed in the works of Marie-Aude Fouéré and Kristin D. Philipps. By opening the official celebrations of fifty years of independence on the 12th anniversary of Nyerere's death in his hometown and resting-place Butiama/Musoma, the responsible parties presented a close symbolic connection between the person Nyerere and the state of Tanzania (Fouéré 2011). Fouéré emphasizes the "return" of Nyerere and his moral principles onto Tanzania's political stage and studied the influence of this process on public debates, definition and agency of morality, belonging and nationality in the country. In doing so, she focuses on Nyerere's representation as a national symbol to strengthen collective identity and highlights different aspects of his "invention" (Fouéré 2014: 6).

In this context, Philipps (2010) mainly analyzes the role of the former single party CCM (*Chama cha Mapinduzi*, Revolution Party), which was founded by Nyerere himself and politically benefits significantly from this fact. She argues that the country's political elite, which still mainly consists of CCM party members, uses the figure of Julius Nyerere to secure and strengthen the party's political legitimacy. Philipps also refers to Schatzberg's *moral matrix of legitimate governance*. Similar conclusions are drawn by Gero Erdmann in the context of his study on formal and informal ties of political parties in Tanzania (Erdmann 2002). Like Chabal and Daloz, Erdmann assumes political processes in Africa to be less institutionalized than in countries elsewhere and rather shaped by informal political processes constituting an integral characteristic of African political parties (Erdmann 2002: 2). Consequently, a significant part of political life is determined by informal structures, which develop separately from any official political framework (Erdmann 1999). According to Erdmann, informal ties of political parties in Africa in general and in Tanzania in particular are ensured by several aspects: party members and voters are tied to a party not only by ideology or their own political beliefs, but also by bureaucratic organization, a personal or charismatic cast of party representatives, clientelist structures, ethnical and regional relations as well as links to civil society organizations (Erdmann 2002). For this paper, the aspect of personalization is of particular interest.

1.2 Research and Methods

The paper presented here is based on findings researched between October 2011 and February 2012 on the occasion of Tanzania's fiftieth Independence Jubilee. The field research was conducted in the context of Carola Lentz's research project on politics of commemoration and national holiday celebrations in Africa 2009-2013. During the study's course the founding father's significance for processes of collective memory and their influence on Tanzanian society became apparent. This paper is a re-evaluation of the collected material to highlight Nyerere's role in the celebrations of fifty years of independence, while also considering other findings on the first president's utilization as a political instrument to present a complete picture of the political processes revolving around his commemoration in general after half a century of sovereignty.

The majority of information used to analyze Nyerere's significance as a national icon was gathered from newspaper articles published between October 2011 and January 2012, in various Tanzanian newspapers. Newspapers are important sources of information as well as entertainment in Tanzanian society, a fact illustrated by the widespread practice of renting newspapers instead of buying them. Printed media are comparatively expensive in Tanzania but can be read at the newsstand for a reduced price; bought papers, too, usually get passed on. Due to the importance of newspapers in Tanzanian society, the analysis of their content is an integral means to explore Nyerere's role. In this paper, mainly the print editions of *Mwananchi* and its English equivalent *The Citizen* as well as the online edition of the *Daily News* are considered; furthermore, print editions of the Swahili newspapers *Jambo* and *Habari Leo* and the weekly English newspapers *The East African* and *The Express* are included.

Printed media in Tanzania are divided into two groups based on their political stands. The ruling party maintains its own publishing group, which owns the CCM's former party organ and Tanzania's oldest newspaper *Habari Leo* and its English pendant *Daily News*. Along with a number of other national papers, they mainly represent information and opinions expressed by the ruling party. Opposed to them are private editors, led by the most highly circulated *Mwananchi/The Citizen*, as well as *The East African* and *The Express*. Other newspapers are supported by the government to different degrees and relatively independent. In this analysis, editions of the *Daily News* and affiliated papers are taken into account to review Nyerere's representation by the ruling party and government, while independent editors can be viewed as opposing positions.

The analysis of the print media is supported by information gathered in twenty documented, semi-structured interviews conducted with informants and experts as well as a dozens number of informal discussions. The names of some informants have been altered where requested. According to the original study's focus, statements made by informants concerning Nyerere's reflection and commemoration referred to here have been given mainly on the informants' own initiative.

Some of the interview partners were selected strategically, some at random. Important expert interviews were conducted with Emmanuel Millenzi, member of the festivities' steering committee, reflecting on the celebrations' protocol, course and symbolisms. Discussions led with Joseph Mbwiliza, professor of history, as well as Emmanuel Mbogo, professor of literature and theatre, on nation and state in Tanzania were equally revealing. An interview with Julius Nyerere's daughter Rosemary provided insight into Nyerere's political and moral beliefs and their practical implications. At Global Publishers Ltd., one of the country's largest private publishers focused on tabloid papers based in Dar es Salaam, a number of semi-structured and informal interviews with journalists and other employees in the publishing sector were conducted. Similar interviews, in general revolving around Tanzania's Golden Jubilee, the country's social and political conditions and Nyerere's role, have been led with activists, artists, small business owners and others in Dar es Salaam, Mwanza as well as the regions Butiama/Mara and Mbeya.

Furthermore, the results of two participatory observations on December 1 and 9, 2011 are taken into account, illustrating the events on the occasion of Tanzania's Golden Jubilee. A visit to Nyerere's birthplace in Butiama and the local Mwalimu Nyerere Museum, the center of the founding father's national commemoration, not only provided valuable insights into

his official representation, but also into the process of creating the Nyerere myth. Observations made on these occasions were recorded as electronic field notes.

Finally, a remark on the use of terms in this paper: strictly speaking, December 9 – here commonly referred to as Tanzanian Independence Day – is only the jubilee of the Tanzania mainland's sovereignty from the British Empire in 1961. This colony formerly named Tanganyika – today *Tanzania bara*, “the mainland” – signed a union treaty with the archipelago of Zanzibar just offshore Dar es Salaam in 1964, only a couple of months after Zanzibar's independence. On official schedules, the mainland's independence jubilee is of equal importance as Zanzibar's independence jubilee on December 10 as well as the Union Day on April 26, and all celebrations are attended by members of both partners of the union.

In 2011 however, media and sources quite commonly referred to the holiday as Tanzanian Independence Day, which is why this term is used here. Some of the official advertising, announcements and materials, although not all, were bearing the holiday's full title *Miaka Hamsini ya Uhuru ya Tanzania bara* (“Fifty Years of Independence of Tanzania Mainland”). In general, Zanzibar media showed stronger regional references and emphasized the correct labelling of the holiday, thus specifically pointing out differences between the nation Tanzania and mainland Tanzania.

The varying and not always correct use of terms on the mainland is an illustration of the imbalance of the union, which is largely perceived all over the islands of Zanzibar. Especially since Nyerere's death in 1999, this has caused occasional tensions between the mainland and the former sultanate. The situation between archipelago and mainland cannot be a subject of this paper, as the field research was conducted on the mainland. Thus, results presented here about the discourse on national identity and political morality only apply to Zanzibar only to a certain extent. Nyerere's role in Zanzibar as “father or enemy of the nation” is discussed in detail in Fouéré (2013).

Foreign-language terms used in this paper are in Swahili, Tanzania's official language and lingua franca, and are listed in a separate index. The assessed newspapers and articles as well as pictures are accessible from the online archive run by the Institut für Ethnologie und Afrikastudien at Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz (<http://www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de/315.php>).

1.3 Structure of the paper

Representation and commemoration evidently refer to historical events, which is why an account of Nyerere's biography needs to precede the analysis of his role as a national symbol and political instrument. Consequently, the next chapter will summarize Nyerere's vita in the context of Tanzanian history from 1953 up to today. Here, I will present Nyerere's political and personal actions as well as the implementation of his socialist agenda *Ujamaa*, and discuss the consequences of his policies, the circumstances of his (temporary) retirement from the political stage, and the legacy he left to the country and his successors.

In chapter three, I present the results of the field research and give an overview of the general practice and symbolism of Tanzanian Independence Day celebrations. In the following, I will address the particularities of the official act of state on December 9, 2011 and refer to critical voices accompanying the celebrations. Finally, I will analyze the commemoration of Julius Nyerere in non-official contexts.

In chapter four, the role of Julius Nyerere as a political tool in the modern nation of Tanzania will be studied. In doing so, the different characteristics attributed to the late president are pointed out in order to understand and discuss the title *Baba wa Taifa*. Next, Nyerere's representation on the occasion of Tanzania's Golden Jubilee and his elevation to "Father of the Nation" will be discussed as part of a process of his "reviving" (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011). An analysis of the characteristics of this renaissance, the moral-political guidelines he is identified with and their influence on Tanzanian society today will conclude this paper.

2. Julius K. Nyerere in Tanzanian history

Kambarage Nyerere was born on April 13, 1922 as one of Zanaki-Chief Nyerere Burito's 26 children in the region of Butiama/Mara close to Lake Victoria. At the age of twelve years, he attended a public primary school in Musoma, and in 1933 continued his education at the Government School of Tabora. Thereby, Nyerere received an outstanding education compared to standards in East Africa at the time: later, he is said to have described Tabora as "as close to Eaton as you can get in Africa" (Kasuka 2013: 66). During his studies at the Makerere University in Kampala/Uganda, he converted to Roman Catholicism and was baptized "Julius" in 1943. In 1947 he returned to Tabora to teach English and Biology at a Catholic mission school until 1949, when he received a scholarship to the University of Edinburgh, making him the first Tanganyikan to obtain a British master's degree. There, he not only studied European history, literature and philosophy⁵, but he also became acquainted with Fabianism⁶ and the theories of Marx and Lenin, which significantly influenced his political direction in the following decades. In London he met George Padmore, West-Indian Pan-Africanist and mentor of Kwame Nkrumah, and shortly after presented his ideas about overcoming ethnical conflicts by pan-African policies in the unpublished pamphlet "The race problem in East Africa" (Ilfiffe 1979: 509).

Upon his return to Africa, Nyerere again took up his profession as a teacher at a college near Dar es Salaam, but soon began campaigning for his country's independence. In 1953 he was elected chairman of the Tanganyika Africa Association (TAA), one of many different organizations promoting national sovereignty. To rally for independence as a united movement, a number of organizations held a meeting in Dar es Salaam on July 7, 1954, a date today celebrated as *Saba Saba* to commemorate the beginning of the national struggle. On this occasion the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) was founded, and Nyerere became its first elected president. The next year he travelled the country in the party's newly bought official car and campaigned among mostly rural populations for his party and its cause. By doing so he attracted the attention of British officials, who soon pressured him into choosing between politics and teaching. Later he stated, referring to his decision in favor of politics, "I became a teacher by choice and a politician by accident" (Kasuka 2013: 67).

According to Crutcher, not only Nyerere's political career but also his most common nickname *Mwalimu*, "Teacher", by which he is still commonly referred today, originated from this time. Rather than alluding to his actual profession, the name was introduced by his

⁵ He also wrote the first Swahili translations of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and *The Merchant of Venice*.

⁶ On Nyerere and Fabianism: Bjerck, Paul, 2008: *Julius Nyerere and the Establishment of Sovereignty in Tanzania*. Dissertation. Madison: University of Wisconsin.

political opponents bothered by “Nyerere’s moderate racial stance and his politics of compromise and common sense” (Crutcher 1968: 285) to mock his personal shortcomings:

Realizing that an open attack upon such a reverend public figure would be suicidal, and noting Nyerere’s habit of using public platforms to lecture his followers and colleagues, rather than serve up political harangue, the few detractors coined the name ‘Mwalimu’. This was meant to connote, mildly, it must be remembered, a slight tendency towards pedagogic pomposity on Nyerere’s part. (Crutcher 1968: 187)

The title’s derogatory notion was forgotten quickly, however, as “both Nyerere’s supporters and the mass of the people took the title as a compliment [...] [and] Nyerere’s closest associates began to use the name in a praiseworthy sense” (Crutcher 1968: 287). Up until today, the name is mainly associated with Nyerere’s function as a fatherly national mentor.

2.1 President

In 1955 and 1957 Nyerere travelled to New York and appeared before the United Nations Trusteeship Council to advocate Tanganyika’s independence as an official TANU representative. After World War I and the forced abandoning of all German overseas territories, Tanganyika Territory had not become a British colony per se, but was administered by the Empire as a UN Trusteeship Territory. After Nyerere approached the UN, Tanganyika’s independence was prepared to be granted in the 1970s following a lengthy transitional period; four years later, however, the date for independence was moved up unexpectedly. On December 9, 1961, Tanzania mainland gained *Uhuru*, “Freedom”. The Trusteeship Territory’s last governor, Sir Richard Turnbull, appointed Nyerere first prime minister of the independent state; one year later, after Tanganyika’s constitution as a republic was approved, Nyerere won the first presidential election and remained head of state until his resignation in 1985.

