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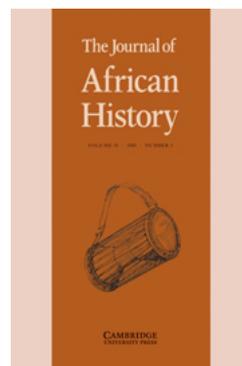
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MILITANTS, MOTHERS, AND THE NATIONAL FAMILY: UJAMAA, GENDER, AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN POSTCOLONIAL TANZANIA

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MILITANTS, MOTHERS, AND THE NATIONAL
FAMILY: *UJAMAA*, GENDER, AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT IN POSTCOLONIAL TANZANIA*

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ABSTRACT: Between 1964 and 1975, development politics in Tanzania came to be organized around a version of *ujamaa* that normalized distinct gender roles and celebrated a generic ideal of the nuclear family. Yet as *ujamaa* villagization unfolded on the ground in the south-eastern region of Mtwara, rural people's practices rarely conformed to the ideas about gender and family implicit in official discourse and policy. Just as the institution of the family on the ground proved to be a complicated and fractured one, the Tanzanian state's understanding of familyhood and the larger project of *ujamaa* were deeply riddled with internal tensions.

KEY WORDS: Tanzania, postcolonial, family, gender, development.

THE categories of gender and family were at the center of development politics in Tanzania between 1964 and 1975. In 1967, President Julius Nyerere inaugurated the era of *ujamaa* in his Arusha Declaration, outlining the principles of self-reliance and security that were to anchor national development. In theory, *ujamaa* sought to eliminate material and ideological distinctions and compress physical distances between Tanzanian citizens through an ambitious program of socialist villagization. In practice, however, *ujamaa* differentiated between the roles of men and women within a larger structure of national familyhood. Nyerere and other leading officials encouraged a vanguard of young male militants to lead a revolution in the countryside; these youths were instructed to enforce operations to create self-reliant *ujamaa* villages and defend the nation against imperialist infiltration and domestic sedition. Simultaneously, the Tanzanian state exhorted rural women to police the domestic sphere and protect the welfare of nuclear families that came to form the foundational units of the demographical reordering sought by villagization. As militants and mothers, these men and women were implicated in contests for power on both an international and a national stage while they were charged with carrying forward Tanzania's developmental mission.

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From its inception, the *ujamaa* formulation was riddled with a set of central contradictions, unfolding as a patriarchal national development project even though Nyerere intended it to catalyze a truly collective and democratic transformation of social, political, and economic life in Tanzania. Conceptually, *ujamaa*'s valorization of self-reliance accommodated both a humanistic universalism and a particularistic idealization of the indigenous and self-contained; similarly, *ujamaa* emphasized an understanding of security that alternately referred to the political stability of its leadership and to the material well-being of its rural citizens. At the level of national discourse, these tensions conformed to a set of broader tendencies of nationalist formations, and manifested themselves most strikingly with regard to matters of gender and family. In the realm of state practice, the ambivalent, gendered trajectory of *ujamaa* was shaped by Tanzania's colonial history and its sustained embeddedness within international capitalist and developmental economies, as well as by the larger global dynamics of the Cold War and decolonization. Meanwhile, on the ground the categories of self-reliance and security resonated with the concerns of rural people in ways that often diverged from the agenda of Tanzanian leaders. In areas such as the southeastern region of Mtwara, the targets of villagization policy – men and women in the countryside – attempted to engage with the internally fractured *ujamaa* project in ways that maximized their own self-interest. Though national development policy came to emphasize the nuclear family as a natural and enduring institution, individuals in Mtwara often approached family as a contingent social resource and survival strategy, and formed and dissolved marital and kinship alliances in order to achieve their own versions of self-reliance and security.

GENDER, FAMILY, AND *UJAMA*A

Ujamaa meant, literally, familyhood,¹ and legitimated itself by invoking an idealized construction of traditional African forms of kinship and extended family – one that emphasized reciprocity, collective effort, and an open version of community. On the one hand, *ujamaa* thus registered a type of familyhood characterized by connection and fluidity. In his first description of *ujamaa*, Nyerere explained that 'tribal socialism' was to form the basis of national development, since 'the foundation, and the objective, of African socialism is the extended family'.² On the other hand, a very different model of familyhood vis-à-vis local practices was embedded within the spatial imaginary of *ujamaa* villagization, particularly in the form that it came to assume in the 1970s. Although Nyerere appealed to a romanticized version of African tradition to guide Tanzanian development, *ujamaa* sought to transform rural forms of social organization, rather than merely restore them to a putatively original condition. While Nyerere's proposal began as an open-ended call for collective, voluntary experimentation with communal living

¹ The Swahili word for kin is *jamaa*; thus *ujamaa* means kinship-ness, or familyhood.

² J. Nyerere, 'Ujamaa: the basis of African socialism' (published as a Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) pamphlet in April 1962), in J. Nyerere, *Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism* (Dar es Salaam, 1968), 11.

and laboring, it morphed into a compulsory drive that solely emphasized the topographical reordering of the countryside, or resettlement.³

In this later version, villagization came to be organized according to the bounded social unit of the individual household rather than the extended kin group; under the terms of Operation *Vijiji*, state officials were to oversee the creation of *ujamaa* villages consisting of a minimum of 250 households (*kaya*) per village. Communal agriculture was to operate through the division of villages into ten-cell units, each composed of ten *kaya*, whose representatives were to labor alongside one another on the village's communal farm. Although the exact details of the geographical regulations and layout of these villages were murky at the level of national policy, many local officials organized new settlements according to a symmetrical grid in which the households making up ten-cell units resided in identical structures along a single linear 'street'. Nothing could be less traditional than this map of the standard *ujamaa* village.⁴ The coexistence of two divergent models of familyhood within the *ujamaa* formulation was evidenced in the gulf between the ideal of a decentralized rural development project emphasizing socialist community rather than biological kinship and the reality of a state-directed policy premised on the contiguous grouping of discrete, rigidly organized nuclear families.

In forging this contradictory gendered developmental vision, Tanzanian officials drew upon colonial state approaches as well as responded to early postcolonial circumstances. The demographic category of young men particularly preoccupied both colonial and postcolonial officials in Tanzania. During and after the Second World War, a series of labor strikes throughout the continent demonstrated the disruptive potential of a floating, economically insecure, and politically marginalized male population, and British policy in Africa adapted to control this phenomenon. Guided by the new goal of 'stabilization', throughout the 1940s and 1950s state officials sought to improve working conditions, infrastructure, and services for employed men and their families in urban spaces.⁵ Stabilization as a social ideal and political strategy was driven by a faith in the salutary effects of rooted, durable nuclear families in cities, as well as by a fear of the dissolution of 'traditional' kinship structures in the countryside. By providing an African urban male workforce with increased salaries and access to permanent housing and other services, colonial officials implicitly normalized a bourgeois, monogamous nuclear family structure. Within this formulation, employed men worked as

³ Villagization between 1967 and 1972 was voluntary and emphasized socialist transformation. After 1973 – under Operation *Vijiji* – resettlement became compulsory, and the goal of achieving true *ujamaa* was eclipsed by the more immediate priority of merely achieving mass relocation to concentrated rural settlements.