A political program was introduced, based on freedom, equality and unity, which Nyerere identified as crucial premises for successful nation-building as well as creating an ideal society (Nyerere 1967). He held on to these three principles as leitmotifs and instruments of his political rhetoric until his death. Ibhawoh and Dibua clarify their function:

According to him, there must be equality, because only on that basis will men work cooperatively. There must be freedom, because the individual is not served by society unless it is his. And there must be unity, because only when society is unified can its members live and work in peace, security and well-being. (Ibhawoh & Dibua 2003: 62)

Nyerere’s ideal of unity, *Umoja* in Swahili, not only had socio-ideological significance but it quickly became a practical political instrument, too. After Zanzibar’s independence and the following violent, socialist-inspired revolution of an African majority against a ruling Arab minority, Nyerere and Zanzibar’s first president, Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume, forged a union between republic and islands. The union treaty came into effect on April 26, 1964. Zanzibar became a semi-autonomous province in the newborn state of Tanzania, its new name originating from a neologism comprising both parties’ names as well as the ancient appellation of the East African coast, *Azania*. The union between Zanzibar and the mainland also needs to be seen in connection with Nyerere’s pan-African ideals. In 1961 he emphasized at a seminar of the World Youth Assembly in Dar es Salaam:

I am convinced that, just as unity was necessary for the achievement of independence in Tanganyika, or in any other nation, unity is equally necessary for the whole of Africa to achieve and maintain her independence. [...] African nationalism is meaningless [...] if it is not at the same time Pan-Africanism. (Nyerere 1962)

Furthermore, Nyerere started to promote a union of East African states right after Tanganyika's independence, which ultimately should only precede a continental African union.⁷ In the region, Jomo Kenyatta proved to be his closest ally; on a continental level, he strongly aligned with Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah. According to Nyerere, a national and continental union was pivotal to prevent and overcome ethnic and religious conflicts which had significantly influenced the revolution in Zanzibar and were expected to threaten Africa's freedom in the future (Assensoh 1998: 130).

On the level of domestic politics, the teacher in history and Swahili aimed at preventing regional conflicts and strengthening integration by designating a national language. At the time of independence, Tanzania was home to more than 120 different population groups, making ethnic conflicts not unlikely. Whereas many former colonies in Africa chose their national language in accordance with the official language of their European rulers, Tanzania introduced Swahili, a Bantu language with strong Arab influence mainly spoken in the coastal area and used as a commercial language throughout the mainland, as *lingua franca*. Professor Emmanuel Mbogo of the Open University in Dar es Salaam commented on this:

We had English and Swahili, but Nyerere immediately realized that if you want to have a strong nation, a united nation, you need a language to unite the people. So that will not be English, because if you talk about English there was maybe one percent of the people who knew English, maybe less, because there were very, very few who went to school. So to promote English as a national language to unite the people, that would have been impossible and ineffective. So he emphasized the Swahili language, that should be the official language, in parliament and everywhere else and that we should do all our discussions in Kiswahili. It was a revolutionary idea, and it helped to unite this country. This is one of the most peaceful countries, and one of the most united ones, and people are proud of being Tanzanian. (Interview Mbogo 29.11.2011)

In 1965 the first Westminster-model constitution was replaced by a new program, which legitimized a democratic one-party state. Assensoh stresses that at the time of independence, no socialist program had been part of TANU's agenda, and Nyerere had mainly focused on liberal pan-African ideals without following any distinct political direction (Assensoh 1998: 131 f). The introduction of socialism was not, as in many other countries, inspired by the necessity to choose a side in the Cold War; it was rather, according to Nyerere, far more compatible with traditional social structures in Tanzania and thus a secure way to lead the country into economic self-sufficiency and stability:

Nyerere took some of the ideas and came up with what you call 'African Socialism', not necessarily following or borrowing everything or copying everything from Marx and Engels, so he took some of the ideas. And he saw that the concept of Ujamaa, the

⁷ Including the modern-day states of Kenya, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda as well as Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and the Central-African Republic, which except for the latter were all still under colonial rule at the time.

concept of socialism was already part of us before colonialism, which is essentially true. (Interview Mbogo 29.11.2011)

Ujamaa, which officially had been introduced during the Arusha Declaration in 1967, constituted the core of Nyerere's "African Socialism", which Askew describes as "agriculture-based reinvention of communalism painted with shades of an idealized African past" (Askew 2002: 47). *Ujamaa* roughly translates to family, community and common spirit, the name emphasizing Nyerere's belief in socially inherent socialism which in precolonial times had manifested itself in the extended family. *Ujamaa* became a set of programs directed towards achieving Nyerere's political and social goals.

To implement the new ideology so-called *Ujamaa* villages were established, where Tanzanian farmers, then and now constituting the population's largest occupational group, were organized in subsistent and democratic communities. Communal ownership and a collectively administered education and health system were supposed to secure the population's needs and at the same time lay the foundation for Tanzania's *kujitengemea*, economic independence. Askew points out the strategic (re-)settlement of Tanzanian citizens into the *Ujamaa* villages to create ethnic diversity and specifically counter regional racism and stratification (Askew 2002: 47).

As for Nyerere, independence and unity were interdependent. His idea of a free and unified Tanzania required *Ujamaa*, which should secure unity by equality as well as individual and collective freedom. According to Pratt, the establishment of a single-party system was supposed to serve against the formation of ethnically, religiously or regionally influenced parties. Consequently, citizens were encouraged to become members of TANU and make use of the equal right to run for public office. A leadership code was established to guarantee officials' personal and collective integrity and prevent corruption and nepotism. Furthermore, large sectors of the country's economy were nationalized.

The features of Tanzanian nation-building influenced by Julius Nyerere can be summarized under three concepts *Uhuru*, *Umoja* and *Ujamaa*, which Nyerere viewed as vital elements to establish an equal, economically independent society. In the following years, his politics were punctuated by his efforts to implement these key concepts, which up to today continue to influence national, societal and political discourse in Tanzania.

To bring politics closer to the mainly rural Tanzanian population, the capital moved to the quiet, economically insignificant market town of Dodoma in the geographic center of Tanzania, which was seen as far more "African" (Pratt 1999: 148) than cosmopolitan Dar es Salaam. The same time, protests against Nyerere's policies arose. Until the end of the 1960s, resettlement to *Ujamaa* villages had been voluntary. But after it became apparent that fewer Tanzanians than anticipated were interested in making use of this option, the government started to move them by force. Using military force against civil society significantly destroyed people's faith in government and Nyerere personally, and until today these events constitute one of the main sources of criticism.

In the course of *Operation Tanzania*, which continued until 1976, about 70% of the country's rural population was moved, many of them by force (Askew 2002: 237). In the process, opponents to the new policies were persecuted and punished to a far greater extent than Nyerere's rhetoric of brotherhood and compromise would have suggested. Askew points out that Nyerere was openly frustrated by his countrymen's protests and reminded them about

their duty to participate in a successful implementation of *Ujamaa* (Askew 2002: 236 f.). By declaring collective freedom needed to be put above an individual's personal freedom, he justified his rigid proceedings as early as 1967 (Nyerere 1967: 305 ff.).

From the 1970s on, military conflicts in neighboring countries started to threaten the nation and interfere with domestic problems. In 1971 Uganda's government was overthrown and President Milton Obote fled to Dar es Salaam. Nyerere, who had closely cooperated with Obote and supported him in his *Move to the left*, did not recognize Idi Amin's new administration and broke off diplomatic relations with the neighboring country to the northwest. Following Amin's atrocities towards Uganda's population and Nyerere's refusal to recognize the UK and Israel-supported president, military interventions started to take place in the border region of Kagera in 1972. At the same time Nyerere had been alerted about a coup in his own country, which had foreseen former Foreign Minister Oscar Kambona as new head of state (Acheson-Brown 2001: 3; Shao: 09.12.2011).

After several armistice agreements, Kagera's annexation by the army of Uganda and the following capture of Uganda's capital Kampala by Tanzanian soldiers, the conflict ended six years later after Amin's escape to exile in Saudi Arabia. Although the military interventions, especially on Ugandan soil, had not been compatible with the law of nations which lead to controversies in the UN, the successful war against Idi Amin caused patriotic enthusiasm and an upswing in Nyerere's popularity as "saviour of the nation" (Field notes 18.01.2012). Today, the Kagera War is one of the most intensively remembered as well as glorified event in Tanzanian history. The fact that it was the Tanzanian army that brought about Idi Amin's downfall fuels national pride, especially since Amin had been condemned internationally as a dictator. Following the events in Uganda, Nyerere won the presidential election in 1980 despite a stagnating economy and huge debts with more than 93% of the votes as candidate for CCM, the party that had emanated from a fusion of TANU and his coalition partner Afro-Shirazi-Party (ASP) in Zanzibar. This election result was not as positive as those of 1965 and 1970, but Nyerere's authority did not seem to be as questionable as anticipated (Hofmeier 1981).

In the beginning of the 1980s, the poor condition of the country's economy could no longer be ignored. Agricultural production decreased after severe droughts, nationalized industries were disrupted due to lack of investment, national debts exploded, poverty and starvation increased, and medical supplies could not be obtained. Cranford Pratt summarizes the causes for Nyerere's political failure as following:

Few would now claim many of these socialist initiatives after 1967 were appropriate instruments for the development of a very poor country, especially not all at once [...]. The leadership-code irritated the political and governmental elite and was bypassed in a number of ways. Peasant farmers were resistant to communal farming on other than a token basis. The movement of rural peoples from their scattered holdings into villages alienated a great many. Many of the nationalized industries, the government had quickly to concede, could only be run by engaging international corporations to manage them under contracts that had to be negotiated by Tanzanians with little experience in international bargaining. [...] Indeed, by the late 1970s, Nyerere and TANU were themselves coming to recognize that many of these initiatives had proven inappropriate, indeed counter-productive to the accomplishment of their objectives. (Pratt 1999: 148 f.)

External aspects, such as the collapse of the East African Union in 1977, the second oil crisis in 1979/80 and national debt following the war against Idi Amin further destabilized the situation.⁸ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) forced Nyerere to distance himself from his policies in order to grant additional funds; with Nyerere refusing to follow the IMF's conditions, most international aid for Tanzania was cut off (Jackson & Rosberg 1982: 230). The hijacking of an Air Tanzania plane in February 1982, carried out in order to force the president to step down, emphasized the nationwide dissatisfaction with Nyerere's politics (Shao 16.11.2011). In 1984 Zanzibar's president and Nyerere's representative Aboud Jumbe stepped down citing a "polluted political climate" (Assensoh 1998: 124), and a few months later, Nyerere's Prime Minister Edward Sokoine was killed in a car accident (Assensoh 1998: 124). Because Sokoine had been appointed to investigate political corruption, the prevailing view is that he was assassinated for political reasons (Interview Mazrui 04.11.2011).

In 1985 Nyerere, who long had considered his politics as a "vaccination" (Nyerere 1977: 5) against the dangers of capitalism, accepted the necessary consequences and stepped down as president. Up until today, his withdrawal is associated with the strong declaration of intent *Ninang'atuka* (I am leaving for good). In his farewell speech to the Tanzanian people on November 4, 1985, he declared:

We have built a nation – together. [...] You, the people of Tanzania, acting together and individually, have built Tanzania into what it is – a proud, united and self-confident nation. I thank you all very much. [...] And the truth is that in praising me you have been praising your own judgement! For my chance to play the role I have played in our joint work has been the result of your decisions, and your actions in voting for me and loyally upholding our constitutional processes. There have always been a few people who have exercised their democratic right and voted against my leadership; but they too have taken part in the building of our country. [...] I thank you all for entrusting me with such a responsible and prominent part in our joint nation building work, and for continuing to give me your active support as I tried to fulfil your trust. (Nyerere 1985)

2.2 Moral authority

Nyerere's resignation after more than twenty years in office opened doors for political change. Contrary to the recommendation of Nyerere, who had planned to install his Prime Minister Salim Ahmed Salim as successor, Ali Hassan Mwinyi became Tanzania's second president. That same year, he was confirmed in national elections. Initially, Nyerere only took one step back and remained chairman of CCM until 1990. According to Southall, this move was taken to secure the union between Zanzibar and the mainland, a relationship which has not always been free from conflicts (Southall 2006: 241).