⁴ On the spatial organization of villages, see J. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, 1998); L. Schneider, 'High on modernity? Explaining the failings of Tanzanian villagisation', *African Studies*, 66:1 (2007), 9–38.

⁵ F. Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge, 1996).

the breadwinners for individual households, while women performed the reproductive labor of homemakers.⁶

Thus, in the postwar era colonial policy shifted towards making the city a favorable home for 'modern' nuclear families. The colonial Department of Social Welfare opened a number of community centers throughout Tanganyika to assist with the re-integration of Second World War veterans into local life, and to organize classes and activities to structure the leisure time of idle young men.⁷ Meanwhile, female Social Welfare officers and volunteer members of the Tanganyika Council of Women schooled women in domestic responsibilities.⁸ Seminars and trainings based in community centers across the country (even in small towns such as Mtwara) offered instruction in home economics, and were organized according to the logic that women were the key developmental agents, since they were responsible for domestic maintenance and 'higher standards of living depend[ed] on better conditions in the home'.⁹

In a city such as Dar es Salaam, where a rapid influx of youth migration after 1940 led officials to fear imminent chaos, the corollary of state urban social welfare interventions in the name of stabilization was a series of regular attempts at 'repatriating' unemployed men to the countryside.¹⁰ In the 1940s and 1950s, conflict between young men and their elders became particularly pronounced in Tanzania, as across much of Africa, as older economies of power articulated with the shifting political landscape of the capitalist colonial economy.¹¹ Nationalist parties gaining momentum across the continent in the 1950s recognized that young men could either challenge the emerging authority of anti-colonial leaders and institutions or, if managed properly, become loyal revolutionaries. Unlike colonial officials, the leaders of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) had long acknowledged the productive as well as the destructive potential of young male restlessness. Like other nationalist parties elsewhere in Africa, TANU created a Youth League (the TANU Youth League, or TYL) whose role was to encourage and absorb young male political participation but also, and most significantly, to perform policing duties aimed

⁶ On the 'breadwinner' concept see L. Lindsay, *Working with Gender: Wage Labor and Social Change in Southwestern Nigeria* (Portsmouth, NH, 2003).

⁷ A. Eckert, 'Regulating the social: social security, social welfare and the state in late colonial Tanzania', *Journal of African History*, 45:3 (2004), 477.

⁸ The Council was run primarily by the wives of colonial officials: see S. Geiger, *TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-1965* (Portsmouth, NH, 1997), 29-30.

⁹ Tanzania National Archives (TNA) 5/S.D.47/30, 'Social Development Department: memorandum on UNICEF aid for the development of the women's club movement in Tanganyika', n.d. [Dec. 1957], cited in Eckert, 'Regulating the social', 479.

¹⁰ J. Brennan, 'Youth, the TANU Youth League, and managed vigilantism in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania 1925-1973', *Africa*, 76:2 (2006), 221-46; A. Burton, 'The haven of peace purged: tackling the undesirable and unproductive poor in Dar es Salaam, ca. 1950s-1980s', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 40:1 (2007), 119-51.

¹¹ F. Cooper, 'Possibility and constraint: African independence in historical perspective', *Journal of African History*, 49:2 (2008), 194.

at protecting the security of the party.¹² This practice of harnessing young men towards the defense of TANU hegemony continued in the years after independence, during which the cause of national security became paramount.

The mutiny of the Tanganyika Rifles and armed forces across East Africa in the wake of the Zanzibar Revolution in January 1964 led to a persistent official reluctance to permit the army a monopoly on force and defense, particularly given the very real threat of Western or imperialist infiltration.¹³ The immediate state response was to form a new army (the Tanzania People's Defence Forces) later that year, composed mostly of TYL recruits and National Service volunteers – youth trained to organize 'nation-building' work¹⁴ and serve as military reinforcements in the national volunteer corps established in 1963.¹⁵ The following year, the Tanzanian government also created a new paramilitary force, the *Jeshi la Mgambo*, or People's Militia, which was, like the TYL, attached to TANU. Though meant to be a reserve army, the People's Militia, like other security institutions, attained an expanded role over the course of the 1960s. In particular, the Militia and the Youth League took on an especially visible developmental function in loosely coordinated policing campaigns throughout the country, and eventually in the villagization initiative that anchored *ujamaa*. Yet the developmental and defense dimensions of these paramilitary organizations were tightly connected in both theory and practice, just as rural development at the local level and Tanzanian security at the international level overlapped in the imagination and experience of TANU officials.

Though the Arusha Declaration highlighted agricultural labor as the foundation of national development, official statements just months after the Declaration revealed that the utility of young men as revolutionary vanguards lay as much in their capacity to police as in their ability to produce. At the 1967 meeting of the TYL General Council, Second Vice-President Rashidi Kawawa stressed the imminence of imperialist threats to Tanzanian sovereignty and the importance of a loyal volunteer reserve army, announcing that 'the Government is to establish an armed TANU Youth League unit to strengthen the defence of the country' and that 'contingents of the youth's armed unit will be stationed in many parts of the country'. He explained that 'Tanzania could not be defended by paid troops' and maintained that therefore 'members of TYL should participate actively in the defence of the country' since 'it is the youths who will bring

¹² The functions of TYL ranged from recruiting party members to policing rallies and stifling opposition parties. TYL 'security' work continued even after the victory of TANU had been assured, mutating into a series of vigilante movements that extended across the colony by the time of independence (see Brennan, 'Youth').

¹³ P. Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976* (Chapel Hill, 2002).

¹⁴ On 'nation-building' projects see M. Jennings, "'A very real war": popular participation in development in Tanzania during the 1950s and 1960s', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 40:1 (2007), 71–95.

¹⁵ The TYL was closely affiliated with the National Service, comprising a feeder for the officially gender-neutral but actually male-dominated institution.

socialism'.¹⁶ At a youth rally in the National Stadium early in 1968, Nyerere proclaimed that 'the youths in all the regions of the country must carry forward the nation's revolution. In this task you have two important weapons – the plough for better and higher production, and the gun for the defence of the nation.'¹⁷ Late in 1973, after the announcement of Operation *Vijiji*, the state paper reported that:

Mr. Kawawa told a parade in Dar es Salaam that every Tanzanian should feel his life is not complete without militia training ... TANU and the Government are committed to making a soldier of every able-bodied person in Tanzania and it is now upon every individual to seize the opportunity of taking militia training wherever possible within the limits of national resources. Nothing but good can come out of the Militia.¹⁸

The decentralization of security work led to a militarization of young Tanzanian men and thus gendered the implementation of a developmental formulation already saturated with a language and imaginary of war.¹⁹ For while in theory under *ujamaa* every Tanzanian, male and female, was to be a 'soldier', in practice, policing, physical defense work, and the enforcement of Operation *Vijiji* were implicitly coded as male responsibilities. Though in its extreme form the official call for collective militarization included women, it was always clear that the true female soldier of *ujamaa* socialism was the devoted mother, both of her own children and by extension of the nation as a whole. The following 1972 editorial sums up the expectations of women within national development discourse:

The women of Tanzania can do much more by participating in the building of socialism as well as rearing and bringing up a robust intelligent nation. For let it not be forgotten that the women of this country are both nation builders and mothers. As nation builders, they must work shoulder to shoulder with their menfolk in building the new Tanzania to which all of us aspire. As mothers, they must take care of the nation.²⁰

The colonial understanding of women as custodians of social welfare also infused *ujamaa* discourse and policy; if, in the 1960s and early 1970s, young men were the guardians of Tanzanian national security, women were to be the guardians of the food security and well-being of their families. Developmental interventions targeting Tanzanian women across the country during the 1960s and early 1970s were overseen by the institutional equivalent of the colonial Social Welfare Department – the Community Development Division²¹ – and the women's organization of TANU. Beginning in 1955, female participation in nationalist politics had largely

¹⁶ 'TANU youth to be armed: Kawawa opens TYL General Council', *The Nationalist*, 26 Sept. 1967. *The Nationalist* was one of four daily newspapers in Tanzania until the press was fully nationalized in 1972, after which it was replaced by the state-run *Daily News*. *The Nationalist*, along with *Uhuru*, its Swahili-language counterpart, was owned and operated by TANU.

¹⁷ 'Plough and gun your weapons, Mwalimu tells youths', *The Nationalist*, 6 Feb. 1968. ¹⁸ Comment, *Daily News*, 26 Nov. 1973.

¹⁹ See A. Mazrui, 'Anti-militarism and political militancy in Tanzania', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 12:3 (1968), 269–84. ²⁰ Comment, *Daily News*, 31 May 1972.

²¹ For more on Community Development see Jennings, 'Very real war'.

been channeled through 'Women's Sections' in TANU branches across the country;²² in 1962, TANU officials established an official women's wing of the party at the national level, the *Umoja wa Wanawake wa Tanganyika* (UWT). Though the constitution of the UWT maintained many of the objectives of the Women's Sections, it also aspired to address 'the problems and concerns of women as a group'.²³ In reality, however, the UWT – its leadership composed of wives of prominent TANU officials – pursued a fundamentally conservative agenda that reflected the organization's embedded position within the patriarchal structure of the ruling party.

The organization's activities, often conducted jointly with Community Development officers, tended to reinforce the normative developmentalism of late colonial social welfare policies. The UWT sponsored adult education programs at community centers throughout the country, designed to improve women's literacy and political awareness but also to inculcate them in 'modern' methods of childcare and housekeeping. The UWT's first such seminar, held in Dar es Salaam in July 1964, sought to school married women in topics such as 'Home and baby care + nutrition' and 'Health problems in the city'.²⁴ The first comprehensive, nationwide UWT Development Plan (introduced in 1965) was, according to one of its chief architects, 'not conceived as a revolutionary means of changing the status of women'. Instead, it was 'designed to enable women to play their fullest part as wives and mothers' and therefore 'to improve the family's general standard of living'.²⁵ To this end, the plan proposed a range of projects, including seminars and trainings in home economics, the establishment of daycare centers, and the initiation of collectively run women's petty commercial groups engaged in activities such as sewing, cooking, vegetable cultivation, and livestock management. Such ventures would be overseen by the 'first advance squads of UWT women' who were to receive training by the organization and subsequently spread out throughout the country to become 'the pioneer field troops to put the plan into operation'.²⁶ In practice, the UWT frequently expanded by unilaterally absorbing local women's organizations and particularly mission groups into the national organization, according to the centralizing logic that all women's initiatives 'must join efforts and work together on the same programme' since 'it is essential that the women's efforts be united to bring maximum contribution to the overall development of our Nation'.²⁷

²² See Geiger, *TANU Women*. The TYL theoretically admitted both male and female members, but in practice often excluded women.

²³ S. Geiger, 'Umoja wa Wanawake and the needs of the rural poor', *African Studies Review*, 25:2 and 3 (1982), 49.

²⁴ TNA, Prime Minister's Office Dodoma (PMO) CD/CD.U.4/8 (18), UWT Seminar: 2, Letter from Bernadette N. Kunambi, Secretary of the Committee, UWT to Mr. Msuya, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Community Development and National Culture, Dar es Salaam, 22 July 1964.

²⁵ 'UWT's plans for national development: putting Tanzanian women in picture', *The Nationalist*, 2 March 1965.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ TNA, PMO CD/CD.U.4/8 (18), UWT Seminar, CD/6/23/70, letter 'Re: Mwanza Women's Conference' from M. C. Bulengo to Mrs. Nyerere, Chairman, Mwanza Women's Board c/o Regional Commissioner, 5 June 1965.

After the Arusha Declaration, UWT and Community Development interventions began to incorporate education in the politics of *ujamaa* and self-reliance into their training sessions, but the prioritization and content of the home economics approach persisted, as resettlement facilitated access to rural women by state officials. That in practice *ujamaa* reinforced rather than dissolved gendered distinctions consistent with an emergent politics of nationalist patriarchy was also apparent in urban spaces from 1968 onwards. Before Operation *Vijiji*, young male militants in cities across the country participated in Operation *Vijana*, a national campaign to eliminate the wearing and consumption of ‘decadent’ or ‘indecent’ Western fashions and beauty products. The operation especially targeted young, mobile women, whom TYL members and other male vigilantes attacked or arrested for wearing miniskirts, makeup, and wigs. The older male leadership of TANU often represented the unmarried women persecuted by younger men as prostitutes, a discourse that reflected generic male anxieties about economic exploitation, as well as a fear of women who were not rooted in male-dominated households where they performed domestic labor.²⁸

The campaign drew upon a common nationalist trope in underscoring that Tanzanian women literally embodied national culture and thus could protect the integrity of the national family by adhering to ‘tradition’ in dress and comportment. Operation *Vijana* linked a particularly narrow understanding of tradition to national security by aligning its ‘relentless war against all foreign dehumanising practices’²⁹ with the broader struggle against imperialism. However, there was a tension between the aim of cultural policing in cities – which sought to purge African culture of foreign influences – and the work of state officials in the *ujamaa* villages of the countryside – who used technologies to mold rural women into homemakers that echoed a distinctly colonial and specifically Christian approach. The Tanzanian state deployed rural development initiatives to transform the fluid institution of the African family into the standardized model of a generic nuclear family, even while it sought to restore a very different model of ‘tradition’ in cities by policing gender norms according to an emphasis on indigeneity.

What accounts for this peculiar combination? Operation *Vijana* marked the new prominence of a nativist politics that affixed *ujamaa* developmentalism to an exclusionary nationalist project. However, rural development programs targeting women recalled a colonial version of patriarchy; a lack of resources and training among the Africanized Tanzanian civil service resulted in a persistent reliance on the ideologies and practices embedded in developmental institutions inherited from the colonial state. *Ujamaa*-era women’s development interventions also reflected the increasing ideological influence and management of a growing group of international (but largely Western-run) state and non-governmental development institutions that, if not forming a singular, monolithic development regime, tended to represent

²⁸ A. Ivaska, ‘In the “age of minis”’: women, work and masculinity downtown’, in J. Brennan, A. Burton, and Y. Lawi (eds.), *Dar es Salaam: Histories from an Emerging Metropolis* (Dar es Salaam, 2007).