On the occasion of Nyerere's resignation, legislation had foreseen to amend the Constitution, in order to restrict stronger controls for the president's office. The initial liberties for an incumbent – such as the authority to proclaim a national state of emergency, to unrestrictedly detain suspects without granting them a trial, and to place any person in any function or position in the country's administration – were tailored for Julius Nyerere, who had wanted to implement *Ujamaa* with a firm hand. Although Nyerere approved of future restrictions to the office and especially supported the establishment of a control mechanism,

⁸ On the failure of *Ujamaa* in general: Ibhawoh & Dibua 2003, Pratt 1999, Ergas 1980, Schneider 2004.

the only measure was to limit the president's term of office to ten years (Southall 2006: 239). The omission of an effective framework to control misuse of the highest office in the country poses one of the biggest challenges for daily political life in Tanzania today (Interview Kawe 20.12.2011).

After one year in office, the new president reached an agreement with the IMF that guaranteed financial aid to the country if it was ready to open its economy. Michail Gorbatschow's policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* had drawn idealistic as well as financial support from socialist regimes all over the world, and with the end of the Cold War and increasing implications of globalization, reforms in Tanzania could no longer be avoided (Kweka 1995:75; Kaiser 1996: 228). By privatizing the economy, opening the country to foreign investment and allowing political pluralism, the government distanced itself from the political course the country had taken for more than twenty years (Askew 2006: 27). In 1992 the results of the Nyalali Commission, which sought to identify the population's positions towards a multi-party system, showed that only 21% of Tanzanian citizens approved of *vyama vingi*, political pluralism (Phillips 2010: 116). Nevertheless, the change of systems was constitutionally determined to provide that all political parties should be established free from any religious or ethnic guidance (Kaiser 1996: 234).

At the same time, neoliberal reforms increased corruption. Abolishing the *Leadership Code*, which had forbidden politicians to engage in the private sector, provoked many officials to improve their incomes by taking bribes. Kelly M. Askew points out Mwinyi's role as "overseer" of this process, which earned him the nickname *Mzee Ruksa*, Mr. Everything-goes (Askew 2006: 30). Today, corruption is a daily issue in Tanzania, and the myth of the country being free from it under Nyerere's administration becomes more important every day, regardless of the fact that Sokoine's investigations into political corruption during the 1980s indicated otherwise.

Following political reforms, the health and education sectors suffered drastic financial cuts, mainly to the disadvantage of the less wealthy. Along with the establishment of a national social and political union, Nyerere's main effort had been to provide education and medical care to all citizens. With the introduction of school fees as a result of the IMF's conditions in particular and a lack of teaching material in general, the number of children attending school sank drastically during the 1990s. In the last 25 years, the number of illiterate people in Tanzania has tripled (UNESCO 2014).

After his presidency, Julius Nyerere continued to support his nation and party as a public person. In 1990 he stepped down as CCM's chairman and assigned the post to President Mwinyi as he had planned. At the age of 68 and after more than forty years on Tanzania's political stage, *Mwalimu*, now a simple member of the party he founded, retired to his father's estate in Butiama-Mwitongo. Spending most of his time reading, writing books, meditating and gardening, he only occasionally became politically involved. As a pan-Africanist, he mediated peace talks in Arusha following the genocide in Burundi and Rwanda until his death.⁹ On a national level, his popularity as an elder statesman and moral authority increased, finally making him more respected than ever before (Fouéré 2014).

⁹ In 1999, he was succeeded by Nelson Mandela.

One of the main reasons for this development was his obvious alienation from his own party. A year after his resignation, during a reform of CCM's structure, he publicly criticized the lack of enthusiasm that had carried independence among members and leadership and declared that the party "had gone to sleep" (Southall 2006: 242). In this context, he approved of a multi-party system despite of Nyalali Commission's findings, hoping that competition would revive political discourse (Southall 2006: 243). Furthermore, he openly criticized his successor Mwinyi for his economic reforms, which had been introduced without adequate corruption-prevention measurements.

The last occasion on which Nyerere actively influenced national politics was in 1994 during the presidential primary elections, when he publicly endorsed Benjamin Mkapa, who went on to secure the presidency the following year. During the primaries Nyerere openly opposed the candidacy of Mkapa's closest rival Jakaya Kikwete, whom he viewed as too young, inexperienced and generally not suitable for the office (Interview Butaha 31.10.2011). The extent to which today's CCM has detached itself from its founder became obvious ten years later, when Mkapa's former contender was nominated for the presidency despite Nyerere's concerns. Jakaya Kikwete won the elections in 2005 and 2010 and is expected to govern until October 2015, according to Tanzania's constitution.

Nyerere did not live to witness these events. During a press conference in Dar es Salaam in 1997 he publicly considered leaving CCM to protest increasing corruption and low political morale (Interview Butaha 31.10.2011). Shortly after, he was diagnosed with leukemia and withdrew from the public sphere. In summer 1999 he was taken to London for treatment, where he died on October 14. The transfer of his remains to Tanzania turned into a nationwide event. Thousands of citizens paid their last respects to their founding father in Dar es Salaam's National Stadium. A thirty-day mourning period was announced and Nyerere's day of death declared a national holiday.

His death also evoked countless reactions on the international level. The UN General Assembly in New York paused for a minute's silence to pay its respects to "the conscience of Africa" (*BBC News* 14.10.1999). The African National Congress (ANC), South Africa's ruling party, honored the "giant amongst men" (Statement ANC 14.10.1999) with five days of national mourning to commemorate Nyerere's support for the ANC against Apartheid. "His support of liberation movements and his role as an elder statesman in Africa, but especially the moral rectitude for which he was equally famous, drew the praise of African leaders" (Onishi 14.10.1999). Zambia's Frederick Chiluba noted: "We've been robbed of a great leader" (*The Times of Zambia* 14.10.1999). While international media remembered Nyerere for his moral stance on the one hand and his socialist ideology on the other, remarkably the failure of Nyerere's policies was not at all discussed in Tanzania, "a silence that echoed loudly" (Askew 2006: 15). CCM commemorated its founding father as a pioneer of independence, warrantor of peace and moral authority who had secured national unity. In his address to the nation on October 14, 1999, President Benjamin Mkapa remembered Julius Nyerere's influence as following:

Mwalimu created the foundations of unity for our nation and struggled for it with all his strength. [...] *Mwalimu* gave this country fame and respect by leading national and international struggles to liberate the countries of southern Africa and making efforts to resolve political and military conflicts in independent neighbouring states. [...] Given this remarkable leadership record there will be some citizens who will fear

that the unity of the country will be jeopardized, that our nation will disintegrate and our relations with neighbouring countries will be affected. I beg you, citizens, to believe that *Mwalimu* succeeded in building a firm and strong foundation in all these areas. We, who inherited that unity and union, took an oath to make it everlasting and continuous. I beg you, citizens, to cooperate in paying deserved respects to the father of the nation by remaining committed to the legacy of his work, his service and his love. Comrade citizens, as we await the body of the father of the nation, I beg you to remain calm and to maintain our solidarity, brotherhood and love at this heavy and unique moment of grief facing our country. (*BBC News* 14.10.1999)

Benjamin Mkapa's obituary exemplifies the countless posthumous tributes to Julius Nyerere in Tanzania. In public perception, the image of his devotion for national unity and peace as well as his integrity have survived until today and have a significant influence on the nation's social cohesion. The following chapter will examine the manners in which this image was interpreted and reproduced during the celebrations of fifty years of Tanzanian independence in December 2011 and reflect on the festivities in general.

3. Fifty years of Tanzanian independence – under the banner of the *Baba wa Taifa*?

The annual Independence Day's celebrations have essentially followed the same protocol since 1961, their main part traditionally being a civil and military parade in Dar es Salaam's Uhuru-Stadium. That being said, this event is but the final act of a number of official rituals celebrated every year.

In 1961 the Nyerere administration created a national torch race for the celebrations of independence, by which national unity was to be presented symbolically. In the weeks before December 9 the *Mwenge wa Uhuru*, the Torch of Freedom, was carried through all provinces of Tanganyika-to-be. It was finally installed at the top of Mt Kilimanjaro, the highest point on the African continent, by Lieutenant Alexander G. Nyirenda, along with the country's new banner. At the same time Kilimanjaro's highest peak, formerly known as Kaiser-Wilhelm-Spitz during German colonial rule, was renamed Uhuru-Peak. This strong symbolic act of Tanganyika's enlightenment already had been announced by Nyerere years before independence during the constitutional assembly in Dar es Salaam in 1959:

We, the people of Tanganyika, would like to light a candle and put it on top of Mt Kilimanjaro which would shine beyond our borders, giving hope where there was despair, love where there was hate, and dignity where there was before only humiliation. (Nyerere 2009)

Historically speaking the torch was not a new symbolic gesture. In ancient Greece the Olympic Fire was ignited preceding the Olympic Truce. On the occasion of the Olympic Games 1936 in Berlin, the first torch race of modern Olympics was staged (Olympic Study Centre 2011: 2). In the US's national myth, flame and torch are common symbols for enlightenment, democracy and freedom (U.S. National Park Service 2012). Nyerere did not specifically refer to this symbolism's common examples, but we can assume he was acquainted with them.

In the context of Tanganyika's independence, the torch metaphor unites the core elements of Nyerere's philosophy: first of all, it is a symbol for *Uhuru*, national and personal freedom, as

well as for the enlightenment of the African continent through independence and progress. According to the Arusha-Declaration and Nyerere's principle "Education for self-reliance", true *kujitengemea* was only to be accomplished through learning and literacy (Nyerere 1967a). First and foremost, the flame and torch race are strong symbols for the idea of national unity, and as such directed internally as well as externally. Furthermore freedom, unity and brotherhood beyond Tanzanian borders were core principles of Nyerere's pan-Africanism, he himself not being the first to hope that his own country's independence would inspire similar developments in other nations in southern Africa still under colonial rule. When Ghana became independent in 1957, Kwame Nkrumah expressed the following during his speech at the midnight hour:

We are going to see that we create our own African personality and identity. We again re-dedicate ourselves in the struggle to emancipate other countries in Africa; for our independence is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of the African continent. (BBC News 14.09.2000)

Until today, igniting the Uhuru Torch at the peak of Mt. Kilimanjaro is one of the most prominent symbols for Tanzanian independence in collective memory; consequently, torch and flame are omnipresent. As a monument in *Mnazi Mmoja Grounds* in central Dar es Salaam, it marks the location where TANU was founded in 1954. Other monuments can be found on traffic roundabouts all over the country, it is displayed on the backside of Tanzanian Shilling coins, and is a common icon in government representation as well as advertisement. The national race introduced in 1961, today called the *Uhuru Torch Race*, is an essential element of the independence celebrations hosted each year during the weeks before the holiday.

On this occasion the *Mwenge wa Uhuru* is carried through all regions and provinces of the country on a yearly alternating route, accompanied by political representatives and the media. Its passage is often used to announce social or infrastructure projects – which rarely get beyond the planning stage after the torch has gone by, as many observe critically (Field notes 30.11.2011).

In 2011 the *Uhuru Torch Race* took a special route to commemorate the Golden Jubilee and ended, as in 1961, at the top of Mt Kilimanjaro (Interview Mbagha 17.12.2011). The reenactment's symbolic intention was strengthened by the participation of the same guide that had accompanied Lieutenant Nyirenda fifty years earlier, as well as fifty Tanzanian and British citizens who celebrated their fiftieth birthdays on December 9, 2011. The group of about 200 people was completed by representatives of Tanzanian companies that had financed the expedition¹⁰, journalists of national media institutions as well as Madaraka Nyerere, *Mwalimu's* youngest and most prominent child.¹¹

But the race's starting point was also chosen according to its associations. For the first time the *Mwenge wa Uhuru's* carriers departed from Butiama, Nyerere's home village and resting place, which since his death has been designated as a mandatory stop for the race. Most of the Nyerere family, including wife Maria, son Madaraka and daughter Rosemary, still lives

¹⁰ Among them were representatives of the Tanzania National Parks Association (TANAPA) and the Kilimanjaro Brewery (Interview Mbagha 17.12.2011).

¹¹ The movie „The Teacher's Country“ (2013) by Benjamin Leers on Tanzania after fifty years of Independence features Madaraka Nyerere on his trail to Uhuru Peak.

on the family estate, where Nyerere's mausoleum is located. Here, the family preserves his memory and organizes the official celebrations commemorating the *Baba wa Taifa's* passing each year on October 14. In 2011 this ceremony constituted the official beginning of the *Uhuru Torch Race* and thus the opening of the entire celebration. A similar connection had been made in 2007 in Ghana, where the Golden Jubilee celebrations were opened on the birth date of founding father Kwame Nkrumah (Lentz 2011a: 43).