²⁹ ‘500 to launch “Operation Vijana”’, *The Nationalist*, 30 Dec. 1968.

their common developmental model as a universal one.³⁰ In particular, their approaches were characterized by a reification of the nuclear family as a normal, necessary, and coherent unit, and the naturalization of a trope of maternal altruism, 'premised on the dubious notion that women possess inherent capacities for nurturing and self-sacrifice'.³¹

VILLAGIZATION, GENDER, AND FAMILY ON THE GROUND

Literature on 'alternative modernities' in the postcolonial world tends to align an asserted distinction between a singular Western capitalist modernity and a corpus of indigenous tradition with a separation between the public and private spheres.³² James Giblin takes this approach in examining the relationship between the historically marginalized residents of rural Njombe and the state in Tanzania, suggesting that during the *ujamaa* period, as in prior decades, 'Njombe's excluded subalterns created a space that stood separate from the state' and thus 'prevented nationalism from becoming hegemonic'.³³ This separate sphere was the realm of the family, and Giblin describes Njombe residents as 'taking refuge from nation in the private sphere'.³⁴ While allowing for the recording of rich local histories, this argument runs into several problems. Most significantly, in distinguishing between the private and state spheres, Giblin participates in the naturalization of what James Ferguson calls a 'vertical topography of power',³⁵ which locates the site of the family below the overarching, higher space of the state. Such an understanding distorts the complexities of spatial production and allows for a compartmentalization of the history of the private sphere of individual families as distinct from a national history of the Tanzanian state. Moreover, as the preceding analysis indicates, the marginalized people of Njombe were not alone in fixating on languages and practices of family; the Tanzanian state did so as well, albeit to different ends.

Thus, the reality of sustained colonial and postcolonial state attempts to remake families and mold gender roles is difficult to reconcile with a mythology of the rural family as an autonomous, indigenous site. The notion of an authentically African type of 'tribal socialism' animating Nyerere's original formulation of *ujamaa* was premised on a separation between the public and private spheres that had already proven untenable. In postcolonial Tanzania,

³⁰ Michael Jennings explores the relationship between foreign development organizations and *ujamaa* developmentalism in *Surrogates of the State: NGOs, Development, and Ujamaa in Tanzania* (Bloomfield, 2008). Subir Sinha provides a useful consideration in a comparative context in 'Lineages of the developmentalist state: transnationality and village India, 1900–1965', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 50 (2008), 57–90.

³¹ R. Schroeder, *Shady Practices: Agroforestry and Gender Politics in the Gambia* (Berkeley, 1999), 8. Schroeder addresses this tendency in more contemporary policy and literature on women and development that has been complicated by a group of 'new household theorists' who illuminate intra-household dynamics in development processes.

³² See for instance D. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, 2000). For a critique see F. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley, 2005).

³³ J. Giblin, *A History of the Excluded: Making Family a Refuge from State in Twentieth-century Tanzania* (Athens, OH, 2005), 7.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 263.

³⁵ J. Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham, NC, 2006), 92.

likewise, 'the modern family circle is quite the opposite of an autonomous sphere at the frontiers of which the structures of the state would halt'.³⁶ TANU officials' symbolic configuration of the nation as a kinship group – an extended, socialist family – translated into policies assigning young men the role of militant defenders of national security and women the work of guarding families, figuratively and concretely implicating the 'private sphere' in larger, 'public' historical processes.

Yet, though a particular – if contradictory – version of familyhood became lodged in the Tanzanian state's developmental vision in the 1960s, officials could not control the actual meanings of gender and family on the ground, just as they could not determine how people interpreted and used the concepts of self-reliance and security locally. As villagization unfolded in Mtwara, rural men and women apprehended the new political formation of *ujamaa* according to their own circumstances and a longer history of development in the region. Interviews with over one hundred elderly residents of three villages in Mtwara Rural District in early 2008 confirm this.³⁷ Read in conjunction with a series of reports composed in 1976 by students of Kivukoni College (the TANU training institute) on these same villages,³⁸ these oral accounts provide a picture of villagization that both conforms to and strikingly departs from the orderly development project sought by national officials.

What came to be the dominant official version of villagization, which viewed resettlement as an end in and of itself, was premised partly on a conception of the countryside as a static space populated by individuals living in parochial ethnic or kinship units that had little contact with each other or the forces of modernity. Mtwara, however, had historically been a space of mobility, intermixing, and connection to larger global political and economic processes.³⁹ By the coast, the countryside was dotted with a variety of living arrangements before the *ujamaa* era. Many people lived in extended family groups of several households in clusters among their farms, but others lived in fairly large settlements, usually situated alongside transportation corridors, that eventually became known as *vijiji vya zamani* (original villages). A few elders describe their pre-villagization homes as a constellation of relatives residing in anywhere from three to ten houses organized in a circular formation,⁴⁰ but others remember a less formal arrangement of living *kiukoo* (with members of their clan, or extended family) in a few houses

³⁶ E. Balibar, 'The nation form', in E. Balibar and I. Wallerstein (eds.), *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (New York, 1991), 101.

³⁷ Tapes and transcripts of fieldwork are in the author's possession. Interviews and translations (from Swahili and Kimakonde) in Mdui, Rwelu, Nanguruwe, and Mtwara town were conducted jointly by the author and her research assistant, Issa Chilindima, and will be cited as 'author's field notes'.

³⁸ Chuo cha TANU Kivukoni, 'Taarifa ya vijiji vya Mkoa ya Mtwara', 1976. Kivukoni College is now Mwalimu Nyerere Academy.

³⁹ P. Seppala, 'Introduction', in P. Seppala and B. Koda (eds.), *The Making of a Periphery: Economic Development and Cultural Encounters in Southern Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam, 1998).

⁴⁰ Interviews with S. M. Ali Mkwewe, H. H. Shaba, and I. S. Mfaki, Rwelu village, Jan. 2008. See also G. Liebenow, *Colonial Rule and Political Development in Tanzania: The Case of the Makonde* (Evanston, 1971).

scattered near each other.⁴¹ Many elders recall living amid mosques and *madrastas*, mission stations, small stores, and schools in *vijiji vya zamani* (such as Nanyamba or Dihimba), with some combination of their spouses, children, parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. In these settings, they were surrounded by other farmers, South Asian traders, missionaries, or *sheikhs*, and wage laborers from within the region or from neighboring Mozambique.⁴²

Throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, men and women in these arrangements frequently traveled in and out of their area of residence and the unit of the individual household itself. The largely Makonde population of the south-east had practiced a mixture of subsistence and cash-crop agriculture and wage labor throughout the period of British rule and into the postcolonial era. Poor farming conditions (including cyclical drought, soil infertility, and – in some cases – land shortages) and colonial tax policy drove many Makonde to movement in pursuit of new territory for farming or opportunities for paid work. Men circulated throughout the region to work at sisal plantations in Mikindani and what became the town of Mtwara on the coast, on smaller private farms in the interior as hired laborers, or on infrastructure projects catalyzed by the Groundnut Scheme of the late 1940s.⁴³ Individuals and families also sometimes shifted their homes in search of more fertile or plentiful land, though after the rise of cashew cultivation in the 1950s this movement became increasingly circumscribed.⁴⁴

During this time, rural south-easterners relied upon multiple, flexible social partnerships in addition to economic diversification and physical mobility. In the context of endemic material hardship, ‘administrative caprice’,⁴⁵ and a lack of basic social security, men and women often treated marriage as a temporary survival strategy rather than an enduring, inviolable institution.⁴⁶ Mtwara elders report divorce and multiple marriages as a common occurrence even in their parents’ generation;⁴⁷ in their own lifetimes, they describe marrying up to eight or nine times.⁴⁸ This frequency of marriage applied equally to men and women, and could entail resettlement or relocation between houses over long distances or within a small area; it reflected high divorce or separation rates as well as low life expectancy

⁴¹ Interviews with H. A. Saloum, E. A. Kulipatanga, and S. D. Kandolechi, Nanguruwe village, Feb. 2008.