The day-long event in Butiama began with a mass attended by members of the family, higher officials and dignitaries in the same church Nyerere had visited every day when staying in Butiama (Fouéré 2011: 3). Following the mass, the procession visited the mausoleum for prayer, and afterwards joined the crowds in Butiama's grounds to attend the closing ceremony featuring more than 600 school children from the region. Fouéré (2011) describes the elements of "theatrical nationhood" (Kruger 1992) depicted during the ceremony. Among interpreted scenes from national history were the igniting of the torch at Mt. Kilimanjaro in 1961, Nyerere's symbolic mixing of soils on the occasion of the Tanzanian union, and traditional life in Ujamaa-villages.

Later during the event, Tanzania's vice president Mohamed Gharib Bilal ignited the torch to open the official festivities marking fifty years of independence. Then, another torch installed on the top of a boulder on the Nyerere estate was ignited on the *Mwenge wa Uhuru*, to shine during the entire race and festivities, close to Nyerere's grave (Fouéré 2011).

By looking at the way those two holidays – Independence Day and Nyerere Day – were connected in 2011, a strong and systematic link between his memory and the representation of national narratives and symbols becomes apparent. For many Tanzanians, Butiama is synonymous with Nyerere. Here, he spent his final years gardening and passionately playing Bao¹², which makes the village a symbol for Nyerere as a "moral authority" (Interview Aziz 31.10.2011). As many high-ranking officials frequently visit Butiama, mostly to pay respects to Maria Nyerere and her husband's resting place, village and estate are strongly represented in the national media. Consequently, most Tanzanians have a distinct idea of how their President lived in Butiama, without ever being able to travel there.

Butiama is the center of Nyerere's commemoration, first, because of his mausoleum, and second, because the village is home to the National Mwalimu Nyerere Museum, run by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, where the founding father's official memory and representation are on display. Along with gifts Nyerere received during his presidency, a number of personal items as well as documents and pictures are exhibited, to illustrate and create *Mwalimu's* collective memory.

Among the numerous exhibits are Nyerere's well-worn watch, which he used during his entire presidency, as well as the plain, grey suit he wore to address party and people in the style of Mao Tse-Tung. Many such items create the image of an altruistic, modest president and simple, practical man who is much more interested in the well-being of his people than his personal gain. The Bao game from Nyerere's personal belongings, which gained some fame itself because guests to Butiama often had to join the former president for a round, suggests a similar narrative: Nyerere being an upright and patriotic statesman proud of his

¹² A traditional board game for two players, originating in Zanzibar.

country's heritage couldn't pass his leisure time with a more traditional game (Field notes 18.01.2012).

But the museum not only tells Nyerere's personal story, it plainly also displays the political influence he had on the country's history. Documents and pictures taken in the years before independence show a young, ambitious teacher, who just shortly before had been pressured by British officials to choose between teaching or politics (Crutcher 1968: 285), flying to the UN in New York in order to advocate for Tanzanian independence. There are very few mentions of fellow campaigners, even at the time TANU and CCM were established, it seems as though Nyerere freed his ten million countrymen from British colonial rule single-handedly. The *Mwenge wa Uhuru* from 1961 is displayed, too, along with black-and-white pictures of Nyerere proudly presenting it during the independence celebrations.

According to Fouéré, the opening of the celebrations to commemorate fifty years of independence in Nyerere's birthplace, above all on his memorial day, can be viewed as reduction of national history to his devotion, commitment and actions and thus the personification of the state – which in turn deeply influences the narratives of what is "Tanzanian" (Fouéré 2011: 4). Although the yearly commemorations honoring Nyerere are organized by his family (Fouéré 2011: 1), the Golden Jubilee's official staging was strongly influenced by Tanzania's political elite. The commemoration of Julius Nyerere is integrated into collective memory in a manner that connects Nyerere's legacy with Tanzanian nationhood, thus allowing everyone to identify with either.

3.1 Independence Day in Dar es Salaam

After kicking off the torch race in Butiama, the celebrations were shifted to the respective stops. One week before Independence Day, on December 1, 2011, the *Mwenge wa Uhuru* reached Dar es Salaam, where the flame's pompous but solemn reception in the Uhuru-Stadium, attended by the president, the mayor of Dar es Salaam and Nyerere's widow, offered a preview of the celebrations to come. More than 10.000 people, many of them government employees who did not only celebrate a day off on December 9, but also eight days earlier (Interview Millenzi 13.12.2011), joined the event. According to rumors, the government hired a group of claqueurs to motivate the crowds. In fact, both events were frequented by a number of supporters in blue t-shirts, printed with the incumbent president's portrait or the ruling party's logo, intoning patriotic songs and chants.

The ceremony was opened by a marching parade of students and boy scouts, who filed into the stadium for about an hour and later positioned themselves on the field. Since some of them collapsed in the midday heat, the children's involvement was later criticized (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011). Following the parade the *Mwenge wa Uhuru* was solemnly presented to the crowds on the back of a truck circling the stadium, until President Kikwete, who until then had followed the events from the stands, received the torch on a small podium in the middle of the field. He awarded medals of honor to those soldiers who had carried the torch so far, thanking them for their acts of merits. The final squadron then took over to take the *Mwenge wa Uhuru* to Mt. Kilimanjaro.

The main event of Tanzania's Golden Jubilee celebrations began on December 9 at midnight, with fireworks over three public grounds in Dar es Salaam. Two of them were open to the public, while the presidential office hosted a third event for invited guests in Mnazi Mmoja Grounds, the same city center garden where TANU had been founded. Next day's ceremonies

began around 9:30 with a reception of international representatives from fourteen countries as well as numerous national guests. By this point, the 18,000 seats in Uhuru-Stadium had already been occupied for hours, and most visitors had to watch the spectacle on screens in neighboring National Stadium. In total, an estimated 70,000 had come to watch the ceremony.

Following the events, the reception became a much-debated issue in the national media, as Tanzania's partners in the East African Union Kenya, Ruanda, Uganda and Burundi were not represented by their national presidents:

Tanzania's regional partners were represented by high-profile representatives, but their below-presidential ranks raised eyebrows, as observers feel that the top-most leaders should have attended in person as a demonstration of solidarity. Withholding the gesture has raised speculations, considering especially that [...] Tanzania was marking fifty long years of nationhood. Plus there has been nothing to suggest that any of the presidents in the neighbourhood have travelled abroad, or had been tied up by too hugely taxing domestic commitments, to spare a day off or two to give a close neighbour company at the latter's event. (Machira 11.12.2011)

The reception came to an end when President Jakaya Kikwete arrived, entering the stadium on the back of a pick-up. Joyously being greeted and cheered at by the blue-clad youngsters, he toured the stadium for several minutes before inspecting the honor guard while 21 cannon shots were fired.

The singing of the national anthem as well as the patriotic song *Nakupenda Tanzania*¹³ (I love you, Tanzania) marked the beginning of the military parade, which has been part of Tanzania's Independence Day celebrations since 1961 as a demonstration of sovereignty and defense abilities (Interview Mbwiliza 05.12.2011). For about two hours various divisions of Tanzania's armed forces marched the stadium and demonstrated "what it looks like when they're going to war" (Interview Millenzi 09.12.2011). The parade's highlight was when four jet fighters, flown in from their base in Morogoro 200 km away, circled above the stadium.

Afterwards 5,000 children and teenagers presented choreographies prepared in cooperation with Chinese instructors (Mkinga 12.12.2011; Interview Millenzi 09.12.2011). Finally, representatives of six provinces, among them Zanzibar, which alternate each year performed their musical and theatrical traditions. These shows are, according to a member of the planning committee, a new element of the Independence Day celebrations and were only added to the protocol a couple of years ago (Interview Millenzi 13.12.2011). While the ceremony used to last only an hour in the years after independence, including a short inspection followed by one of Nyerere's moralizing-motivating lectures, it recently converted into a day-long state reception involving thousands of soldiers, volunteers and school

¹³ Tanzania's national anthem *Mungu ibariki Afrika* (God bless Africa) is essentially based on the hymn *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica* written by South African Enoch Mankayi Sontonga in 1897. As an ANC hymn, it became a symbol of the anti-Apartheid movement and functions as national anthem in Zambia and in parts of South Africa until today. Zimbabwe and Namibia, too, used a version of the song as their anthem for decades. Consequently, it has a strong pan-African meaning, a fact which presumably influenced its designation as national anthem in Tanzania. At the same time, this status makes personal identification with a particular nation rather difficult, which is why the anthem is traditionally followed by the far more patriotic *Nakupenda Tanzania* (Interview Millenzi 13.12.2011).

children, “hand-picked to proportionally represent Tanzania” (*Tanzanian Affairs* 2012: 5) and requiring months of preparation (Interview Nyerere 10.12.2011; Interview Millenzi 13.12.2011).

The ceremony’s final event was President Kikwete’s address to the nation, which was not confirmed before the parade, as the celebration’s main purpose had been to entertain the crowds (Interview Millenzi 13.12.2011). In a short speech Tanzania’s President remembered Tanzania’s struggle for independence and the failures of the British colonial rule that had left the country in a desolate state. He reminded his listeners of the country’s “huge successes” achieved during the previous fifty years and called on Tanzanian citizens “not to lose [sic] hope” (Mugarula 10.12.2011), even and foremost in times of economic hardship. Tanzania was a developing country, Kikwete emphasized, but its citizens were coexisting in peace, security and sovereignty:

Tanzania is independent in its decisions [...] we have the right and ability to decide what is important and reject what does not benefit us [...] we choose who to collaborate with, and do not take orders from anyone. (Mugarula 10.12.2011)

Kikwete expressed Tanzania’s achievements of the last fifty years, mainly numerical, and quoted in detail how many schools, hospitals and kilometers of tarmac road had been constructed since independence. He commemorated Nyerere with the following words: “Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and his colleagues vowed to fight for our independence and help Tanzanians to climb out of poverty” (*Tanzanian Affairs* 2012: 6). With an optimistic though vague vision of a future Tanzania that will mainly tackle poverty, he concluded his speech after about ten minutes.

The ceremony that had cost approximately 64 bn Tanzanian Shillings (TSH) (ca €32 m) and the celebrations in general were followed by intense debates. *The Citizen* noted that the billions “sunk” (Mkinga 12.12.2011) to finance costly jet-fighter excursions and meaningless speeches would have been more reasonably invested in the construction of sixty kilometers of tarmac road, and asked: “Has *Uhuru* offered help for the needy?” (Mugarula 14.12.2011). It continues:

Some told the *Political Platform* that the pompous celebrations did not offer the people a ray of hope for overcoming political and socio-economic challenges they face. Others say the country deserved the treatment to the golden jubilee. The High Court of Tanzania advocate, Mr. Sylvanus Slylivand, said President Jakaya Kikwete failed in his brief speech to give a clear direction towards conquering challenges inflicting *wananchi* [en.: citizens] for five decades now. The government had spent billions of shillings on the celebration, which mainly focused on the past and the present, instead of grappling with challenges, which paint a gloomy picture for the country’s future. (Mugarula 14.12.2011)

In a special section called *Vox Pop* the paper also published statements of Tanzanian citizens on fifty years of independence, presenting a variety of critical aspects and opinions. One statement, however, encapsulates the overall sentiment: “It’s been a sweet and sour experience” (*The Citizen* 09.12.2011), as the section was titled on the date of the Golden Jubilee. Indeed the county had non-violently gained independence and managed to build a united nation almost free from ethnical conflicts, and with education policies that were already yielding results. But on the economic level many of the quoted citizens were

expecting tremendous challenges, which had to be tackled during the following fifty years of nationhood. The economic upswing expected after the reform of the political system had failed to appear, and the notion that nothing had changed for most Tanzanians was frequently expressed:

So for me exactly, I am not very happy with the fifty years, because they have brought nothing to me and my relatives back in my home-village in Mwanza, in the north-west of Tanzania. I also have the idea that for another fifty years, there will not be any power in my village. [...] Well, of course, I am also happy because I've been living peacefully, I got educated, though in a very difficult way. But otherwise, I don't have much to celebrate. (Interview Mzee Ndaki 10.11.2011)

I have nothing to feel proud of. Life for ordinary Tanzanians like me is very tough, I feel disserved by my leaders. Poverty is still rampant, but we have made some positive steps in eradicating ignorance. (*The Citizen* 09.12.2011)

As one of the poorest countries in the world, Tanzania today remains dependent on international aid from China and the West: "We rely on foreign aid although we have everything" (Interview Kawe 08.12.2011). To many Tanzanians, real independence should look different.

The current economic deficits are often associated with another issue, which poses not only a practical but also an ideological problem: endemic corruption.¹⁴ In the public sector, clientelism and bribery are daily business and have significant influence on the country's prosperity and development as well as on national and social cohesion. According to many, the catastrophic accidents involving overloaded ferries that claimed hundreds of people's lives just off the Tanzanian coast can be traced back to a "culture of corruption" (Interview Butaha 02.11.2011), as officials on the Dar es Salaam–Zanzibar line are accustomed to accepting bribes in order to ignore specifications on freight and the number of passengers. When a ferry operating between Zanzibar's two main islands sunk in September 2011, the 200 lives lost left a deep mark on the nation's state after fifty years of independence.