⁴² Author’s field notes; Chuo cha TANU Kivukoni, ‘Taarifa’.

⁴³ M. Rizzo, ‘What was left of the Groundnut Scheme? Development disaster and labour market in southern Tanganyika, 1946–1952’, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 6:2 (2006), 205–38.

⁴⁴ Previously farmers had practiced shifting farming of annual crops; cashew, a tree crop, required permanent cultivation of a single area. See author’s field notes. On the history of cashew cultivation in Mtwara, see P. J. Northwood, ‘Cashew production in the southern province of Tanganyika’, *East African Agricultural and Forestry Journal*, 28 (1962), 35–9.

⁴⁵ Liebenow, *Colonial Rule*, 334.

⁴⁶ J. A. R. Wembah-Rashid’s fieldwork elsewhere in the region also emphasizes the elasticity of familial bonds: see ‘Socio-political development and economic viability in a rural community: the case of Nakarara village, Mtwara Region Tanzania’ (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1983).

⁴⁷ Examples were provided in interviews with S. M. Mpendemuka and E. M. Nantende, Nanguruwe village, Feb. 2008; and with S. H. Chinankwili, Rwelu village, Feb. 2008.

⁴⁸ Author’s field notes.

rates. The overwhelmingly Muslim character of the Makonde population in coastal Mtwara meant that polygamy had been practiced throughout the area for generations, although material constraints prevented many men from marrying more than one wife at a time.⁴⁹ The influx of Makonde from northern Mozambique as *Manamba* recruited for sisal plantation labor by colonial authorities,⁵⁰ or as refugees from conflict between FRELIMO and Portuguese soldiers beginning in the 1960s,⁵¹ brought a monogamous Christian population into the area. These immigrants, too, remained mobile, intermarrying with local Makonde, migrating throughout Mtwara and to locations to the north such as Dar es Salaam and Tanga, and even returning permanently or periodically to northern Mozambique.

In other words, family structures and residential patterns in Mtwara in the years leading up to *ujamaa* were far from uniform or stable, and hardly conformed to official expectations of either 'modern' or 'traditional' norms. It was into this context that the Tanzanian villagization initiative inserted itself, and it was these conditions that shaped the way villagization unfolded on the ground in Mtwara. Young men seeking political capital as a means of gaining their own social and economic autonomy (or self-reliance) and stability (or security) had joined local branches of the TYL in the decade before the Arusha Declaration. During the anti-colonial movement of the 1950s, Youth League members encouraged rural people to join TANU by explaining that 'the party is your weapon and the card your bullet',⁵² and acted as *askaris* (guards or soldiers) by 'protecting the party, defending the party, giving it power'.⁵³ The militarization of young men in the region continued into the early postcolonial period, when Youth Leaguers worked as unsupervised rural police who 'protected the peace' of the countryside by patrolling the area for petty criminals.⁵⁴ In the latter half of the 1960s, young men from the south-east joined other Youth Leaguers throughout Tanzania for training sessions in National Service and Militia camps, and eventually returned to their homes to take on a new role as enforcers of compulsory villagization in the early 1970s. Between 1973 and 1975, TYL members throughout the Mtwara countryside forcefully resettled rural people into large settlements of at least 250 households each, in compliance with the strict guidelines of the nationwide Operation *Vijiji*.

Official figures reported Mtwara as the site where villagization was most thoroughly implemented in the wake of the Arusha Declaration: by 1969 this region alone was responsible for 333 of the 476 villages throughout

⁴⁹ For instance, L. Mkenere (interview, Mdui village, Jan. 2008) explains that polygamy was limited earlier because men had fewer resources to pay a bride price (*posa* or *mahali*).

⁵⁰ Liebenow, *Colonial Rule*, 157–8; Rizzo, 'Groundnut Scheme', 205; author's field notes.

⁵¹ Beginning in 1964, guerillas organized under the umbrella of FRELIMO, the Mozambican nationalist party, become embroiled in violent struggle against Portuguese colonial occupiers. Tanzania provided a haven for FRELIMO until Mozambican independence in 1975.

⁵² Interview with Ali Ali, former District leader for TYL, Mtwara town, Jan. 2008.

⁵³ Interview with I. S. Mfaki. TYL militants would particularly 'protect' TANU from the opposition nationalist party, the Tanganyika National Congress.

⁵⁴ Interview with M. S. Yusuf, Mdui village, Jan. 2008.

the 18 regions in mainland Tanzania.⁵⁵ In a meeting late in 1970, Kawawa proclaimed: 'the people of Mtwara are leading in the upsurge of the nation's *ujamaa* movement'.⁵⁶ By 1970, the number of villages in the region had reportedly risen to 700 (with 300,000 inhabitants);⁵⁷ by 1972, the figure exceeded 1,000.⁵⁸ The enormous number of villages recorded in the region prior to the start of forced resettlement reflected a significant reordering of the countryside, but hardly accorded with the ideals set forth by national policy. In a 1970 report, the principal Regional Development Officer in Mtwara followed a numerical cataloguing of villages by conceding that 'in truth none of these villages have yet received any *ujamaa* training'. Of the villagers, he commented, 'they love *ujamaa* but they don't understand what to do'.⁵⁹ This observation acknowledged the lack of state control over the transformation of social, political, and economic life in rural Mtwara, and hinted at the gulf between official discourse and actual local interpretations of national policy.

In reality, many south-easterners had indeed shifted their residence beginning in 1967, but this move was rarely to a functional communal village. Between 1967 and 1972, local officials traveled throughout the countryside, encouraging rural people to 'live together' and sometimes promising material rewards from the state for those who did so. Rural people both heeded and ignored this call; those who resettled usually did so close to their original homes and private farms, and built new houses in what elders recall as *vijiji vidogo vidogo* (small villages) comprising anywhere from ten to one hundred households.⁶⁰ In other cases, officials merely recorded *vijiji vya zamani* – settlements that had already existed for years – as new *ujamaa* villages, without asking residents to shift their homes at all.⁶¹ These *vijiji vidogo vidogo* and *vijiji vya zamani* made varying degrees of progress towards the practice of true *ujamaa*; some settlements developed village farms where residents farmed contiguous private plots as encouraged by the Mtwara Regional Commissioner.⁶² Yet men and women throughout the south-eastern countryside continued to work on their older farms (particularly their permanent cashew plots) after this first wave of voluntary villagization.⁶³

⁵⁵ '476 *ujamaa* villages established – Kisumo', *The Nationalist*, 15 July 1969.