Extreme political corruption has been criticized by many Tanzanians since the political reforms in the beginning of 1990s, and is not only an economic problem but also a social one. Many fear that corruption promotes a class society, a "society in which the *haves* have become the *have mores* and the *have nots* have become the *nots*" (Interview Shigongo 16.12.2011). Above all, the fear of risking Nyerere's final stable legacy, the union between Zanzibar and the mainland, is increasing. On the streets of Dar es Salaam the union was not perceived as solid as national politicians tend to present it; on Zanzibar, too, separatist movements bespeak growing alienation between the union partners (Interview Aziz 31.10.2011; Interview Maembe 22.11.2011). In this context, demands for constitutional reforms are increasing, as the current Constitution does not foresee enough political power for either side of the union (Interview Kawe 20.12.2011).

During the fifty years of independence celebrations, it became apparent that the union's decreasing stability, corruption and the stagnating economy are mainly associated with one

¹⁴ For an overview on corruption and clientelism in Tanzania: Chêne, Marie (2009): "Overview of Corruption in Tanzania". <http://www.u4.no/publications/overview-of-corruption-in-tanzania/> 04.03.2009. Accessed 29.04.2015.

event in Tanzanian history: the political reshuffle of the 1990s. While many people promoted economic reforms after Nyerere's resignation, advocates for a capitalist economy in Tanzania have become rare. Although many middle-aged Tanzanians still remember *Ujamaa's* destitution, today's economic and political order is a cause for concern, too. Most Tanzanians are undecided on the systemic reform's actual benefits:

They say that one achievement is the change of the administrative system. They have said that Tanzania has succeeded to change from socialism to capitalism. [...] Is it an achievement to move from our typical socialism, which is our identity? Each nation has to have its own identity, and we as Tanzanians are identified with socialism. They say that the shift from socialism to capitalism is an achievement – I don't know! Socialism to me seems more Tanzanian than the capitalism, which is something new. So when you say, it's an achievement, I think it is a hot debate. (Leers 2013)

The idea that socialism constitutes an essential part of Tanzanian identity, as the ideology aligns very well with traditional African family structures, has often been referred to by Nyerere, as discussed in Chapter 2, and the image prevails. This, and the fact that many Tanzanians did not exactly profit from the introduction of a free market economy, has inspired a certain glorification of *Ujamaa*, socialism and its moral values. *The Citizen* remembered "with deep nostalgia" (Visram 09.12.2011) the national enthusiasm after the Arusha Declaration was signed in 1967 and emphasized its unifying effect. The notion that present-day Tanzania needed "ethical, patriotic and honest leadership" (Visram 09.12.2011) indicates that tendencies to romanticize Tanzanian socialism are mainly connected with the collective memory of Julius Nyerere.

Debates on the occasion of fifty years of independence in Tanzania have shown, that few people were in the mood for celebration; many regarded the jubilee with bitterness and resignation. While representatives of the government praised the accomplishments of the past decades, most Tanzanians were painfully aware of the challenges that lie ahead in order to achieve the visions of 1961.

This contrast was illustrated only a couple of days after the celebrations, when heavy rainfalls devastated the poorer quarters of Dar es Salaam and isolated Kariakoo, Tanzania's economic center and most populous area. Following the floods, the government was criticized for a lack of effective emergency management as well as public construction oversight, which critics attributed to endemic political corruption. Tanzania's fiftieth Independence Day was accompanied by many impressive images, but none could serve as a better metaphor for the country's condition as the image of flooded Kariakoo: "Look at this, people are living under water in Dar es Salaam, the capital city. This is Tanzania at fifty." (Interview Kawe 18.12.2011).

3.2 "What name do you hear everywhere?": Commemorating Nyerere

Contrary to previous anticipations, the memory of Julius Nyerere was not as prominently featured in the celebrations on December 9, 2011, as it was in Butiama two months before. In the few speeches and addresses, he was remembered along with his successors and other former political comrades who had taken part in the fight for independence. During the celebrations in the Uhuru-Stadium, his portrait was installed above the stands opposite the president's box, next to an image of Sheikh Amani Abeid Karume, Zanzibar's first president and Nyerere's partner in establishing the union. Regardless of the fact that Karume had not

been an actor on Tanzania's political stages at the time of independence, Professor Mbwiliza considered it adequate to commemorate both founding fathers on the occasion:

They say, we are celebrating fifty years of *Uhuru*. Now within the fifty years one of the greatest achievements is the Union between Zanzibar and Tanganyika. So it is in that context that you can speak of a period rather than a single event itself [...] If you say from here to fifty years, you have to bring in the effect of Karume, because there are other things that occurred and we are now able to celebrate them as a part of it. [...] we are celebrating a period and our achievements of a period of fifty years. (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011)

An official recognition of Nyerere's contributions for the nation was awarded the day before in the form of a medal of honor. Nyerere's widow, who usually appears as his official representative, accepted the award on her husband's behalf. The same honor was given to Nyerere's retired successors, Ali Hassan Mwinyi and Benjamin Mkapa. In the official politics of commemoration, Nyerere was placed as one hero out of many.

In the streets and off the official stages, however, Nyerere was everywhere. His portrait had been printed on *kangas*, traditional cloth, sometimes in an ensemble with his three successors, sometimes with national symbols such as Mt. Kilimanjaro, the *Mwenge wa Uhuru* or the national Coat of Arms. Shops had been selling these fabrics for weeks for 12,000 to 15,000 TSH (€6). Government representatives and civil servants had received special *kangas*¹⁵ with the celebration's official logo and a picture of the young Nyerere (Interview Millenzi 09.12.2011).

In the national media, Nyerere was the favorite topic during the weeks before December 9:

If you listen to the radio, if you read the newspaper, what you are going to see is that in the most recent among the heroes, of course you see one name coming up: "Things would not have been as bad as they are now if that man did not die. If that man was still alive, things would have never been as bad as they are now." So who is this? What name do you hear everywhere? If I stop by a bus station, I hear the name, if I read the newspaper, he is in there. (Interview Mbwiliza 05.12.2011)

On Independence Day, *Mwananchi* and *Daily News* printed a famous historical picture showing Nyerere sitting on his supporters' shoulders, holding a sign reading "Complete Independence 1961". The weekly paper *Raia Mwema* titled their special edition on fifty years of independence "Nani kama Nyerere?" (Who is like Nyerere?). *Mwananchi* published additional supplements in their daily edition from November on, which included reprints of historical articles, reports on contemporary Tanzania as well as a column titled *Nukuu za Mwalimu* (Mwalimu's quotations). In these excerpts from his speeches, Nyerere's justified his political decisions, promoted his ideas and commented on the nation's challenges and progress.

In its *Special Report: Tanzania@50*, the weekly paper *The East African* asked "Have Tanzanians kept faith with Nyerere's ideals?" (Gathara 12.12.2011), emphasizing that it is mainly Nyerere's political stance that has left its mark in the collective memory. The fact that his

¹⁵ Government representatives and civil servants had already been dressed in special *kangas* on the occasion of the Uhuru Torch's reception in Dar es Salaam a week before. Printed on them were Lieutenant Alexander Nyirenda igniting the torch on Mt. Kilimanjaro.

influence as president, the politics of *Ujamaa* and his political rigidity are regularly criticized does not conflict with his unifying quality:

Though his dream of lifelong learning for his people turned out to be just that – a dream [...]; and his economic policies proved to be disastrous for the nation, Mwalimu remains a reverend figure in the Tanzanian, and indeed global, political firmament. [...] His ideas, it seems, are set to continue to inspire the next generation of Tanzanians. (Gathara 12.12.2011)

Critical voices towards the founding father have never been uncommon but tend to become more and more cautious, even a bit apologetic:

He united us, he tried to make us come out as a single entity, where people love each other. We don't treat ourselves or others by means of religion or tribes or social classes. Of course I give him credit that he managed to keep us together. [...] But concerning development, he did almost nothing, because he concentrated more on politics than on things that could really bring about development to anybody. He put more efforts on politics, politicizing people with his socialist propaganda. (Interview Mzee Ndaki 10.11.2011)

In this context, comparisons between Tanzania and Kenya were employed frequently. Especially since many Tanzanians observe the effects of ethnic conflicts in a neighboring country, Nyerere's nation-building efforts and contributions to national unity and peace were praised highly:

Mwalimu did his best to unite the people regardless of color, tribe or religion. He made Kiswahili our national language, which boosted our solidarity. The government now has to control our national resources to benefit all. (*The Citizen* 09.12.2011)

Furthermore, his political and personal integrity, which in the eyes of many expressed itself in his recognition of political failure and resignation from office, is regarded very highly. Consequently, Tanzania's governing politicians are often judged according to standards of credibility set by an idealized Nyerere, which most of them cannot hold up in the public eye. The country's political elite was "not Nyerere-like" and were less concerned with the common good than their personal interests (*The Citizen* 09.12.2011):

I'd say, the only politician that I know of who was truly altruistic, who was really thinking about the people – even though his policies did not work, but no one would deny that he was a man of the people and that he really thought about Tanzanians and their problems – was the late Mwalimu Nyerere, rest in peace, but he was the last altruistic leader that we had. (Interview Kawe 20.12.2011)

It must be said that interview partners commonly referred to Nyerere as *Mwalimu*, whereas the title *Baba wa Taifa* was mostly used in official contexts. This points to a discrepancy between official and public commemoration, and is a good example of the artificial rhetoric employed by the Tanzanian government, which will further be analyzed in the following chapter.

During the celebrations of fifty years of independence in Tanzania, Nyerere's ongoing effect on his nation's cohesion and integration became quite obvious. For most Tanzanians, no other politician or public figure has left a deeper mark on the country's history:

We will never be again like we were during his time, because there is no leader of his kind. That is the message you get. And well, ok, we have new leaders coming in and out, they are voted for, but definitely they will not be like Mwalimu Nyerere. (Interview Mbwiliza 05.12.2011)

The fact that his personal commemoration was not prominently featured during the celebrations on December 9 does not significantly contradict with this observation. It rather suggests that the memory of Nyerere is one of the foundations on which Tanzanians base their commitment to the nation, which in turn allows this commitment's confirmation during the celebrations on Independence Day.

Furthermore, by looking at the opening of the celebrations in Butiama and the reenactment of symbolic events emphasizing Nyerere's ideals such as the torch race with Mt. Kilimanjaro as a final destination, it can be assumed that the CCM officials constituting the country's political elite are using their prominent (national and partisan) founding father for political aims. This aspect will be discussed in the following chapter.

4. "Reviving Mwalimu". The Nyerere Myth

The events in Butiama, and Nyerere's omnipresence in the media, are symptoms of an ongoing process in Tanzania which can be described as the founding father's "reviving" (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011). Fouéré pointed out "the return in the public sphere of a reconfigured version of Ujamaa as a set of moral principles embodied in the figure of the first president of Tanzania, Julius Kambarage Nyerere" (Fouéré 2014: 1) since the new millennium. It will be shown here that Nyerere's values, political life and legacy continue to significantly influence Schatzberg's *moral matrix of legitimate governance* in contemporary Tanzania. Nyerere's "return" in the form of an idealized national icon (Fouéré 2014) is based on a number of characterizations attributed to him by different political and societal stakeholders, which are to be discussed.

Generally the first president is referred to as *Mwalimu*, the teacher. As noted before, this nickname only partially reflects his actual profession; moreover, it relates to Nyerere's habit of moralizing and lecturing initially his fellow party members and later an entire nation on his political stance. After independence, *Mwalimu* became the nation's affectionate term for its president, which until today is positively perceived. Furthermore, a teacher's profession is highly regarded in Tanzania:

Teaching is making people aware of themselves. Teaching is sharpening people's brains. More important, teachers of that time were very much respected people, to whom the villagers could come because they trusted the teachers. [...] In teaching there is no cheating. (Leers 2013)

Nyerere's extensive, explanatory speeches illustrating his understanding of political morals, common good and national duties had become over the years an integral part of Tanzania's political landscape. Professor Mbwiliza remarked that "he took the slightest occasion to talk to the people, and this became expected." While doing so, he consistently presented his arguments in a simple and easy-to-follow manner. Nyerere's political rhetoric in the form of honest, radical and moralizing lectures heavily contrasts with Tanzania's current politicians' oratory, as became apparent during President Kikwete's speech on the occasion of December

9. Consequently, a Dar es Salaam-based journalist anticipated the following prior to the celebrations:

[Kikwete] will just tell us to be proud of what has been achieved, and that the ones who are criticising him are spoilers. He will give some examples of the national achievements since independence and then point at some future challenges, to slow down the opposition. (Interview Mazrui 04.11.2011)

This contrast regularly provokes polemic criticism. Regarding the extensive military parade staged by a general-turned-president, Professor Mbwiliza remarked, that “probably every one of our leaders knows very well where his strengths are” (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011), adding:

If there was a national holiday like that and he [Nyerere] decided not to speak, everyone would say, No, there is something wrong. How come we are gathered here together and our president decides not to speak, does it mean he doesn't have to tell us something? So he knew that people expect him to say something, they do not want to leave their homes to come and see him and watch him inspecting a military parade, if he doesn't even want to talk to them. So why should they go there? So he knew that they would at least expect a speech however short, at least for an hour or so. Then, everybody was happy saying, I was there, he said this, I heard it. (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011)

Since the 1960s the government has been publishing Nyerere's speeches, first as small booklets, later as anthologies. After his passing in 1999, records of his statements became an integral part of national television and radio broadcasts; the occasional lack of video is countered by the use of historical photographs from suitable contexts. The messages of these *wosia wa baba* (“Father's instructions”), mainly his pleas for peace and unity, are highly cherished in modern Tanzania; the continued omnipresence of these recordings, however, is viewed rather critically, as Philipps (2010) pointed out referring to interviews in Singida:

I hate the *wosia wa baba* – it makes me sick! Every day that stupid song. His messages are good, but he's dead! Why are we listening to the politics of someone's who's been dead for years? Let's talk about the politics of today! (Philipps 2010: 22)

A visit to the Tanzania National Museum reveals not only that Nyerere's messages have become a part of collective national memory, but also the way he conveyed them. The museum displays TANU's first car, an Austin Morris Limousine, in which Nyerere travelled Tanganyika during the 1950s to advocate independence. He is portrayed as itinerant preacher, a visualization he himself had later employed: “I should have been a preacher in a pulpit instead of the president of a republic” (Smith 1971: 42). Nyerere's altruistic modesty exhibited in the Mwalimu Nyerere Museum in Butiama can be seen as another example of this representation. During his presidency he regularly travelled the country and visited communities to convince people of his visions as directly as possible. International media such as the *New York Times*, too, compared Nyerere's leadership to the influence of a preacher “who used East Africa as a pulpit from which to spread his socialist philosophy worldwide” (Kaufmann 15.10.1999).

Nyerere's representation as a political priest and prophet is supported by the Catholic Church: in January 2006 initial intentions seeking to canonize the devout catholic were

declared. According to Fouéré the possibility of his sanctification is extremely important in the context of Nyerere's political instrumentalization: It would consolidate the Nyerere myth, whose spirituality and moral stance have become legendary. Moreover, the process contradicts Nyerere's openly demanded separation between church and state. Nyerere's elevation from the secular to the sacral realm "would definitely erase the historical, political, and intellectual context of the 1950s-80s that gave birth to the man and the values he defended, producing instead an utterly decontextualized moral figure" (Fouéré 2014: 10).

Nyerere's representations as teacher and preacher are examples for the concept of the "spiritual face of power" (Schatzberg 2001: 51) described by Schatzberg, who introduces this concept in reference to the set of religious and parental metaphors employed by Zaire's Mobutu to personally legitimize his political leadership (Schatzberg 2011: 51). Compared to leaders such as Mobutu or Ivory Coast's Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who had his portrait installed in an ensemble with Jesus and the Apostles in the *Cathedral of Notre Dame de la Paix* of Yamoussoukro, Nyerere's representation as a religious figure is limited.

Regardless, Jackson and Rosberg (1982) identified aspects that support the definition of Nyerere's leadership as *prophetic rule*. In the current practice, Nyerere's moral approach and *Ujamaa* as a state philosophy to establish a unified, independent and thriving nation appear like a religious manifest, which implies the radical transformation of the present as well as a new order (Jackson & Rosberg 1982: 182). By remembering Nyerere as a political prophet, Tanzania's citizens are turned into a group of religious believers, who can revert to a comprehensive set of rules and norms. The founding father's moral principles count as higher aims on which, if we follow Jackson and Rosberg, *prophetic rule* bases its legitimacy, and which justify drastic means to enforce these aims. Nyerere's willingness for sacrifices to achieve higher aims seems obvious when considering his hardline position on the resettlement of citizens in order to strengthen national unity (Nyerere 1967: 305 ff.). Furthermore, *prophetic rule* is less vulnerable to the consequences of drastic measures than to the recognition of actions that do not lead to the desired results. Nyerere, too, declared in 1985 that he was stepping down as president because he ultimately considered the Arusha Declaration as well as the *Ujamaa* to be economic and political failures (Nyerere 1985a).

The circumstances under which Nyerere left Tanzania's political stage are themselves an important contribution to the idealizing myth created around the figure of the first president. By admitting political failure and accepting the consequences, he has proven immense credibility and personal accountability in the eyes of many Tanzanian citizens. Also, he is generally considered as principled and incorruptible, which dissociates him from the current political elite:

What makes him admired is that he'd just say, I'm incorrupt and I want to lead my fellow colleagues. As a leader I enjoy certain privileges that my colleagues do not, and by the very nature of what I'm entrusted with why should I want to go beyond of these privileges? What is due to me, these privileges, is good because of the office I own. Now why should I fall into corruption? [...] His credibility is a challenge for everyone following Nyerere in the eyes of the people. (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011)

This perception of Nyerere as protector of integrity in the highest political office is strengthened by the critical attitude he himself had developed against his own party during

his final years. After resigning as CCM's chairman in 1990 he remained a regular but prominent member of the party and increasingly criticized the growing clientelism in the government as well as its moral and social consequences. At a press conference in the Kempinski Hotel Dar es Salaam in 1995, he accused Mwinyi's government of constitutional misconduct and called upon Tanzania's citizens to vote for a different party in the forthcoming elections:

This [corruption] would not only lead to collapse of the now-sensitive thirty-year-old union between the twin-islands of Zanzibar and Pemba und Tanzania mainland, but would also plunge the country into chaos. [... We need] a president able to correct the situation and put the country on the right track. [...] Tanzania is stinking with corruption. (Nyerere 1995)

In Nyerere's eyes, corruption and clientelism not only had economic consequences, but they would also influence social equality and national cohesion. With this stance on the state of the nation and his party's current role, he proved once more his rigidity concerning ethical values, which crucially influenced his perception as a moral authority (Interview Butaha 31.10.2011).

For many Tanzanians, Nyerere's political attitude, influenced as it was by strong moral values, is not only unique compared those of other national leaders, but it also stands out on an international level (Interview Aziz 31.10.2011). Many refer proudly to Tanzania's respected international reputation due to Nyerere's role:

So there are quite a number of areas where I personally credit Mwalimu. He elevated Tanzania to a very high position in the eyes of the international community. I myself went to the USA, and even people who didn't really know geography, once I mention Tanzania, secondary question was, Land of Nyerere? So the name became almost a synonym with the country. Very few leaders will achieve that status of national identification, your name being identified with the destiny of your country, it's very rare. (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011)

The image of Nyerere as a lecturing, preaching moral authority is being widened in recent years to include yet another aspect: in the commemoration of the Kagera War, Nyerere is represented as commander in chief. Especially in the media, Tanzania's successful war against Idi Amin and the dictator's following exile were frequently recalled and discussed on the occasion of fifty years of independence. The national television broadcast TBC1 aired numerous video clips showing Tanzanian troops during their sortie against the Ugandan army. Added to the pictures were suitable sections from the *wosia wa baba*, with Nyerere justifying his sending of troops despite his general efforts to counter the challenges peacefully. Additional comments emphasized Nyerere's unmatched commitment to national security and against Idi Amin's despotism, which ultimately prevented the Kagera region from being annexed by Uganda and made Nyerere the saviour of the Tanzanian people (Field notes 16.11.2011).

In the Mwalimu Nyerere Museum in Butiama, too, Nyerere's role in Tanzania's sole act of war is commemorated. The museum displays a number of gifts he received from local chiefs after the war had ended, thanking him, as commented in a brochure, for his "fearless commitment to save the nation" (Field notes 18.01.2011).

Julius Nyerere has been presented with many faces during the past fifty years of Tanzanian independence, which influence the collective commemoration of his person: he is a teacher and prophet, a moral authority and fearless commander. Since his death, however, especially in the official governmental narrative, a new title has been used to refer to Nyerere: *Baba wa Taifa*, Father of the Nation.

4.1 President as “Father of the Nation”, Party as “Father of the Government”? The political utilization of Nyerere

On October 14, 1999, President Benjamin Mkapa announced the passing of Julius Nyerere on national radio with the following words:

Dear citizens, it is with great sadness that I announce to you that our beloved father of the nation, Comrade Julius Kambarage Nyerere, is dead. Mwalimu died this morning at 10.30 Tanzanian time at St Thomas’s Hospital, London, where he had been undergoing treatment for leukaemia since 24th September. As our earlier statements have indicated, the condition of the father of the nation changed suddenly on Wednesday night, 30th September, and all his organs began to deteriorate. This caused the doctors to transfer him to the intensive care unit, where he passed away today. I know that the death of the father of the nation will shock and sadden all Tanzanians. Many will feel anxiety. (*BBC News* 14.10.1999)

A few days later, Nyerere’s body was transferred to Tanzania and laid in state in a temporary building on the grounds of the Uhuru-Stadium. Thousands of people paid their last respects to their first president, while black banners overhead stated “Kwa Heri Baba wa Taifa” – “Goodbye, Father of the Nation”. On October 23 the state funeral was held on the grounds of his estate in Butiama. The event was broadcast on national TV and radio, and an entire nation watched as Nyerere was buried next to his parents. Above his grave a mausoleum was erected, bearing an inscription above the entrance: “Mwl. J.K. Nyerere, Baba wa Taifa (Father of the Nation)”. The same line subtiles a common portrait of Nyerere in his 70s, which can be found on millions of walls in official buildings, shops and private homes all over the country.

Accordingly, the title “Father of the Nation” as reference to Julius Nyerere is omnipresent in his official representation. Schatzberg points out that Tanzanian media and government had not been supporting or initiating any personality cult during Nyerere’s lifetime, although family metaphors always were a part of the country’s political rhetoric – not least since *Ujamaa* was generally based on the assumption that Tanzanian socialism worked along the same social principles as a traditional extended family common in pre-colonial Tanzania. In the context of *Ujamaa*, Nyerere’s representation as a national father figure would have been self-evident. Effectively, family metaphors were employed rather to refer to the equality and unity of all Tanzanians, who were urged to consider each other as siblings, as indicated in the first article of TANU’s party statute: “I believe in the Human Brotherhood and the Unity of Africa” (Nyerere 1962b).

Consequently, and in contrast to other African leaders such as Ivory Coast’s Houphouët-Boigny, who had left behind an “orphaned” (N’Guessan 2015) nation after his death, Nyerere never presented himself as a national father figure. Neither did Tanzania’s founding father, in accord with the idea of all peoples’ equality, attempt to benefit politically from his ancestry (Crutcher 1968: 278).

After Nyerere resigned as chairman of CCM in 1990, the use of family metaphors and paternal imagery in the recollection of Nyerere's career became more frequent. Schatzberg quoted a radio broadcast discussing the transition in the party's highest office in 1990: "[Mwinyi] asked the leaders and all the Tanzanian people to give him every assistance so that he could steer the ship bequeathed to us by the father of the nation, Mwalimu Nyerere" (Schatzberg 2001: 12). Nyerere's elevation to the "Father of the Nation" implies the population's infantilization; when Mwinyi accepted his nomination for the presidency, he paid respects to his predecessor by thanking him for raising Tanzania "the way a parent brings up his or her children" (Tagalile 1985). According to Fouéré (2014), Nyerere's current mise-en-scene as an idealized Father of the Nation follows Memel-Fôte's typical three-step model:

His childhood and youth are explored in order to highlight premonitory signs of his future career: the even temper that would serve him well when confronted with the stresses and responsibilities of politics; his hard-working attitude that would later become socialist discipline; the generosity that augured his future commitment to equality and justice. His education is presented as an initiation rite he successfully overcame to enter the age of wisdom, and his decision to leave the classroom and join the liberation movement is interpreted as a turning point in his life, a kind of symbolical 'rebirth'. (Fouéré 2014: 9)

Strikingly, certain aspects of Nyerere's political influence are adapted to his representation as Father of the Nation. In the official narrative, *Ujamaa* and its violent manifestation are concealed in a "silence that echoes loudly" (Askew 2006: 15). *Ujamaa* and its violent realization are often considered as tyrannical aspects of his presidency (Interview Butaha 31.10.2011) and can be seen as characteristics of what Schatzberg defined as "chiefly rule" (Schatzberg 2001: 145 ff.). By not remembering Nyerere in the context of his socialist ideology but rather his contribution to national unity and peace as well as his personal commitment and integrity (Mwinyi n.y.; Mkapa n.y.), the myth of an ideal "benevolent father" (Schatzberg 2001:23) is significantly strengthened. Sometimes, certain aspects of *Ujamaa* are commemorated; but, as the events during the opening celebrations in Butiama indicated, the official representation is largely focused on nostalgic-romanticizing narratives rather than an ideologically critical reflection (Fouéré 2011: 5).