⁵⁶ 'TANU plans to boost Mtwara *ujamaa* villages', *The Nationalist*, 12 Oct. 1970.

⁵⁷ 'Mtwara's giant step forward', *The Nationalist*, 11 Jan. 1971. The state archives offer a different number – 601: TNA, PMO RD/12/14/1 (V), Mtwara Region Rural Development, RD/R.10/1/4, 'Taarifa ya kazi za maendeleo tangu mwezi Oktoba hadi Novemba 1970', 28 Dec. 1970.

⁵⁸ M. Hirst, 'Recent villagization in Tanzania', *Geography*, 63 (1978), 122–5.

⁵⁹ TNA, PMO, 'Taarifa ya kazi', 28 Dec. 1970.

⁶⁰ Author's field notes. Wembah-Rashid records a similar process.

⁶¹ Chuo cha TANU Kivukoni, 'Taarifa'.

⁶² The transition to *ujamaa* was to be spread out over two phases. First, farmers cultivated a large, contiguous area of village land parceled into private household plots. This type of 'shoulder-to-shoulder' (*bega kwa bega*) cultivation would eventually be replaced by true communal farming when private plots were abolished. See TNA, PMO CDR/12/14/4 (IV), Mtwara Region Rural Development, *Mkoa wa Mtwara: Maongozi na Utaratibu wa Kutekeleza Azimio la Arusha Katika*, March 1968, Ndanda Press.

⁶³ Author's field notes; Chuo cha TANU Kivukoni, 'Taarifa'. Cashew farm abandonment, however, eventually became a widespread problem throughout the region, leading to a drastic drop in cashew production from 1974 onwards. See P. Lal, 'Between

The young men whom TANU officials enlisted to enforce the second wave of villagization belonged to the same demographic that had led much of the first wave of villagization in Mtwara. The theme of self-reliance underpinning national development policy had a particular resonance for many of these youths: moving to *ujamaa* villages, whose anticipated productivity and self-sufficiency were to help make Tanzania a self-reliant nation in the world, could greatly benefit young men seeking to become independent adults capable of establishing themselves as heads of their own households. Resettlement in the name of *ujamaa* represented less an existential rupture than another opportunity to maximize their own security, in social and economic terms, according to older local practices of flexibility and mobility. For some, this meant moving away from their extended family in search of new land for farming and possibly opportunities for power within the political economy of new villages. Often, extended family groups – each loosely defined as an *ukoo* – split during both stages of villagization, in its voluntary and forced incarnations. One elderly man who left his extended family during villagization simply observed that ‘within an *ukoo*, each person agreed to go to the area they wanted’.⁶⁴ While his clan spread out over fairly long distances, other clans merely divided between neighboring villages. Though many extended family groups separated so that individuals could go ‘where their heart wanted’,⁶⁵ others settled together in new villages. In particular, those who had already invested years of labor in productive cashew plots tried to stay close to their cashew farms. This was especially true of areas further inland from the coast in Mtwara, where land shortages constrained the ability of farmers to select unclaimed territory for cultivation.

In practice, the implementation of Operation *Vijiji* proceeded in a fairly decentralized fashion, with the TYL performing the majority of the work of coercing and supervising resettlement in Mtwara, as in other regions. In this respect, the distinction between the Tanzanian state and the larger population was blurred, as young male militants often enforced resettlement among the communities they themselves hailed from. Former Youth Leaguers recall traveling throughout the Mtwara countryside in small groups, with a local official such as the ward chairman, to instruct people to relocate into larger settlements. Subsequently, TYL militants would forcibly transport those who had initially refused to move by loading them into a vehicle and threatening to burn or destroy their homes and property.⁶⁶ Villagers recall the event differently, depending on the terms under which they ultimately complied with the Operation. Those who waited to relocate until compelled to do so describe Operation *Vijiji* as an episode of disturbance⁶⁷ or destruction,⁶⁸ in which Youth Leaguers ‘set homes on fire’,⁶⁹ while

the village and the world: imagining and practicing development in Tanzania, 1964–1975’ (unpublished PhD thesis, New York University, forthcoming).

⁶⁴ Interview with H. Ismail, Mdui village, Jan. 2008.

⁶⁵ Interview with S. I. Ismaili, Mdui village, Jan. 2008.

⁶⁶ Author’s field notes.

⁶⁷ Interview with H. S. Mkumbange, S. Y. Chembeya, H. S. Nampungila, and M. S. Malenga, Mdui village, Jan. 2008.

⁶⁸ Interview with S. H. Chinankwili.

⁶⁹ Interview with A. S. Nanguo, Rwelu village, Feb. 2008.

others merely recall a benign order⁷⁰ to relocate. Some elders refer to moving into concentrated villages as moving into nations (*taifa*), or beginning to live nationally (*kitaifa*),⁷¹ reflecting the widespread confusion among rural people about the exact meaning of *ujamaa* and the national political structure presiding over it.

In new settlements, Youth Leaguers and local officials organized the construction of new homes according to a particular style⁷² – in orderly lines parallel or perpendicular to roads bisecting the settlement, each approximately thirty paces apart.⁷³ The former district leader for the TYL in Mtwara explained that villagers were instructed to build in ‘clean lines’, in the style of Mtwara town, in order to create a ‘modern environment’⁷⁴ in the countryside. Yet, even in this putatively organized atmosphere, complications resulted when new arrivals to villages built their homes next to coconut or papaya trees belonging to an older resident;⁷⁵ land disputes arising from such situations still remain salient throughout rural Tanzania today.⁷⁶ Moreover, for polygamous families the boundaries of a single household were hazy, and few guidelines existed for how the construction of standardized houses for discrete nuclear families should proceed in such cases.

SECURITY, SELF-RELIANCE, AND THE PROBLEMS OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The discursive and literal militarization of TYL *askaris* in Operation *Vijiji* was consistent with a larger emphasis on defense and security that had pervaded official conceptions of villagization and discussions of development in Tanzania from their earliest stages. Particularly along Tanzania’s southern border with Mozambique, ‘defense’ was built into the structure of *ujamaa* villages beginning in 1967, and villagization was officially described as the creation of *vijiji vya ujamaa na ulinzi – ujamaa* and defense villages.⁷⁷ The internationalist orientation of *ujamaa* that manifested itself in support for movements for self-determination across the world – particularly in Mozambique and southern Africa – rendered Tanzanian sovereignty vulnerable to imperialist retaliation; therefore, as the Minister of Defence and National Service explained, ‘the Government’s aim in the southern regions and elsewhere, was to establish defence *ujamaa* villages along all the country’s borders, which would be able to stand by themselves and only ask for assistance when necessary’.⁷⁸ *Ujamaa* and defense villages were to be

⁷⁰ Interview with K. M. Janike, Rwelu village, Feb. 2008.

⁷¹ Author’s field notes.

⁷² Interview with H. S. Mkumbange, S. Y. Chembeya, H. S. Nampungila, and M. S. Malenga.

⁷³ Interview with M. S. Chimbando, former TYL member, Mdui village, Jan. 2008.

⁷⁴ Interview with Ali Ali.