Interestingly, this representation is not only internally but also externally directed, which becomes evident when looking at the official, government-sponsored website honoring Nyerere's life, juliusnyerere.info. It includes an extensive number of historical documents, pictures, audio recordings, quotes and obituaries presenting an outstanding leader, and is available in six languages, four of which are European.

Nyerere's posthumous representation as national father figure constitutes, according to Schatzberg, one of the vital instruments of CCM's efforts to legitimize governance in a multi-party system. If Nyerere is "Father of the Nation", as Philipps pursues the idea, CCM can claim for itself the role of "Father of the Government" (Philipps 2010: 120). In particular President Jakaya Kikwete actively contributes to Nyerere's use as a tool to strengthen his own partisan and political legitimacy and bases his presidential authority on a "myth of maturity and of lineal descent from the national father – Nyerere – that has been woven around the political party that sponsors him" (Philipps 2010: 120).

While doing so, Philipps argues, the incumbent president is likely to try and counter two aspects that may lead the legitimacy of his governance to be questioned. Due to his young age and athletic appearance, many Tanzanians as well as the media often refer to Kikwete as *kijana*, the youngster. “He is not yet seen to be *mzee*, an elder whose age and experience mandates a certain kind of respect” (Philipps 2010: 119). According to Philipps, the implied lack of political and personal maturity is supposed to be countered by frequent references to Nyerere as Kikwete’s wise political mentor.

This narrative, in turn, is often challenged by the widespread rumour that Nyerere himself did not want the ambitious former general to be president at all. In fact, the founding father explicitly opposed Kikwete’s nomination in the 1995 presidential elections, stating he was too young (Ewald 2010: 229) and instead supporting Benjamin Mkapa. Kikwete’s first candidacy and Nyerere’s reaction became legendary; critics claim Nyerere suspected Kikwete was corrupt, and mocked the fact that Tanzania’s fourth president had to wait for Nyerere to die to pursue his political aims (Interviews Butaha 02.11.2011, Mazrui 04.11.2011).

Referring to Kikwete’s utilization of Nyerere to obtain political legitimacy, both Philipps (2010) and Fouéré (2014) recall an event marked by considerable political symbolism. During his election campaign in 2005, the president-to-be visited Nyerere’s widow Maria in Butiama, a common gesture by Tanzanian politicians paying tribute to their founding father. While little information on the meeting has been released to the public, one anecdote made it onto the news: Nyerere’s widow bestowed a Bible upon Kikwete, a Muslim from the Swahili coast. By accepting the Bible from *Mama Maria*, who, like her husband, is known to be a devout Catholic in a country populated by Christians and Moslems on equal terms, Kikwete demonstrated he cherished Nyerere’s ideals of religious and social equality and accepted them as his own. Maria Nyerere’s gift equalled a late blessing for Kikwete’s candidacy, which he had been denied just ten years earlier.

This encounter is a suitable example for the important part played by Nyerere’s widow, who since his death has served as his official representative. The Father of the Nation lives on in *Mama Maria Nyerere*, who is included in the logic of family metaphors in political realms. During the celebrations of fifty years of independence, she attended all important events, generally sitting next to First Lady Salma Kikwete. Maria Nyerere’s presence during public events illustrates Nyerere’s political use on two levels. First it suggests a close, mutual relationship between Nyerere and the current political elite; second, her being a replacement emphasizes the narrative of how much *Mwalimu* is “missed” (Mwinyi n.y.) by Tanzania as a nation. Thus Maria Nyerere, just like her husband, has become a political instrument.

Nyerere’s commemoration is not only used to derive legitimate governmental responsibility from a constructed political heritage; his beliefs and values are instrumentalized to win votes. During the 2010 presidential elections, CCM attacked the leading opposition party CHADEMA (Chama cha Demokrasi na Maendeleo) arguing that the Arusha-based organization would only represent the interests of ethnic groups in Northern Tanzania.

Political racism is a grave accusation for political organizations in a country where a multi-party system would only be tolerated if all parties would operate beyond ethnic or religious guidelines. “If you accuse someone of racism, people get scared” (Interview Mazrui 04.11.2011), since the fear of racism threatening social cohesion and national unity was always one of the key issues in Nyerere’s speeches. By confronting CHADEMA with racist

allegations, implying that the party disregards the founding father's ideas, CCM not only weakens its opponent's cause. At the same time, the former single political party presents itself as Nyerere's sole true heir, backing its credibility by an invented narrative (Interview Mazrui 04.11.2011).

The celebrations of fifty years of independence in Tanzania, too, must be seen in the context of Nyerere's political utilization to legitimize CCM leadership. The prelude in Butiama on the anniversary of Nyerere's death constituted an explicit, deeply symbolic reference of Tanzania's political elite to their founding father. By celebrating a mass in the very church "where the father of the nation used to come every day" (Fouéré 2013: 3), visiting his grave and opening one of the greatest commemorative events in Tanzanian history on his doorstep, CCM not only reduced national history to the personal commitment of one man (Fouéré 2011), but also once more emphasized the close relationship between nation, founding father and party.

Consequently, the main events in Dar es Salaam on December 9 were far less concerned with Nyerere's commemoration but rather focused on the achievements that Tanzania – and thus CCM – had accomplished in fifty years of sovereignty. During the openings in Butiama, Nyerere was presented as a national and partisan icon; on Independence Day CCM used this narrative to legitimize the party's leadership. The extended military parade, too, needs to be seen in this context:

It seems we're becoming more and more militaristic now. [...] everybody wants to demonstrate some kind of power and I think the military presence sets the message clear. Whoever commands the military commands a lot of power and authority. It's a symbolic demonstration of power and authority. (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011)

The situation in Tanzania is easily comparable to the celebrations of fifty years of independence one year earlier in Gabon and the exclusion of "Father of the Nation" Omar Bongo Ondimba, who had governed the country from 1967 until his death in 2009. In Gabon the Golden Jubilee was celebrated during the first year of the presidency of Ondimba's son Ali Bongo. Just like Nyerere, Omar Bongo Ondimba was barely mentioned during the official celebrations. Rather, the occasion was used to present Ali Bongo himself as the legitimate president. Gabon's incumbent would have had additional troubles referring to his biological father, since critics had already denounced dynastical infiltration into democracy preceding the celebrations (Fricke 2011: 148). As a consequence, after fifty years of independence, Gabon celebrated the coming of a new era under the leadership of a new president, who nonetheless can derive leadership claims from his special relationship with the country's history (Fricke 2011).

Not only CCM, however, but also Tanzania's opposition parties use narratives of the founding father for political aims. During the campaign of a smaller Arusha-based party, Nyerere's "reviving" turned real when an imitator appeared as his ghost:

[He] professed to have 'come from the dead' in order to 'put things straight' and 'apologize to Tanzanians' [...] 'Nyerere' regretted that he had made a grave mistake during the first Multiparty Elections in 1995 by assisting the ruling party in its path to victory, adding that 'he had come back' to warn the local people here not to repeat the same mistake. (*The Arusha Times* 31.07.2005)

Thus, oppositional parties use Nyerere as a political tool by presenting and interpreting his later critical stance towards his own party. Thereby, not only is CCM accused of generally dishonoring the very political ideals they claimed as their own by referring to Nyerere as spiritual guide. This also allows oppositional parties to present themselves as true heirs to the Father of the Nation's ideological legacy.

The process of political use of Nyerere, his wife and his political beliefs presented is a suitable example for Erdmann's informal ties of political parties in Tanzania: CCM bases its claims for governance on an official, self-created narrative of the "Father of the Nation", while opposition parties instrumentalize a differently focused image of Nyerere to justify their claims of political change. According to Erdmann, the informal, charismatic, neopatrimonial structure of Tanzanian parties in general suggests that the multi-party system has not yet been fully established and accepted (Erdmann 2002).

Nyerere's unique role is of immense significance for the former single party, since it is connected to a set of essential infrastructure, historical and not least financial advantages. The ruling party is actively using these advantages to strengthen their functionaries' political legitimacy, as became apparent in the use of Nyerere's idealized imagery on the discussed events in October and December 2011. Remarkably critics, too, use Nyerere to expose CCM's flaws in governing the nation. This leads to critical receptions of Nyerere's utilization by the ruling party to legitimize claims of the role of "Father of the Government", which will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.2 "Just another political tool?" Nyerere's role in today's Tanzania

As the studies of Erdmann (2002), Philipps (2010) and Fouéré (2014) have shown, Nyerere's mise-en-scene as "Father of the Nation" as well as his political use were part of several successful election campaigns that secured voters' sympathies for CCM in vast parts of society. During the research in 2011 and considering the results of the last few elections, it became apparent that Tanzania's ruling party does not enjoy the same level of popularity than it used to. The main reasons for this are extreme political corruption and the poor state of the economy, which is mainly attributed to political lapses by the ruling party over the last fifty years. First in foremost, high-ranking officials of CCM are accused of bad leadership in general, as pointed out by Nyerere's son Madaraka:

I think Tanzania has a potential to become prosperous. But there is a problem. When we became independent, we had I believe a committed group of leaders who were really serious about tackling the problems that Tanganyika was facing. Leaders have the responsibility to server their community, and not themselves. I believe that the current crop of leaders that we have – I won't say everyone – are leaders who have less interest about the development of the country then their own personal interest. (Leers 2013)

Furthermore, critics of the political elite often refer to Julius Nyerere and the political culture of the first years after independence, which creates an effect of its own:

It might not work in the best interest of people in the authorities if you continue reviving Mwalimu. It could have some boomerang effect because then what I fear seems to be happening: people are now judging our current leadership using the standards set by Mwalimu. (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011)

In Tanzania today, the image of legitimate governance is marked by Nyerere, his actions and values – or rather, by the narrative of Nyerere as benevolent Father of the Nation which, as has been shown, mainly has been created and supported by political beneficiaries. The Nyerere myth is a national political model for all future political actors: “They want you to respond in the way Mwalimu would have responded; they want their leaders to live like Mwalimu did.” (Interview Mbwiliza 20.12.2011)

Especially in informal contexts, comparisons between Nyerere and current members of the government are frequent. A neighbor in Dar es Salaam pointed out that Nyerere and his family had cherished the idea of equality and lived as “simple people” (Interview Aziz 31.10.2011) themselves, associating with presidential status mainly their own responsibilities towards the community without exploiting their privileges to their own advantage. Tanzania’s current corrupt political actors, in contrast, would consolidate social inequalities and thus jeopardize national unity (Interview Aziz 31.10.2011). While social equality is still considered often to be one of the main characteristics of Tanzanian society, some observe different tendencies:

Which is diminishing a bit is the equality amongst people. It’s a bit different now, but I can say, we still have it in a way. It doesn’t matter who you are, whether you’re the daughter of a president or not, you can just mingle with other people easily. (Interview Nyerere 10.12.2011)

Vitali Maembe, an artist and social activist who speaks out against corruption, criticizes: “Tanzania right now doesn’t belong to everybody, but to a small group of people” (Interview Maembe 22.11.2011). The reference to a “small group of people” is a common reference to Tanzania’s political elite, which largely constitutes also the social and financial elite and which, while elevating Nyerere as a national hero and claiming his political inheritance, has largely detached itself from its founder’s ideals (Interview Maembe 22.11.2011).

The issue of corruption is one of the most frequently discussed problems attributed to government and party failures, also because the image prevails that there would not have been any corruption in Tanzania during Nyerere’s presidency: “The word ‘rushwa’ [corruption] was something you had to look for in a dictionary” (Ndunguru 12.12.2011). Whether this assumption is true cannot be substantiated here, but evidence suggests that the narrative strengthens the Nyerere myth and allows critical comparisons. These are additionally backed by the founding father’s deep conviction of corruption being an essential threat to national unity. Furthermore, his much-praised simple lifestyle supports Nyerere’s idealization as a symbol of humility, integrity and honesty (Fouéré 2014: 9).

As a consequence, Tanzania’s economic condition as well as the state of the education sector and health system are common targets for critics, who identify a lack of political idealism as a cause of the social system’s inept condition. A Dar es Salaam-based member of CHADEMA points out the following:

Nyerere left this country when literacy was on 90-something percent, so literacy was actually higher than today, even with all the problems of Ujamaa, literacy was quite high. So how did he do it? How come kids are leaving primary school when they can’t read and write? Here are a lot of primary school kids running around, but our children can’t read and write, they finish primary and cannot read! That’s a shame for a country like

ours. How do you come from being 95 percent literate to a situation like that? So that means the guys who have been there since then, they were not serious. He already laid a base: you need educated people to move forward. When you have a country of dunderheads, you end up with people who can't think. And I think that is what they want: They want people not to be able to think, so that no one can question what they're doing. (Interview Kawe 20.12.2011)

Often, these critical comparisons are illustrated by metaphors of nurture and nourishment, as described by Schatzberg and Bayart. A journalist from Dar es Salaam complained that Tanzania's current social and economic condition was above all caused by politicians who "don't work for their country but for their stomachs" (Interview Mazrui 04.11.2011). In caricatures, established CCM parliamentarians are often depicted as corpulent, aged men, also physically contrasting with slender Nyerere (Schatzberg 2011: 170).

Schatzberg's and Bayart's analysis of nourishment metaphors can be extended to images of domiciles frequently employed in Tanzania's political rhetoric. Social activist Maembe criticized the country's political elite for "constructing the wrong buildings on good foundations" (Interview Maembe 22.11.2011), referring to the decline of social unity and equality following the emergence of neo-patrimonialism. Nyerere himself, who had bemoaned the nation's "fragile foundations" during a speech in 1995, had also employed similar metaphors in his address to the nation on the occasion of Tanganyika's independence in 1961:

[Independence] is like a plot of land you receive to construct a house on it. To obtain it is a well-deserved triumph, because one has fought for it. This house demands a lot of hard labour, even more enthusiasm and perseverance, but once built, we can achieve great things. (*Mwananchi* 09.12.2011)

Considering that the myth on which critics have based their complaints about the ruling party has been created by the people who in turn are now challenged by that very same myth, this leads us to an understanding of Professor Mwibiliza's idea of a "boomerang effect". Nyerere's party presents itself as its founding father's legitimate political representative, but in political practice has almost entirely detached itself from his values and ideals. Extreme political corruption, but also the poor condition of the nation's economy and health and education sector, and increasing social inequalities are political failures which a collectively commemorated Nyerere had always put at the top of the agenda.

The absence of the heads of states of Tanzania's partners in the East African Community (EAC) during the reception on December 9, too, was discussed from this perspective. Critics claim that Jakaya Kikwete was lacking commitment in the EAC because he would not chair the intergovernmental organization during his presidency according to its rules of rotation (Interview Maembe 22.11.2011). *The Citizen* presumed, that the absence of presidents Kagame, Museveni, Kibaki and Nkurunziza was meant to be a "silent demonstration of misgivings over [Tanzania's] hard-line position toward formation of the envisioned federation" (Machira 11.12.2011). Tanzania's incumbent president was betraying Nyerere's pan-African ideals politically as well as spiritually, and was boycotting an institution actively coined by Nyerere (Interview Maembe 22.11.2011).

In this context, also Nyerere's title of *Baba wa Taifa* is problematic for many Tanzanians. Not only had *Mwalimu* never advocated his own, symbolic or practical, exalting role in

Tanzanian society, but moreover the mere idea of one person outshining his fellow citizens fundamentally contradicted his egalitarian ideas (Interview Aziz 31.10.2011).

Thus, Tanzania's ruling party banks its claims for legitimate governance on a contradiction that couldn't remain unnoticed by the public, making the founding father's use "for political ends that Nyerere would never have pursued" (Phillips 2010: 122) a subject of harsh criticism. Phillips cites a blogger's comment on Kikwete visiting Maria Nyerere in Butiama:

JK [Kikwete] went to Butiama and was given a Bible by Mama Maria. This, we are told, is a symbol that he has been agreed upon by Mwalimu, so all of we Tanzanians should agree. This is just another political tool that we citizens have given CCM to rule our lives.... now, this is what we get, that every time there are problems in this country like now with electricity, medicine, they announce anything about Mwalimu and just like that, we citizens quiet down. (Phillips 2010: 122)

Whether the contrast between CCM's ruling and the values of its icon will in fact lead to a "boomerang effect" and eventual political change cannot be determined here and will be observable in the following years. What can be evaluated, however, is the important function of Julius Nyerere and his idealization in Tanzanian politics and society today:

A striking feature of the varied memories of Nyerere that circulate in Tanzanian society today is that they converge in a vision of Nyerere as a benchmark against which political leadership is being measured, producing imaginaries of morality rooted in standards associated with the past. In a country marked by an abandoned moral contract between the state and citizens, Nyerere and Ujamaa are employed as a language and repertoire of ideas, values, images, and metaphors to define, mediate, and construct conceptions of morality today and the meaning of Tanzanian-ness. (Fouéré 2014: 17 f)

Nyerere's ideals and political influence, but most of all the pervasive narrative of his private personality, serve as moral guidelines in Tanzanian politics; or, to again refer to Schatzberg, Nyerere's current idealized mythical image constitutes the country's *moral matrix of legitimate governance*. The founding father's official commemoration continues to support a powerful narrative of and principled and altruistic Father of the Nation who not only defined standards on political morals but ultimately on the nation itself and its identity. This does not necessarily imply political consent, since the idea of a political *matrix* allows different interpretations of and emphasis on its various aspects and facets. Secondly, nations also define themselves according to their internal debates and conflicts, and the public discourse on Nyerere's legitimate heritage only underlines his image's significance for national self-perception.

Here, it should be noted that this conclusion is drawn from mainly observing the political discourse on Tanzania mainland. As Fouéré (2013) points out, Nyerere's image and role are regarded and interpreted differently on the Zanzibar archipelago, where nostalgia of an independent island nation lives on. Here, Nyerere is often associated with an alleged unequal union and a new African colonization (Fouéré 2013). While Nyerere constitutes a benchmark for Tanzanian-ness on the mainland, he is rather considered as "récit de la nation zanzibari en negative" (Fouéré 2013), which in turn strengthens a specific Zanzibar identity. Thus, Nyerere's commemoration may seem like a characteristic of two alienated union partners consolidating regional identities. But since the union between islands and mainland

has never existed without strains and is marked by struggle between authority and sovereignty, the Nyerere myth continues to influence and shape the nation as a whole.

For the mainland, it can be noted that the use of paternal metaphors is relevant in a particular regard: it constitutes an important tool to legitimize CCM rule. Nyerere's official title is merely a political instrument, an assumption furthermore underlined by the rare use of the term "Father of the Nation" in unofficial contexts, where he is much more frequently referred to as *Mwalimu*. The fact that Tanzania's oldest party claims sole inheritance of Nyerere's legacy divides the political nation.

This indicates, however, that the Nyerere myth through its instrumentalization exerts a unifying influence at the same time: Nyerere's common image significantly strengthens national identity, as it allows all actors of the political realm to adopt it as their icon and interpret it accordingly. Like all national symbols, his image provides room for different interpretations (Lentz 2013). Through his mise-en-scene for political aims as well as related criticism, Nyerere has become point of reference for those relating to a Tanzanian "Wir-Gruppe" (Elwert 1989). Thus, Nyerere not only influenced the country's "national imaginaries" as incumbent president; his current commemorative use as well as criticism targeted towards this process based on values and norms accepted as advocated by the founding father rather continue to contribute to their (re-)production until today.

5. Conclusion

They know he cared for his people, he was able, he was a charismatic leader, a statesman who could really speak and talk and convince people. He was intelligent, a debater. He made some mistakes, but he was sincere in whatever he wanted to do. (Mbogo 29.11.2011)

This evaluation by Professor Mbogo from Dar es Salaam's Open University clearly sums up the relevant aspects dominating Julius Nyerere's representation in contemporary Tanzania. As the presented paper has shown, the founding father is commemorated today as a dogmatic but benevolent and honest idealized public figure, whose influence on debates on politics, morals and identity has not decreased since his passing fifteen years ago.

Considering the country's political failures since independence and the reasons for his resigning as president, this positive view on Julius Nyerere is at least to some extent surprising. In 1961 he had led the country towards independence, and during its first decades of sovereignty decisively helped to shape the vision of Tanzania as a free and unified nation. The ideal of *Umoja*, unity, became national a leitmotiv that Nyerere succeeded to politically enforce by introducing Kiswahili as the national language and establishing the geopolitical union between Tanganyika and the islands of Zanzibar. Propagating his vision of unity beyond Tanzania's national borders, he marked the independence celebrations in 1961 with pan-African symbolism: igniting the "Torch of Freedom" on Africa's highest peak illustrated the enlightenment of an entire continent by freedom, national identity and brotherhood. Until today the *Uhuru Torch* is carried through all of Tanzania's provinces in the weeks before Independence Day to commemorate Nyerere's values. Thus, the reenactment of climbing Kilimanjaro on the occasion of fifty years of independence proved as one of the most striking references to Tanzania's first president in December 2011.

Furthermore, Nyerere shaped the country with his socialist doctrine of *Ujamaa* justified by structural similarities between the traditional African extended family and socialist order. While the more idealist aspects of *Ujamaa* have been met with approval by many Tanzanians since their official implementation in 1967, its practical, economic guidelines challenged the nation. With the failure of *Ujamaa* becoming apparent during the 1970s, Nyerere fell out of favor with his previous national and international supporters, and resigned in 1985.

This paper has shown that Nyerere's current status as a national icon largely traces back to his instrumentalization in the political context. The country's political elite, namely the former single party CCM, presents Nyerere in collective commemoration as "Father of the Nation", suggesting their own legitimate claim for governance as representatives of Nyerere's political legacy. This "return" demonstrates itself by an idealization of his political influence as well as the production of his image as symbol for humility, political integrity and national unity. The fact that Tanzania's celebrations of fifty years of independence were opened in Nyerere's birthplace on the national holiday commemorating his death is an illustrative example of his political utilization. Not only did the ruling party organizing the event directly refer to its national and partisan founding father, but the nation's history of the preceding fifty years was presented as the outcome of a single man's impact.

Consequently, concerning the logic of his political use, Nyerere was not prominently featured two months later during the events in Dar es Salaam commemorating the actual Independence Day, which largely focused on national achievements of the previous fifty years. The country's successes are interpreted as successes of Nyerere's party due to historic reasons, resulting in the implied celebration of CCM's contributions on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee.

In the media as well as in informal discourses, the country's achievements were reviewed rather critically compared to the government's narrative. Critics denounced the poor state of the economy and large-scale corruption. Their allegations were underlined by heavy floods following Independence Day, illustrating the consequences of a dysfunctional political system. A so-called "small group of people" leading and exploiting the country for their own benefit has become synonymous with kleptocracy and social inequality, heavily contrasting with Nyerere's collectively commemorated image.

In this context, the narrative of an incorruptible Nyerere is especially relevant. It exemplifies the general reference to Nyerere's values commonly employed when CCM and government are criticized. Consequently, politicians and CCM officials are expected to tackle political challenges "the way Mwalimu would have" (Interview Mwbiliza 20.12.2011), revealing that the creation of a Nyerere myth to strengthen political legitimacy has also negative effects for its beneficiaries. The discrepancy between a collectively commemorated Nyerere's ideals and political reality mainly shaped by CCM does has become apparent to more and more Tanzanians.

This shows that Nyerere's "return [...] as a set of moral principles" (Fouéré 2014: 1) took place in two reciprocal processes, the first being the creation of a Nyerere myth to legitimize CCM political rule. Second, the critical reaction towards the founding father's political use based on the very same myth now contributes to his reemerging importance in Tanzanian politics. Few discourses on politics and morals in Tanzania are led without reference to

Mwalimu, and the “boomerang effect” expected from Nyerere’s instrumentalization could have a major impact on the country’s political landscape in the coming years.

This paper has illustrated Nyerere’s considerable importance in collective and personal memory in Tanzania today. An idealized, politically revived president has become a benchmark – be it, as on Zanzibar, antipodal – to evaluate political decisions and developments, thus constituting the base of what Schatzberg introduced as *moral matrix of legitimate governance*. In modern Tanzania the commemoration of Julius Nyerere is central to political discourse on legitimacy and identity, allowing everyone to interpret and construct their national icon accordingly. Nyerere, who had committed his life to building a Tanzanian nation, thereby continues to contribute to its preservation. Ultimately, this is what unified the nation on its Golden Jubilee: “We Tanzanians are tied together by Mwalimu” (Interview Aziz 31.10.2011).

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