⁷⁵ Author’s field notes.

⁷⁶ I. Shivji, *Not Yet Democracy: Reforming Land Tenure in Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam, 1998).

⁷⁷ Defense was emphasized as a primary function of *ujamaa* villages at other potentially vulnerable sites, such as along the TAZARA railway, constructed between 1969 and 1974 with Chinese support. See J. Monson, ‘Defending the people’s railway in the era of liberalization: TAZARA in southern Tanzania’, *Africa*, 76:1 (2006), 113–30.

⁷⁸ ‘Stronger defence planned: forces to get better weapons – Sokoine’, *Daily News*, 29 June 1972.

founded on the same principles as *ujamaa* villages, yet were distinct in their added function of making rural citizens self-reliant in defense.

A series of Portuguese incursions into Tanzanian territory in 1967 intensified the climate of rural security consciousness in the south-east. After land mines killed two Tanzanians, Kawawa visited the site of the blasts and 'urged people living on the border to be vigilant and cooperate with security forces and the army reserves in tracking down the enemy and safeguarding the integrity of the nation'.⁷⁹ In 1970, on another visit to the border, Kawawa 'reiterated his call upon all people living in border villages' and instructed villagers that 'the duty of defending the nation was the responsibility of every individual'.⁸⁰ Villagization in Mtwara region, therefore, theoretically served as a means to enable rural citizens to become soldiers for the nationalist cause, by concentrating peasants in settlements where they could set up patrols and receive training by Militia officials. The Mtwara Regional Commissioner insisted that each village 'is supposed to have its own security force so that it can be very self-reliant in the matter of defense' and that 'it will be necessary for each adult to participate in trainings in weapons usage, and training in important exercises'.⁸¹ TYL members and other young men attended training camps across the country, where they received instruction in weapons usage and 'parade' (marching), and 'learned how to defend their nation from enemies as if it was their father'.⁸² Yet, paradoxically, even as leaders encouraged youth self-reliance in matters of national security, the increased independence of young men threatened to challenge the patriarchal foundations of TANU rule. Speaking at a TYL camp in 1967, Kawawa announced that 'TANU Youth League camps were established to teach the youths the spirit of "self-reliance" so that they could serve the nation effectively', since 'youths were the bulwarks and builders of the nation and as such they needed good training'.⁸³ However, the evolving attitude of the older generation of TANU leaders also reflected an overriding concern about *managing* young men,⁸⁴ and the deep tension between the logics of centralization and decentralization that characterized *ujamaa* rural development policy more broadly partially emerged from this anxiety.

While the militarization of young men during the *ujamaa* era effectively blurred the lines between the Tanzanian state and its rural citizens, the simultaneous enlistment of women as guardians of families reflected a significant gulf between rural Tanzanian populations and the official realm of policy-making. Though TANU rhetoric encouraged *individual* self-reliance among male militants, the UWT and Department of Community Development trained rural women to care properly for self-reliant *families*, according to an approach that elided both the dynamics that occurred within households and the reality that the rural household itself was a fluid entity. Furthermore, the configuration of women as domestic homemakers echoed

⁷⁹ 'Be vigilant, look out for infiltrators', *The Nationalist*, 14 April 1967.

⁸⁰ 'Be vigilant, border peasants warned', *The Nationalist*, 5 Oct. 1970.

⁸¹ *Mkoa wa Mtwara*. ⁸² Interview with I. S. Mfaki, Rwelu village, Feb. 2008.

⁸³ 'Kawawa reveals T.Y.L. future plans: youths – bulwarks of nation', *The Nationalist*, 3 Feb. 1967.

⁸⁴ See A. M. Ivaska, 'Of students, "nizers," and a struggle over youth: Tanzania's 1966 national service crisis', *Africa Today*, 51:3 (2005), 83–107; Brennan, 'Youth'.

a bourgeois conception of family in which men performed productive labor outside of the home, which deeply contradicted the reality, often recognized by TANU leaders, that women in Mtwara (as throughout Tanzania) performed the majority of agricultural, as well as reproductive, labor.⁸⁵

As was the case with young male militarization, however, the official imposition of a version of familyhood that emphasized female domesticity arose from the *weakness* of the Tanzanian state rather than from its excessive power. Despite frequent reports throughout the 1960s recording the successes of the Community Development Division and the UWT in terms of quantitative accomplishments, women's development work was actually crippled by a lack of organization, funding, and education. On a visit to Mtwara Region in 1966, for instance, one official commented that 'it is doubtful however that the Women Community Development Assistant really knows so much more than the women themselves to be able to "teach them"' and that 'a lot of CD staff in the Region have had no training in CD at all'.⁸⁶ Training for female development officers was indeed scarce: a study conducted in 1970 found that of the 560 women employed by *Maendeleo*,⁸⁷ about half had had no training of any kind, about 400 had had no training in home economics, and that only 70 had secondary school certificates.⁸⁸ The Tanzanian government dealt with this problem by absorbing private schools around the country to serve as training centers, and by requesting assistance from international donors.

In 1964, responding to one such solicitation, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, using Freedom from Hunger Campaign funds donated by the Swedish International Development Corporation and equipment provided by UNICEF, funded the construction of the Buhare Home Economics Centre located in Musoma, the capital of the northern Mara region. After an initial period of Swedish supervision, the Tanzanian government gained operational control over the Centre, which offered courses in rural home economics and day care centre assistantship (ranging from two years to two weeks in length) to *Maendeleo* extension workers, as well as to villagers. Courses in home economics were also conducted at mission stations and Rural Training Centres throughout the country.

In a letter to the FAO's Programme for Better Family Living in 1972, one Buhare official optimistically remarked that 'we are at a stage of developing home economics material that suits the rural family and developing communication means that are effective to transfer this knowledge to the families'.⁸⁹ In reality, however, the curricula of Buhare and Rural Training Centres continued to emphasize subject matter that took little account of the

⁸⁵ See Editorial, 'Stop this practice', *The Nationalist*, 9 Sept. 1967.

⁸⁶ TNA, PMO CDR/12/14/4 (IV), Mtwara Region Rural Development 5/6/1 (37), 'Safari notes, Mtwara region', from B. J. Renju, 11 Nov. 1966.

⁸⁷ The Ministry of Regional Administration and Rural Development.

⁸⁸ TNA, PMO RD/E6/1 FAO Home Economics General (80) E.6/1. RD.E.6/1, *Maendeleo* to FAO, 'Request to UN/FAO assistance to establish a diploma course at Buhare H. E. Training Centre', 12 Oct. 1971.

⁸⁹ TNA, PMO UV/U4 Ujamaa Villages General 188. Ref. No. E.6/1, I. B. Lomayani, for Commissioner for Rural Development, 'A PBFL orientation to *Maendeleo* programmes', 21 Jan. 1972.

material realities of the Tanzanian countryside, and instead reflected the ideological assumptions of international donors and a tendency to ignore existing local developmental knowledge. Far from comprising the coherent institution of either the 'traditional' African extended family or the 'modern' nuclear family sought by the state's home economics approach, family in Mtwara had in fact remained an often temporary and malleable entity throughout the villagization process. As the socialist harmony envisioned by the utopian version of *ujamaa* and substantive state investment (in the form of developmental infrastructure and services) failed to materialize, rural people continued to rely on older survival strategies. These included, quite frequently, forming multiple temporary marriage alliances, engaging in migration and other forms of petty wage labor, and maintaining a degree of flexibility that official policy failed to accommodate.⁹⁰

In theory, the activities of UWT and Community Development extension workers corresponded to a state project that prioritized a substantive understanding of development, seeking first to achieve concrete improvements in the quality of life of its citizens. According to *ujamaa* discourse, food security was as critical to Tanzanian development as was military security; ensuring the material self-sufficiency of families and villages promised to guard the nation from dependence on foreign aid. An editorial in *The Nationalist* at the start of 1967 registered the importance of agricultural self-reliance in the face of encroaching 'neo-colonialist spheres of influence', noting that 'throughout his tours of the regions, Mwalimu [Nyerere] has been putting across this message: "A nation that has enough to eat through its own efforts is a dignified and proud nation."' ⁹¹ In practice, however, ensuring the food security of individual households by regulating domestic practices became the primary means to achieve this larger goal of protecting national self-reliance and dignity.

Women's trainings were frequently not integrated into rural development planning at the national and regional levels, and remained disconnected from other developmental interventions – such as those overseen by the Ministry of Agriculture – at the site of the *ujamaa* village. The observations of a national official in Mtwara in 1966, that 'the development of women's programmes still appear to be considered separately from the overall CD programmes in the districts and are consequently usually unrelated and mutually exclusive', were repeated in official correspondence into the 1970s. Home economics focused on the *consumption* rather than production of food, and its place in the national development plan was confined to encouraging 'the proper utilization of resources'.⁹² Problems of real material scarcities of food or access to food became reconfigured as deficiencies in nutritional knowledge and techniques of domestic food storage, rationing, and preparation, all of which could theoretically be cured by exposing women to the

⁹⁰ Author's field notes. See also P. Seppala, *Diversification and Accumulation in Rural Tanzania: Anthropological Perspectives on Village Economics* (Uppsala, 1998); S. Berry, *No Condition is Permanent: The Social Dynamics of Agrarian Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Madison, 1993).

⁹¹ Editorial, 'Food and national prestige', *The Nationalist*, 24 Jan. 1967.

⁹² TNA, PMO RD/E6/1 FAO Home Economics General (80) E.6/1. Re. No RD/E.6/1 (223a), I. B. Lomayani, Principal Secretary Prime Minister's Office, 'Evaluation of the home economics programme in Tanzania', 14 April 1972.

science of 'modern' home economics.⁹³ In Mtwara, as elsewhere, national development policy ultimately did little to tackle the structural conditions creating a population vulnerable to food shortages,⁹⁴ diluting and even negating the developmental utility of women's interventions.

CONCLUSIONS

Between 1964 and 1975, development politics in Tanzania came to be organized around a version of *ujamaa* that normalized distinct gender roles and celebrated a generic ideal of the nuclear family. Yet, as villagization unfolded on the ground in the south-eastern region of Mtwara, rural people's practices rarely conformed to the ideas about gender and family implicit in state discourse and policy. Although in regions such as Mtwara many young men complied with official orders by participating in resettlement drives, they also sought to maximize their own self-reliance from older generations of male leaders within their extended families and the larger national family. Furthermore, the stable nuclear family around which new settlements were supposed to be organized often proved to be an elastic and provisional entity for both men and women in Mtwara. In particular, the ideal of the devoted female domestic guardian rooted in the *ujamaa* formulation proved incongruent with the actual lifestyles of many rural women, who frequently moved in and out of productive and reproductive roles and joined their male counterparts in embracing diversification and flexibility as instruments of personal security.

Rather than revealing the 'private sphere' to be an autonomous site to which rural people retreated or from which they resisted the Tanzanian state's *ujamaa* project, the preceding analysis shows that languages and practices of gender and family at the local level were deeply entwined with the political economy of national development more broadly. The implementation of *ujamaa* in regions such as Mtwara was accordingly inflected by existing dynamics between men, women, and their kin in those areas, but national policy also contributed to transformations in these local practices. Just as the institution of the family on the ground proved to be a complicated and fractured one, so were the state's version of familyhood and the larger project of *ujamaa* riddled with internal contradictions. The goals of self-reliance and security animating the *ujamaa* formulation proved to be elusive partly because of these contradictions, as well as because of the Tanzanian state's material limitations, just as the ultimate vision of an orderly massive reorganization of the Tanzanian countryside proved unworkable in regions such as Mtwara.

⁹³ This approach persisted in Tanzanian national development policy for decades. See The United Republic of Tanzania, Ministry of Agriculture, *Comprehensive Food Security Programme: Volume I: Main Report* (Dar es Salaam, 1992).

⁹⁴ For more on Tanzanian agricultural policy, see S. Ponte, *Farmers and Markets in Tanzania: How Policy Reforms Affect Rural Livelihoods in Africa* (Portsmouth, NH, 2002). On food security as a concept, see P. McMichael, 'Food security and social reproduction: issues and contradictions', in I. Bakker and S. Gill (eds.), *Power, Production and Social Reproduction: Human In/security in the Global Political Economy* (New York, 2003).

Evaluating gender and family according to a methodology that simultaneously addresses national discourse and local practice bridges the divide between materialist social history and abstracted discursive analysis, and erases the hierarchical spatial separation between the rural family and the state. It also highlights the utility of gender as an analytical category in micro-level studies of development, and hints at the importance of the idea of family to nationalist formations more broadly. Scholars interrogating instances of nationalism across time and space have described the affinity of nationalist discourses for metaphors of kinship, which facilitate the naturalization of the nation as an eternal demographic unit and cultural community.⁹⁵ Constructions of the indigenous – usually articulated via the category of ‘tradition’ and located in the ‘private sphere’ – play a key role in this process of national self-authentication. At the same time, however, developmental interventions staged by national states often seek to reconfigure the institutions of gender and family in practice, thus altering the very site at which national culture is putatively grounded.

In the case of Tanzania, the paradoxes of national development were registered in disjunctures between official discourse about tradition and enacted state policy. While *ujamaa* supposedly recalled a version of Africanness distinguished by inclusive socialist forms of community, from 1967 onwards TANU’s urban campaigns were, in fact, characterized by a nativist emphasis on aesthetic markers and distinct gender norms. At the same time, the weaknesses of the Tanzanian state resulted in the prominence of a rural developmental approach that echoed colonial and Western understandings of familyhood. In part, this internally fractured yet strikingly patriarchal trajectory reflected the tension between expansive and exclusionary versions of kinship deployed by *ujamaa* discourse, which in turn linked to the broader tension between universalism and particularism inherent in Tanzanian nationalism. Far from being solely produced by the structural contradictions of the nation form, however, the gendering of *ujamaa* politics in the 1960s and 1970s reflected the historically specific material limitations of a new state threatened by the dynamics of global capitalism and the Cold War. Moreover, the actual implementation of this gendered developmental vision was complicated by the often divergent actions of rural Tanzanian men and women on the ground during this period.

⁹⁵ See for instance Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (London, 1997); Balibar, ‘Nation form’.